Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Wisborough Green Neighbourhood Plan

SEA Scoping Report

Wisborough Green Parish Council

September 2026

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Quality information

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

1.1.1 AECOM has been commissioned to undertake an independent Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of the emerging Wisborough Green Neighbourhood Plan (hereafter referred to as 'the Plan'). The neighbourhood area, which covers the civil parish of Wisborough Green, is shown in **Figure 1.1**.

1.2 The Wisborough Green Neighbourhood Plan

1.2.1 The Plan is being prepared under the Localism Act 2011[1] and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012[2], and in the context of the adopted Chichester Local Plan (2021-2039). The Plan will be used to guide and shape development within the neighbourhood area, establishing a vision, strategy, and a suite of policies (i.e., site allocation polices and wider development management policies) which seek to address key local issues and objectives.

1.2.2 The Plan is being prepared in the context of the Chichester Local Plan (2021-2039) which was adopted in August 2025. The Local Plan provides the broad policy framework and a long-term strategy to manage development, protect the environment, deliver infrastructure, and promote sustainable communities within Chichester District. Neighbourhood plans will form part of the development plan for Chichester, alongside, but not as a replacement for the Local Plan. Neighbourhood plans are required to be in general conformity with the Local Plan and can develop policies and proposals to address local place-based issues. In this way it is intended for the Local Plan to provide a clear overall strategic direction for development in Chichester, whilst enabling finer detail to be determined through the neighbourhood planning process where appropriate.

1.2.3 The Chichester Local Plan provides a housing target of 75 dwellings for Wisborough Green, in addition to the 68 allocated in the original Neighbourhood Plan, of which 51 are built and a further 6 committed (57 total). The residual 11 homes from the original 68 was planned for 'Clark's Yard', but this site has since been withdrawn. On this basis, the overall housing target is **86 dwellings** (i.e., the residual 11 plus the 75 in the Chichester Local Plan), to be delivered via Neighbourhood Plan allocations.

1.2.4 As the southern section of the neighbourhood area is within the South Downs National Park (see **Appendix A**), the Plan should also be in general compliance with the new South Downs Local Plan (2024-2042)[3]. The new South Downs Local Plan is at a relatively advanced stage of plan making and is scheduled to be submitted for examination in public (EiP) before the end of 2026. However, it is acknowledged that new development through the Wisborough Green Neighbourhood Plan is likely to come forward within or in proximity to the village (i.e., outside of the National Park boundary).

[1] UK Government (2011) 'Localism Act 2011)' can be accessed here.
[2] UK Government (2012) 'The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012' can be accessed here.
[3] South Downs National Park Authority (2026): 'A new South Downs National Park', accessible here.

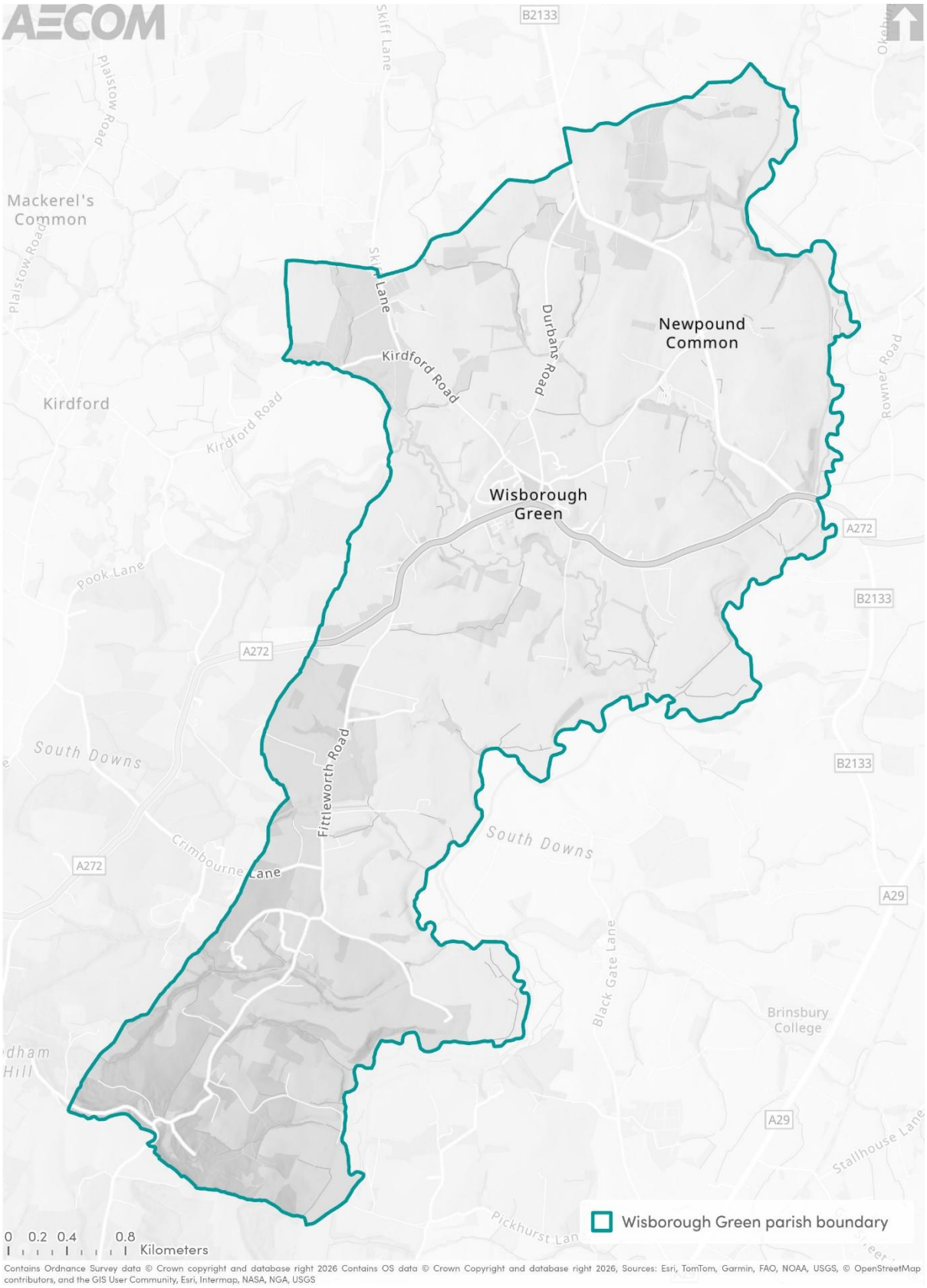


Figure 1.1: The neighbourhood area

1.3 SEA explained

1.3.1 SEA is a mechanism for assessing the likely significant environmental effects of plan and programmes before they are adopted. In England, SEA is required under the Environmental Assessment of Plan and Programmes (England) Regulations 2004 ('the SEA Regulations')[4], which transposes into national law the EU Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive. It ensures that environmental considerations are integrated into plan-making at an early stage and that the potential environmental consequences of different policy options are examined.

1.3.2 A Neighbourhood Plan requires SEA where it is likely to have significant environmental effects. In this respect, Neighbourhood Plans are more likely to be screened in as requiring an SEA if both the following apply:

1. the Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared within a neighbourhood area with significant environmental constraints, such as, for example, Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), protected landscapes, or large concentrations of heritage assets; and
2. the Neighbourhood Plan is likely to allocate sites for development. [5]

1.3.3 As both conditions apply for the Wisborough Green Neighbourhood Plan, a full SEA process is being undertaken to meet the specific requirements prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations).

1.3.4 In line with the regulations, there are two key steps for SEA:

- When deciding on 'the scope and level of detail of the information' which must be included in the Environmental Report there is a consultation with nationally designated authorities concerned with environmental issues; and
- A report (the 'Environmental Report') is published for consultation alongside the draft plan which presents an assessment of the draft plan (i.e. discusses 'likely significant effects' that would result from plan implementation) and reasonable alternatives.

1.3.5 The aim of the SEA will be to inform plan-making both directly (i.e. through structured, systematic and evidence-based analysis), and indirectly (by providing stakeholders with information on potential plan impacts and so facilitating effective consultation).

1.3.6 Undertaking SEA will help ensure consistency in the development and evaluation of the Plan.

[4] UK Government (2004). '*The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004'* can be accessed through this link.
[5] DLUHC (February 2022): Chief Planner's Newsletter, February 2022 "Strategic Environmental Assessment for Neighbourhood Plans: Timely and effective screening" accessible here

1.4 SEA scoping

1.4.1 A key procedural requirement of the SEA Regulations is to present a scope for the SEA, so that the designated authorities (Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency) can provide timely comment.

1.4.2 Developing the draft scope for the SEA of the Plan as presented in this Scoping Report has involved the following steps:

- Exploring the policy context for the Plan and SEA to summarise the key messages arising.
- Establishing the baseline for the SEA to help identify the key issues and opportunities for plan makers; and
- Considering this information, developing an SEA Framework comprising SEA objectives and assessment questions, which can then be used as a guiding framework for the subsequent assessment.

1.4.3 The scope is explored and presented under a series of themes, as follows:

- Air Quality.
- Biodiversity.
- Climate Change Adaptation.
- Climate Change Mitigation.
- Community Wellbeing.
- Historic Environment.
- Landscape.
- Natural Resources (Soil and Water); and
- Transport.

1.4.4 The selected SEA themes incorporate the 'SEA topics' suggested by Schedule 2(6) of the SEA Regulations.[6] These were refined to reflect a broad understanding of the anticipated scope of plan effects.

1.4.5 The discussion of the scoping information for each theme is presented in **Chapter 3**, and the proposed SEA Framework is brought together as a whole in **Chapter 4**. Each proposal within the emerging Plan will be assessed consistently using this Framework.

1.4.6 The discussion of the scoping information for each theme is preceded by details of the policy context for the Plan (see **Chapter 2**). Specifically, the Plan's relationship to wider plans, programmes and strategies.

[6] UK Government (2004). '*The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004*' can be accessed through this link.

2. Links with other plans, programmes, and strategies

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The SEA must consider the relationships between the Plan and other relevant plans, programmes, or strategies (PPS) and environmental objectives. In this context, the contents of the Plan will be partially influenced by the objectives presented within other international, national, regional and local PPS of relevance for Wisborough Green (and the wider Chichester District as a whole). **Table 2.1** below shows the PPS that are relevant across a number of SEA themes.

Table 2.1: PPS relevant to a number of SEA themes

Document Title	Year of Publication
International	
SEA Directive [2001/42/EC]	2001
National	
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	2026
Environment Improvement Plan	2025
Planning and Infrastructure Act	2025
Levelling-up and Regeneration Act	2023
Environment Act	2021
National Model Design Code	2021
National Design Guide	2019
Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations	2004
Planning Practice Guidance	various
Local	
Chichester Local Plan 2021-2039	2025

2.1.2 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The NPPF, supported by Planning Practice Guidance, establishes the overarching policy framework within which plans must be prepared. It promotes a plan-led system and a presumption in favour of sustainable development, balancing economic, social and environmental objectives.
- The Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP) sets out long-term goals for improving England's natural environment and delivering the legally binding targets established under the Environment Act 2021. The plan focuses on restoring nature, improving environmental quality, promoting circular economy, strengthening environmental security and increasing

public access to nature. It includes a range of commitments including those to protect 30 per cent of land and sea for nature by 2030 and reducing population exposure to the most harmful air pollutants by 30 per cent by 2030. Natural England is taking a leading role in supporting the delivery and implementation of environmental improvement plans. Furthermore, the EIP and associated monitoring reports link to the 25-Year Environment Plan policy paper (2018).

- The Planning and Infrastructure Act is designed to speed up planning approvals and infrastructure delivery, particularly for housing and transport projects. It includes provisions to encourage brownfield redevelopment and to ensure that new housing developments are supported by necessary infrastructure, such as roads, schools, and healthcare facilities. It also introduces the use of spatial development strategies to support strategic planning across larger geographies to better coordinate growth and infrastructure provision.
- The Government's Levelling Up and Regeneration Act seeks to reduce regional inequalities and promote economic growth and opportunities in less prosperous areas. It has been designed to address regional disparities, stimulate economic development, and enhance infrastructure and community well-being in order to create a more balanced and inclusive nation.
- The Environment Act establishes a framework for environmental governance in the UK, setting legally binding targets for air quality, water, biodiversity, and waste reduction. The Act created the Office for Environmental Protection (OEP) to hold public bodies accountable for environmental law compliance and introduced measures to improve resource efficiency, waste management, and water quality; and
- The National Model Design Code provides guidance to local planning authorities on how to prepare design codes and design guides that promote high-quality, well-designed places. It supports the implementation of the NPPF and expands on the design principles set out in the National Design Guide.

2.2 Air Quality

2.2.1 **Table 2.2** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the SEA.

Table 2.2: PPS reviewed in relation to Air Quality

Document Title	Year of Publication
International	
Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe Directive [2008/50/EC]	2008
National	
The Air Quality Strategy for England	2023
The Environmental Targets (Fine Particular Matter) (England) Regulations 2023	2023

Document Title	Year of Publication
The Clean Air Strategy	2019
A Green Future: Our 25-Year Plan to Improve the Environment	2018
UK plan for tackling roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations	2017
The Environmental Noise (England) Regulations	2006
Environmental Protection Act	1990

2.3 Biodiversity

2.3.1 **Table 2.3** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the SEA.

Table 2.3: PPS reviewed in relation to Biodiversity

Document Title	Year of Publication
International	
Biodiversity Strategy for 2030	2020
Birds Directive [2009/147/EC]	2009
Habitats Directive [92/43/EEC]	1992
National	
UK Biodiversity Framework	2024
Natural England Green Infrastructure Framework	2023
Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework for England	2023
Biodiversity Net Gain Guidance	2023
Environment Act 2021	2021
Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations	2019
Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations	2017
Wildlife and Countryside Act	1981
Local	
Chichester Biodiversity Strategy (2026-2036)	2026
West Sussex Local Nature Recovery Strategy	2026

2.4 Climate Change Adaptation

2.4.1 **Table 2.4** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the SEA.

Table 2.4: PPS reviewed in relation to Climate Change Adaptation

Document Title	Year of Publication
International	
The Paris Agreement UNFCCC	2015
Water Framework Directive	2000
National	
UK (third) National Adaptation Programme 2023 to 2028	2023
UK Climate Change Risk Assessment	2022
National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy	2020
How Local Authorities Can Reduce Emissions and Manage Climate Change Risk	2012
Flood and Water Management Act	2010
The Flood Risk Regulations	2009
UK Climate Change Act	2008
Local	
Chichester Climate Emergency Action Plan (2025-2030)	2025
West Sussex Local Flood Risk Management Strategy	2025

2.5 Climate Change Mitigation

2.5.1 **Table 2.5** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the SEA.

Table 2.5: PPS reviewed in relation to Climate Change Mitigation

Document Title	Year of Publication
International	
The Paris Agreement UNFCCC	2015
Kyoto Protocol	1997
Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe Directive [2008/50/EC]	2008
National	
The Seventh Carbon Budget	2025

Document Title	Year of Publication
Carbon Budget Delivery Plan	2023
UK Climate Change Risk Assessment	2022
Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener	2021
Heat Networks: Building a Market Framework	2020
Clean Growth Strategy	2019
The Road to Zero	2018
UK Climate Change Act	2008
Local	
Chichester Climate Emergency Action Plan (2025-2030)	2025

2.6 Community Wellbeing

2.6.1 **Table 2.6** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the SEA.

Table 2.6: PPS reviewed in relation to Community Wellbeing

Document Title	Year of Publication
National	
10 Year Health Plan for England	2025
UK Infrastructure: A 10 Year Strategy	2025
Get Britain Working White Paper	2024
Homes England Strategic Plan 2023 to 2028	2023
Long-Term Plan for Housing	2023
Streets for a Healthy Life: A companion guide to building for a Healthy Life	2022
Building for a Healthy Life	2020
Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review 10 Years On	2020
Health Impact Assessment in Spatial Planning	2020
Planning for Sport Guidance	2019
Healthy High Streets	2018
Spatial Planning for Health: An evidence resource for planning and designing healthier places	2017
Equality Act	2010
Local	

Document Title	Year of Publication
West Sussex Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2025-2030)	2025

2.7 Historic Environment

2.7.1 **Table 2.7** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the SEA.

Table 2.7: PPS reviewed in relation to the Historic Environment

Document Title	Year of Publication
International	
Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage of Europe	1992
World Heritage Convention	1972
National	
Historic England: Heritage and Climate Change	2022
Historic England Advice Note 11: Local Planning and the Historic Environment	2022
Historic England Advice Note 4: Tall Buildings Advice Note	2022
The National Design Guide	2019
Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management	2019
Historic England Good Practice Advice: The Setting of Heritage Assets	2017
Historic England Advice Note 8: Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	2016
Historic England Advice Note 3: The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans	2015
Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979	1979
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990	1990
Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act	1953

2.8 Landscape

2.8.1 **Table 2.8** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the SEA.

Table 2.8: PPS reviewed in relation to Landscape

Document Title	Year of Publication
International	
European Landscape Convention	2000
National	
Design and Placemaking PPG (consultation document)	2026
Management plans for Protected Landscapes in England	2025
Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework	2024
National Model Design Code	2021
Local	
South Downs Partnership Plan (2026-2031)	2026

2.9 Natural Resources (Soil and Water)

2.9.1 **Table 2.9** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the SEA.

Table 2.9: PPS reviewed in relation to Natural Resources (Soil and Water)

Document Title	Year of Publication
National	
National Framework for Water Resources	2025
Agriculture Act	2020
The Environment Agency's approach to groundwater protection	2018
The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017	2017
Local	
South East River Basin District Management Plan	2022
West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan (2033)	2021
West Sussex Waste Local Plan (2031)	2014

2.10 Transport

2.10.1 **Table 2.10** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the SEA.

Table 2.10: PPS reviewed in relation to Transport

Document Title	Year of Publication
National	
The Department for Transport's Third Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy	2026
Cycle Infrastructure Design	2020
The Transport Investment Strategy – Moving Britain Ahead	2017
Local	
West Sussex Active Travel Strategy (2024-2036)	2024
West Sussex Transport Plan (2022-2036)	2022

3. Key issues for the neighbourhood area (and SEA)

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 An overview of the key issues for the neighbourhood area (and SEA) is presented below (by SEA theme), proportionate to the scope of the Plan and potential effects. The key issues have been identified and informed by a review of the available baseline information for the neighbourhood area, with links provided. Maps and figures of the baseline information are presented in **Appendix A** of this report, showing the biodiversity designations, protected landscapes, heritage assets and areas, soil and water resources, and flood risk areas within and in proximity to the neighbourhood area.

3.2 Air Quality

Table 3.1: Baseline evidence informing the identification of key issues

Document Title	Year of Publication
Air Quality Annual Status Report	2025
Chichester Air Quality Action Plan	2022
Air Quality and Emissions Guidance (Sussex)	2021

3.2.1 There are no designated Air Quality Management Areas in the neighbourhood area. However, vehicle emissions remain a major source of pollution in Chichester District and is generally worse in larger towns and villages. Whilst the neighbourhood area is not likely to experience comparable level of growth as larger towns and villages during the plan period, all areas are sensitive to growth in terms of associated pressures on air quality.

3.2.2 Future development may temporarily increase air pollution through construction and traffic-related emissions, but also presents opportunities to embed sustainable transport, active travel, and low-emission technologies into planning and infrastructure.

3.2.3 The cumulative impact of strategic scale growth in the wider area (e.g., at Billinghurst and Adversane) may also increase traffic flow through the village (primarily the A272 and B2133).

3.3 Biodiversity

Table 3.2: Baseline evidence informing the identification of key issues

Document Title	Year of Publication
Natural England Green Infrastructure Map	2026
Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre - Summary Report for Wisborough Green Parish	2020

Document Title	Year of Publication
Site Conservation Objectives for 'The Mens' SAC	2014
MAGIC Interactive Map	2002

3.3.1 New development may affect the integrity of The Mens SAC/SSSI, particularly if located within SSSI Impact Risk Zones or SAC 'buffer zones' for development types likely to come forward during the plan period, indicating a need for consultation with Natural England.

3.3.2 Development could impact locally important sites including ancient woodland, the Wisborough Green Pastures, and priority habitats, which provide and accessible green spaces for communities and positively contribute to the natural environment.

3.3.3 The neighbourhood area contains a variety of priority habitats and wildlife corridors (see **Appendix A**). These habitats can support protected and notable species. Development may lead to habitat loss and fragmentation, weakening ecological networks and reduced species movement.

3.3.4 The neighbourhood area presents an opportunity to deliver and coordinate biodiversity net gain through development location, design and management. This includes creating new habitats, improving connectivity, restoring degraded areas, and strengthening green and blue infrastructure networks to support ecological resilience and climate adaptation.

3.4 Climate Change Adaptation

Table 3.1: Baseline evidence informing the identification of key issues

Document Title	Year of Publication
Flood Risk Map for England	2026
Chichester Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	2023
Chichester Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	2023

3.4.1 Fluvial and surface water flood risks are prevalent within the neighbourhood area (see **Appendix A**). It is anticipated that climate change will increase the variability of weather and the frequency of extreme weather events. Particular local issues include:

- Unmapped flooding points of underground springs that arise in winter in Newpound Lane, Kirdford Road and Durbans Road.
- Surface water flooding at all access points on roads into Wisborough Green, with the village cut off on occasions.

3.4.2 The impacts of climate change have the potential to affect the health and wellbeing of residents in the neighbourhood area. It will be important for the Plan to combat inequalities and health risks associated with climate change in the planning and design of new development.

3.5 Climate Change Mitigation

Table 3.1: Baseline evidence informing the identification of key issues

Document Title	Year of Publication
UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions statistics (2005-2024	2026
Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Guidance	2023
UK Climate Change Risk Assessment	2022

3.5.1 Chichester District Council declared a climate emergency in July 2019, resolving to support local authorities (and, by extension, neighbourhood groups) to help tackle climate change through plan-making where possible.

3.5.2 Emissions from transport are a primary contributor to carbon emissions within the neighbourhood area, highlighting the need for spatial planning and infrastructure upgrades to reduce car dependency and increase active travel uptake.

3.5.3 Opportunities to influence per capita emissions by encouraging integrated and connected development has the potential to reduce the need to travel and supports travel by more sustainable modes.

3.5.4 The nearest mains gas supply is in Billingshurst. Without this connection, many in the village are reliant upon electricity, not only for cooking, but also heating. The electricity supply to the village has created difficulties for many, with fluctuations and short-term power cuts being experienced. Supporting opportunities to improve energy resilience and efficiency within the neighbourhood area (i.e., from alternative renewable sources, such as solar and heat pumps) are key considerations for plan making.

3.6 Community Wellbeing

Table 3.1: Baseline evidence informing the identification of key issues

Document Title	Year of Publication
Natural England Green Infrastructure Map	2026
Community Consultation Displays	2026
English Indices of Deprivation	2025
Housing Density Evidence Study	2024
Chichester Open Space, Sports Facilities, Recreation Study and Playing Pitch Strategy	2024
Public Health Data Profile 2024/25 (Chichester)	2024
Local Green Space - Justification Report	2022
Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment	2022
Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment	2021

Document Title	Year of Publication
HELAA Parish Maps	2021
Nomis - Census Data	2021

3.6.1 Loxwood, Kirdford, and Wisborough Green are described as *"service villages"* in Policy S2 Settlement Hierarchy in the Local Plan. A service village is considered to have a range of local services and facilities such as, but not exclusively, a school, village shop, a medical centre, public transport facilities and recreational facilities. The existing services, facilities, and amenities within the neighbourhood area support community vitality and the quality of life of residents, with the availability and longer-term viability of community assets essential for continued growth.

3.6.2 Housing affordability and the availability of sustainable and appropriate dwellings for residents are key concerns for the local community.

3.6.3 Population growth may increase demand for healthcare, housing, education, and community facilities, requiring coordinated infrastructure planning. Pressure on the existing primary school is a particular concern. Growth of residents aged 65+ is also likely to place increased strain on healthcare, social care, dementia services, and age-friendly infrastructure.

3.6.4 The neighbourhood area has a number of strong green and blue infrastructure assets that can contribute towards the physical and mental wellbeing of residents. This includes local woodlands, waterways, green spaces, and open areas.

3.6.5 Rural areas across Chichester District, including the neighbourhood area, experience inequalities in terms of public transport connectivity, affordability of housing, and accessibility to services and facilities.

3.6.6 The neighbourhood area is primarily a rural environment reliant on traditional rural economies such as farming, forestry, and fishing industries. However, the neighbourhood area also has some small-scale industry other than farming, which includes retail businesses, a light industrial area at Newpound, self-catering holiday accommodation, and Fishers Farm Park tourist attraction.

3.7 Historic Environment

Table 3.1: Baseline evidence informing the identification of key issues

Document Title	Year of Publication
West Sussex Historic Environment Record	2026
Chichester Archaeology & Historic Environment Record	2026
Historic England - Heritage at Risk Register	2026
Wisborough Green Conservation Area - Character Appraisal and Management Proposals	2010
MAGIC Interactive Map	2002

3.7.1 The neighbourhood area has a range of designated and non-designated assets and areas (see **Appendix A**), including 95 Listed Buildings, one Scheduled Monument, and nearly 30 unlisted buildings which have been identified on the Townscape Appraisal Map in the Conservation Area Character Appraisal as being positive buildings of townscape merit. These must be protected from inappropriate development that could damage their character, setting, and heritage significance. In particular, the historical aspect and prominence of the village church and the Wisborough Green Conservation Area (where 46 Listed Building are located).

3.7.2 Development should impact positively upon and seek opportunities to enhance public understanding of heritage and archaeological assets within the neighbourhood area.

3.7.3 Climate change poses a growing threat to heritage assets through flooding, erosion, material decay, and waterlogging.

3.8 Landscape

Table 3.1: Baseline evidence informing the identification of key issues

Document Title	Year of Publication
Special Qualities of the South Downs National Park	2024
Local Green Gap Assessment	2020
Chichester Landscape Capacity Study - North East	2019
Wisborough Green - Village Design Statement	2018
Wisborough Green Character Area Appraisals	2013
National Character Area Profile 120 - Wealden Greensand	2013
National Character Area Profile 121 - Low Weald	2013
West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment	2003
MAGIC Interactive Map	2002

3.8.1 Contributing to the evidence base for the Chichester Local Plan, the Landscape Capacity Study (LCS) considers the sensitivity and capacity of areas in terms of their potential to accommodate new development. There are areas of land surrounding Wisborough Green village which have a 'medium' to 'high' sensitivity to development and a 'low' capacity for change.

3.8.2 Tranquillity and dark skies are vulnerable to light pollution and visual intrusion, with proposals affecting primarily rural locations (such as the neighbourhood area) potentially eroding these qualities. Careful design will be required to avoid fragmentation or loss of characteristics that contribute to the local character of rural environments.

3.8.3 There are a range of landscape features present within the neighbourhood area which contribute to the character and quality of the landscape, detailed within the 14-character area appraisals. These features should be safeguarded where possible.

3.8.4 Climate change may alter landscape patterns and increase the risk of drought or flooding, particularly affecting habitat networks which contribute to the special qualities of both local character and protected landscapes (e.g., the setting of the South Downs National Park - see **Appendix A**).

3.8.5 The expansion of the village has the potential to threaten open spaces and local green gaps, which may adversely impact local distinctiveness and sense of place. This requires careful spatial planning to limit adverse impacts on the landscape. Local factors include the visual character of the village (e.g., important local views and vistas) and the approach to the village from the surrounding areas including footpaths, bridleways and green lanes.

3.9 Natural Resources (Soil and Water)

Table 3.1: Baseline evidence informing the identification of key issues

Document Title	Year of Publication
Land Use Framework for England	2026
Predictive Agricultural Land Classification Map for England	2025
Environment Agency Catchment Data Explorer	2025
Estimated Wastewater Treatment Headroom	2024
Chichester Water Quality Assessment	2018

3.9.1 Development within the open countryside could result in the permanent loss of best and most versatile agricultural land (see **Appendix A**). This could impact food production, landscape characteristics and soil quality.

3.9.2 Redevelopment of brownfield sites offers opportunities to reduce urban sprawl, utilise existing infrastructure, and support regeneration. It is acknowledged that opportunities for brownfield development are limited across the neighbourhood area due to the availability of sites.

3.9.3 Population growth and village expansion may increase demand for waste processing infrastructure. The capacity of existing facilities (e.g., the Newpound Lane sewerage system) may potentially need to be expanded to meet future needs, while ensuring that any new facilities do not adversely affect nearby communities or the environment.

3.9.4 Climate change may increase the risk of soil erosion, drought, and flooding, affecting soil structure, moisture levels, and agricultural productivity, especially in areas containing best and most versatile agricultural land.

3.9.5 With regards to water resources, Wisborough Green is surrounded by a variety of wetland - rivers, tributaries, a section of canal, ponds, springs and water meadows. A significant proportion of water bodies across the country do not achieve good status, with most classified as moderate, poor or bad. Future development should ensure that no further deterioration occurs and should contribute to achieving good status as required by the Water Framework Directive. Locally, this is most likely to be achieved through incorporating natural drainage solutions and expanding natural features and

permeable materials through the design of new development areas, reducing run-off into nearby water resources.

3.9.6 Increased housing and associated infrastructure could lead to higher water consumption and wastewater generation, which may place additional pressures on water treatment facilities and local watercourses. Whilst this is primarily outside of the remit of the Plan to address, opportunities to support resource efficiency and circular economy principles through the design of new development areas should be encouraged.

3.10 Transport

Table 3.1: Baseline evidence informing the identification of key issues

Document Title	Year of Publication
Chichester Transport Assessment	2024
Chichester Parking Strategy (2023-2027)	2023

3.10.1 There is a high reliance on private vehicles within the neighbourhood area, and more broadly across rural environments in the district, reflecting limited availability, frequency and coverage of alternative transportation (primarily comprising a community-run minibus). The impact of strategic scale growth in the wider area (e.g., at Billinghurst and Adversane) may also increase traffic flow through the village (primarily the A272).

3.10.2 There are existing congestion and traffic issues along the local road network, particularly along School Road, Newpound Lane, Kirdford Road, and Durbans Road. Contributing factors include roadside parking during school drop-off, sporting events around The Green, narrowness and pinch points, blind corners, sunken lanes, and a limited number of pavements. Additionally, throughout the centre of the village and on the estates, the speed limit is 30 mph which is often exceeded.

3.10.3 Local road networks are vulnerable to climate change impacts, including flooding, overheating and infrastructure degradation (e.g., potholes, subsidence, and general erosion).

3.10.4 Opportunities to expand active travel networks across the neighbourhood area, particularly between new development areas and the village centre, should be encouraged. This will help to facilitate opportunities for walking, wheeling, and cycling.

4. Proposed SEA Framework and Methodology

4.1 The proposed SEA objectives, established through the identification of key issues and environmental objectives as part of the scoping exercise, are brought together to create one framework, the SEA Framework, and are presented in **Table 4.1** below.

4.2 The SEA Framework provides a methodology and consistent approach for the appraisal of the Plan. The proposed SEA Framework will be used to appraise the options and proposals the Plan, and findings will be fed back to the neighbourhood group to inform plan development.

Table 4.1: SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions

SEA theme	SEA objective(s)	Assessment questions (will the Plan help to…)
Air Quality	Support improvements to air quality and reduce exposure to air pollution.	• … minimise traffic congestion and encourage active travel and public transport use to reduce key pollutant emissions, particularly nitrogen dioxide (NO_2)? • …support reduction in air pollution for key pollutants, including carbon dioxide emissions from road transport by 2030, contributing to net-zero ambitions? • …ensure that new development, particularly housing, incorporates design considerations which minimise exposure to poor air quality?
Biodiversity	Maintain, create and enhance the extent and quality of biodiversity habitats and networks within and surrounding the neighbourhood area, protect species diversity, and deliver net gains.	• …avoid or mitigate adverse impacts on internationally and nationally designated sites and their integrity? • …improve the condition of designated sites with indicators showing progress towards favourable condition in SSSIs? • … contribute towards the Environmental Improvement Plan's target of protecting 30 per cent of the UK's land by 2030 to restore nature and promote species abundance? • …protect and enhance locally important sites? • …contribute towards Local Nature Recovery Networks and delivering net gains for nature, including via supporting connected and resilient green and blue

SEA theme	SEA objective(s)	Assessment questions (will the Plan help to…)
		infrastructure networks through habitat creation and restoration. • …prevent habitat loss, fragmentation, and degradation, maintaining or improving connectivity through wildlife corridors and ecological networks? • …promote biodiversity net gain by encouraging habitat creation, restoration, and enhancement in development proposals? • …support the conservation of priority habitats and protected species?
Climate Change Adaptation	Increase resilience to the potential effects of climate change, including flood risk, extreme weather events, and natural hazards.	• …avoid or reduce flood risk from fluvial, reservoir, groundwater and surface water sources, particularly in vulnerable areas? • …incorporate natural drainage solutions, permeable materials, and water management systems to improve resilience to flood risks? • …help reduce overheating and surface water flooding by protecting and expanding green infrastructure, expanding permeable surface cover and increasing tree cover (e.g. via urban greening / native planting)? • …increase resilience to drought by supporting water efficiency, water reuse, and sustainable water management?
Climate Change Mitigation	Mitigate climate change by supporting the transition to net zero emissions, increasing efficiency and reducing energy use.	• …ensure new developments achieve high energy efficiency with monitored performance? • … reduce greenhouse gas emissions to accelerate to net zero and work to prepare the natural environment for the effects of climate change? • …expand electric vehicle charging infrastructure to support the shift to electric vehicles? • …consider the potential for local renewable energy generation? • …promote sustainable transport options that reduce transport emissions?
Community Wellbeing	Support the delivery of a range of housing types and tenures to	• …increase the supply of affordable and accessible housing for all residents,

SEA theme	SEA objective(s)	Assessment questions (will the Plan help to…)
	meet local needs, with a focus on affordability. Promote and protect health, wellbeing, and safety by enhancing green infrastructure and creating safe and sustainable communities. Support a productive, diverse and resilient economy that provides opportunities for all.	including lower-income and vulnerable groups? • …deliver a balanced housing mix that meets the needs of different household types? • …support the delivery of housing in locations with good access to services, facilities and sustainable transport modes? • …ensure housing growth is supported by adequate infrastructure, services, and community facilities? • … increase the availability of accessible, inclusive, and interconnected green and blue open spaces for nature for everyone within a 15-minute walk from home? • …reduce health, crime and living environment inequalities, particularly in the most deprived areas? • …support physical and mental health outcomes across different population groups? • …enable flexible working through digital infrastructure and facilitating adaptable workspaces through design? • …ensure sufficient and appropriate employment land is available to meet current and future business needs?
Historic Environment	Conserve and enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets and areas (and their setting) within the neighbourhood area.	• …safeguard designated and non-designated heritage assets form harm or inappropriate development? • …improve the condition, diversity, and character of the neighbourhood area's historic environment and heritage features? • …respect and enhance the character, setting, and integrity of conservation areas and historic viewpoints? • …address climate change risks to heritage through sustainable conservation and adaption measures? • …promote public access, understanding and enjoyment of the neighbourhood area's historic environment?

SEA theme	SEA objective(s)	Assessment questions (will the Plan help to…)
Landscape	Protect and enhance the character and quality of the landscape and public realm, including the setting of protected landscapes.	• …improve the condition, diversity and character of the local landscape and villagescape, safeguarding distinctiveness and sense of place? • …respect the special qualities and sensitivities of both the rural and built environments within the neighbourhood area (and their interrelationships)? • …preserve tranquillity and dark night skies, avoiding significant increases in noise or light pollution? • …integrate and promote green infrastructure, including tree planting, parks and natural corridors to support biodiversity, recreation, and climate resilience? • …create opportunities to enhance the quality of the public realm?
Natural Resources (Soil and Water)	Protect soil and mineral resources, promote efficient land use and manage waste effectively. Protect and enhance water quality and resources, supporting the application of nature-based solutions and reducing pollution risks.	• …safeguard best and most versatile agricultural land from unnecessary loss or degradation, prioritising development on brownfield or lower-quality land where possible? • …minimise waste generated during development, supporting circular economy through waste management and ‘design for life’ principles and promoting the sustainable use/production of natural resources? • …safeguard mineral resources within Mineral Safeguarding/ Consultation Areas, ensuring that non-mineral development does not prevent future extraction? • …facilitate improvements to the ecological status of local water bodies, supporting the achievement of ‘good’ status as required by the Water Framework Directive? • …minimise pollution risks from nitrate vulnerable zones, urban runoff, construction, and wastewater discharge? • …reduce water consumption through incorporation of water-efficient technologies such as rainwater harvesting and greywater recycling?

SEA theme	SEA objective(s)	Assessment questions (will the Plan help to…)
Transport	Encourage a modal shift to sustainable and active transport use. Improve accessibility to essential services and facilities within the neighbourhood area.	• …reduce reliance on private car use and encourage modal shift to public and active transport modes (e.g., walking, wheeling and cycling)? • …integrate climate resilience measures to protect key transport infrastructure from flooding, heat damage, and other extreme weather impacts? • …establish opportunities to reduce congestion and traffic through the village centre? • …minimise road safety risks by reducing reliance on private car travel and supporting active travel uptake?

5. Next Steps

5.1 Subsequent stages for the SEA process

5.1.1 The next stage will involve exploring reasonable alternatives for the Plan. The findings of this work will be fed back to the neighbourhood group so that they might be taken into consideration when finalising the Regulation 14 (draft) version of the Plan. The draft version of the Plan will then be subject to appraisal, and the SEA Environmental Report will be prepared for consultation alongside it.

5.1.2 The SEA Environmental Report will contain three key sections, as follows:

- **Summary of SEA scoping:** including the comments received from the SEA scoping consultation and how these have been considered and addressed through the SEA.
- **Consideration of reasonable alternatives:** evaluating the potential sustainability trade-offs associated with taking forward different options and approaches, to support neighbourhood plan making.
- **Appraisal of the draft Plan:** undertaking a review of Plan policies and providing a narrative on how these policies perform in sustainability terms. The SEA findings may provide recommendations (where appropriate) to strengthen and enhance policies.

5.2 Consultation on the Scoping Report

5.2.1 Public involvement through consultation is a key element of the SEA process. At this scoping stage, the SEA Regulations require consultation with statutory consultation bodies but not full consultation with the public.

5.2.2 The statutory consultation bodies are the Environment Agency, Historic England, and Natural England. This scoping report has been released to these three statutory consultees, and Chichester District Council, for their comment.

5.2.3 Consultees are invited to comment on the content of this scoping report, particularly the evidence base for the SEA, the identified key issues, and the proposed SEA Framework.

5.2.4 The consultation period runs from 10th September 2026 to 15th October 2026, incorporating the statutory five-week period for scoping consultation. Comments on the Scoping Report should be sent to:

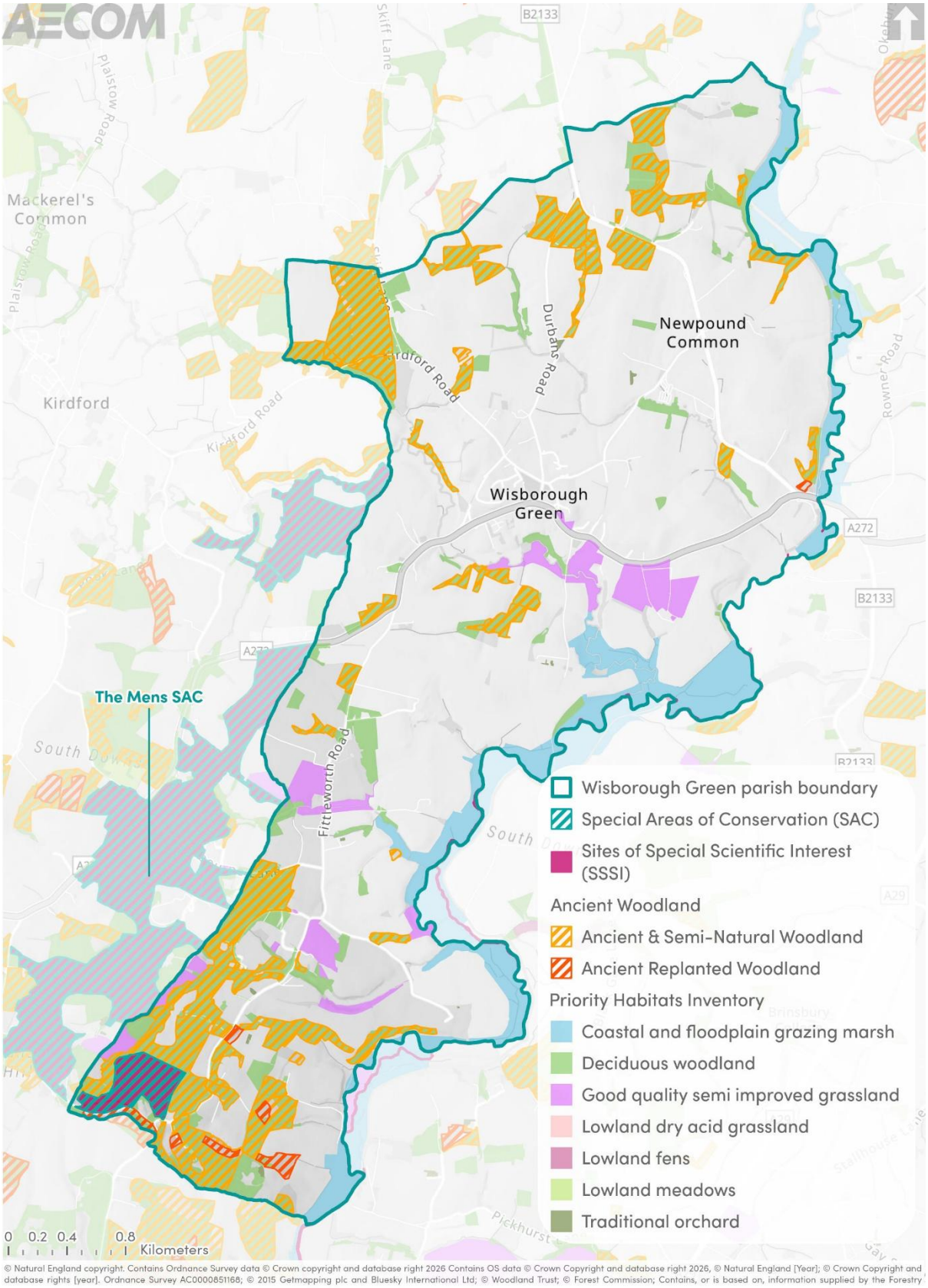
Ryan Putt, AECOM

Email address: ryan.putt@aecom.com

5.2.5 All comments received on the scoping report will be reviewed and will inform the development of the SEA where appropriate.

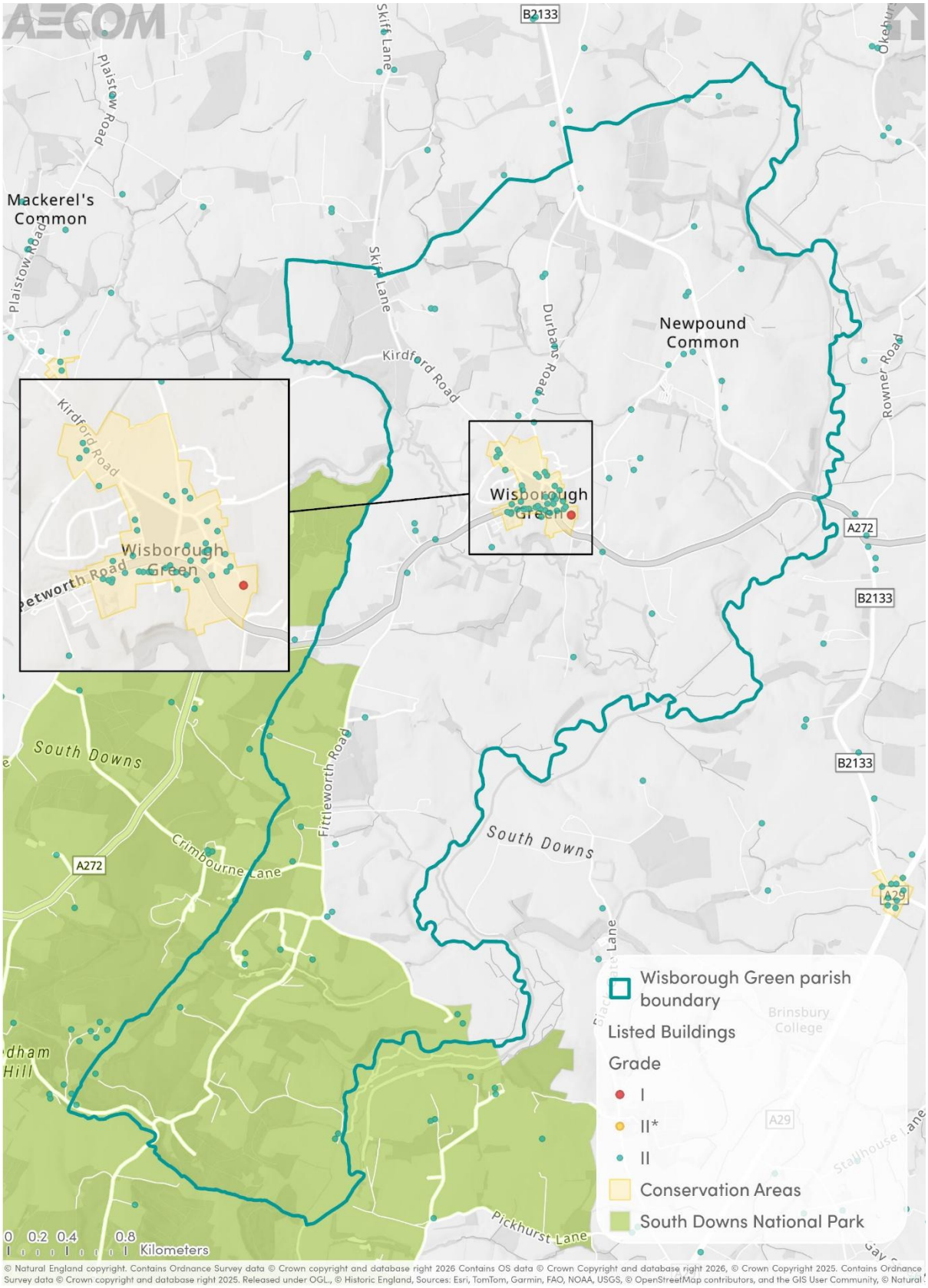
Appendix A Constraints mapping

A.1 Ecological designations



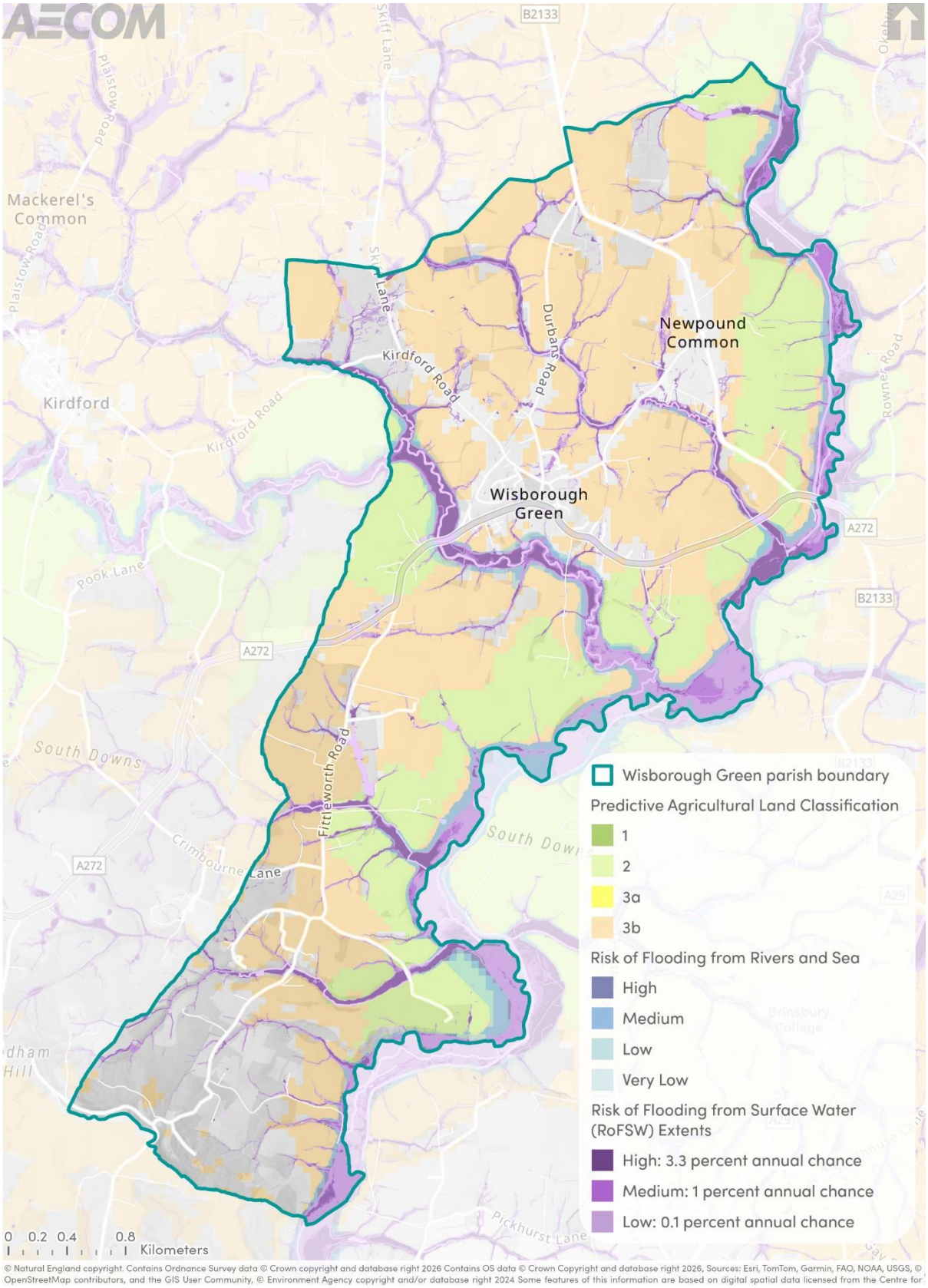
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A.2 Heritage and landscape designations



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A.3 Soil and water resources (including flood risks)



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