

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan

Scoping Report

February 2022

Quality information

Prepared by	Checked by	Verified by	Approved by
Fraser Young Graduate Environmental Consultant	Cheryl Beattie Principal Environmental Planner		
Emily Baker Graduate Environmental Planner			

Revision History

Revision	Revision date	Details	Name	Position
V1	March 2022	First draft for internal review	Fraser Young	Graduate Environmental Consultant
V2	March 2022	First draft for QB review	Andy Robinson	Langton Brook Consultants

Prepared for:

Hoxne Parish Council

Prepared by:

AECOM Infrastructure & Environment UK Limited
3rd Floor, Portwall Place
Portwall Lane
Bristol BS1 6NA
United Kingdom

T: +44 117 901 7000

aecom.com

© 2022 AECOM Infrastructure & Environment UK Limited. All Rights Reserved.

This document has been prepared by AECOM Limited (“AECOM”) in accordance with its contract with Locality (the “Client”) and in accordance with generally accepted consultancy principles, the budget for fees and the terms of reference agreed between AECOM and the Client. Any information provided by third parties and referred to herein has not been checked or verified by AECOM, unless otherwise expressly stated in the document. AECOM shall have no liability to any third party that makes use of or relies upon this document.

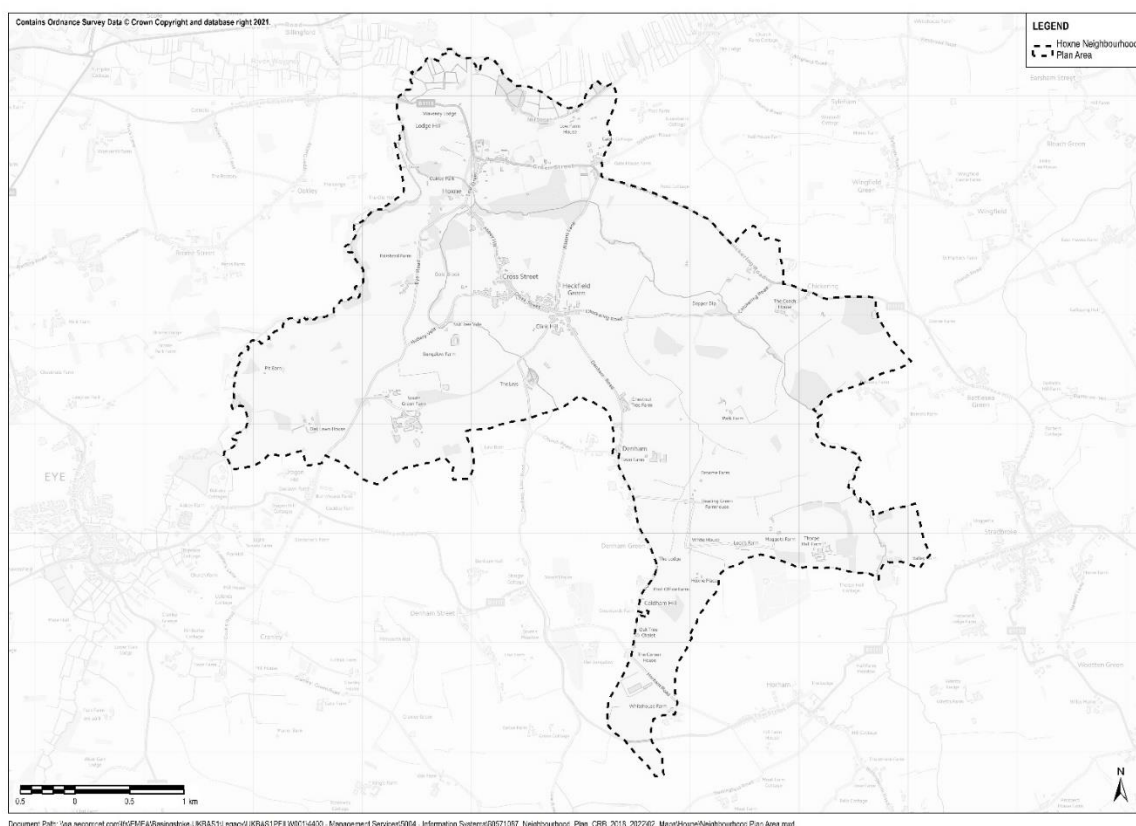
Table of Contents

1.	Introduction	1
2.	Air quality	4
3.	Biodiversity.....	7
4.	Climate change	19
5.	Landscape	33
6.	Historic environment	41
7.	Land, soil, and water resources	50
8.	Community wellbeing	56
9.	Transport.....	63
10.	Next steps	72
	Appendix A SEA Framework.....	73

1. Introduction

- 1.1 AECOM has been commissioned to undertake an SEA for the Hoxne NP.
- 1.2 The HNP is being prepared under the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, and in the context of the local development framework of Mid Suffolk District Council.
- 1.3 The Plan area was designated in 2019 and is depicted in **Figure 1.1**, overleaf.

Figure 1.1 Neighbourhood area



Planning policy context

- 1.4 The Parish falls within the boundary of Mid Suffolk district. The adopted Mid Suffolk local planning framework consists of:
 - The Core Strategy Focused Review Document adopted in 2012; and
 - The saved policies of the 1998 Local Plan.
- 1.5 Mid Suffolk District Council are currently working with Babergh District Council to develop a Joint Local Plan (JLP). The JLP is at a relatively progressed stage of development, having been submitted for examination at the end of March 2021.
- 1.6 Policy SP03 (Settlement Hierarchy) of the submitted JLP categorises Hoxne as a 'hinterland village' within the settlement hierarchy. Policy SP04 (Housing Spatial Distribution) identifies a total of 9% growth in hinterland villages over the

plan period 2018-2037. Table 04 identifies that for Hoxne this equates to a total of 43 new homes, 13 of which had already received planning permission as of April 2018, leaving a residual need to identify land for a further 30 homes.

- 1.7 Policy LS01 of the submitted JLP allocates the 'land south of Denham Road' for 30 homes to meet the identified residual need. However, in December 2021, correspondence between Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils and the Inspectors (document G09¹ and G10²) indicate that the emerging JLP will be divided into two parts, in which the existing housing allocation policies (including Policy LS01) would be deleted from the emerging plan and the settlement boundaries in the adopted 1998 Mid Suffolk Local Plan and 2008 Core Strategy (as opposed to proposed) policies map would be retained. A review of the settlement hierarchy is also likely to be undertaken.
- 1.8 Certain spatial elements of the submitted plan are considered unsound at present and would require further review with a more up-to-date and robust evidence base. They are thus likely to be considered in the preparation and adoption of a 'Part 2' JLP which is expected to start as soon as possible after the adoption of 'Part 1' of the emerging JLP.
- 1.9 It is anticipated that at a minimum, land for 30 new homes within Hoxne will still be sought and these are being planned for in the development of the HNP.

SEA explained

- 1.10 SEA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the potential impacts of an emerging plan, and potential alternatives in terms of key environmental issues. The aim of SEA is to inform and influence the plan-making process with a view to avoiding and mitigating potential negative impacts and maximising the potential for positive effects. Through this approach, the SEA for the Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan seeks to maximise the emerging plan's contribution to sustainable development.
- 1.11 SEA is undertaken to meet the specific requirements prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations).
- 1.12 The Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan has been screened in by Mid Suffolk District Council as requiring SEA due to residential development proposed within areas of sensitivity, including the Hoxne Conservation Area. Historic England have agreed with this conclusion noting the potential for significant effects upon the historic environment.
- 1.13 The next stage of SEA (this report) seeks to establish a suggested scope for the SEA. A key procedural requirement of the SEA Regulations is to present this scope for the SEA, so that the designated authorities (Historic England, Natural England, and the Environment Agency) can provide timely comment.

¹ Available at: <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Strategic-Planning/JLPExamination/CoreDocLibrary/G-ExaminationCorrespondence/G09-Letter-Inspectors-to-BMSDC.pdf>

² Available at : <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Strategic-Planning/JLPExamination/CoreDocLibrary/G-ExaminationCorrespondence/G10-Letter-BMSDC-to-Inspectors.pdf>

SEA scoping explained

1.14 Developing the draft scope for the SEA as presented in this report has involved the following steps:

- Exploring the policy context for the Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan and SEA to summarise the key messages arising.
- Establishing the baseline for the SEA (i.e., the current and future situation in the area in the absence of the Neighbourhood Plan) to help identify the plan's likely significant effects.
- Identifying particular problems or opportunities ('issues') that should be a focus of the SEA; and
- Considering this information, developing a SEA framework comprising SEA objectives and assessment questions, which can then be used as a guiding framework for the subsequent assessment.

1.15 The scope is explored and presented under a series of key environmental themes as follows:

- Air quality
- Biodiversity
- Climate change (including flood risk)
- Landscape
- Land, soil and water resources
- Community wellbeing
- Historic environment
- Transportation and movement

1.16 The selected environmental themes incorporate the 'SEA topics' suggested by Annex I (f) of the SEA Directive.³ These were refined to reflect a broad understanding of the anticipated scope of plan effects. The discussion of the scoping information for each theme is presented in **Chapters 2 to 10**, and the proposed SEA framework is brought together as a whole in **Appendix A**. Each proposal within the emerging Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan will be assessed consistently using this framework.

³ The SEA Directive (Directive 2001/42/EC) is 'of a procedural nature' (para 9 of the Directive preamble) and does not set out to prescribe particular issues that should and should not be a focus, beyond requiring a focus on 'the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors'

2. Air quality

2.1 This theme focuses on air pollution, in particular; air quality exceedances (AQMAs) and air quality issues associated with the main road network.

Policy context

2.2 **Table 2.1** (below) presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan SEA.

Table 2.1 Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to air quality

Document Title	Year of publication
<u>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)</u>	2021
<u>The Clean Air Strategy</u>	2019
<u>UK plan for tackling roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations</u>	2017
<u>A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment</u>	2018
<u>Mid Suffolk Core Strategy (CS)</u>	2008
<u>Mid Suffolk Core Strategy Review</u>	2012
<u>Regulation 19 'Pre-Submission' draft Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan (JLP)</u>	2020
<u>Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils 2020 Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR)</u>	2020

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

- The Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan should have regard to the NPPF, which predominantly seeks early planning to reduce/ mitigate air quality impacts in development and to take advantage of opportunities to improve air quality. Measures to improve air quality include traffic and travel management and green infrastructure provision. Strategic development is expected to be focused at locations that have or will be provided with high levels of accessibility; supporting both a reduced need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. Smaller-scale development should consider the potential for cumulative effects in relation to air quality.
- The Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan should also have regard to the emerging Joint Local Plan which contains policies relating to air quality, such as Policy SP08 (Strategic Infrastructure Provision).
- Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) are declared in areas which exceed national objectives for levels of particulates, nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide, ozone, benzene, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, butadiene, carbon monoxide, lead and/ or nitrogen oxides. The Air Quality ASRs for Mid Suffolk and Babergh demonstrate no continued or significant exceedances, and therefore no AQMAs are declared within Mid Suffolk.

- To improve air quality across the UK, national strategies have in the last few decades focused on regulatory frameworks, investment by industry in cleaner processes and a shift in the fuel mix towards cleaner forms of energy (largely at point sources). Whilst there are dedicated strategies to reducing roadside emissions (as a significant source of nitrogen dioxide emissions), recent objectives outlined in the Clean Air Strategy seek to recognise wider sources (including smaller contributors and diffuse sources) that contribute to poor air quality. This includes power generation, heating our homes, producing food, manufacturing consumer goods, and powering transport.

Baseline summary

- 2.4 In line with the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) as set out in Section 82 of the Environment Act (1995), Mid Suffolk District Council is required to assess Air Quality standards within the region on an annual basis. In this regard, there are no Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) within Hoxne Parish.
- 2.5 In addition, the main transport route (the A140) connecting Hoxne Parish to Brome and other neighbouring towns and parishes is noted to be non-significant to air quality pollution, according to the most recent Air Quality Status Report (2020).⁴
- 2.6 However, it should be noted that there are some areas of local congestion which could be detrimental to air quality. Localised areas are highlighted in the draft Plan, including areas surrounding St. Edmund's Primary School. Traffic congestion in the Parish is explored in more detail in **Chapter 10**.
- 2.7 The Parish Council has contributed substantially to traffic calming on the B1118 and on the junction of Low Street and Goldbrook. The extent and speed of general and HGV traffic extending through the Parish is a major concern of local people. There are limits to the extent that these issues can be addressed through the Neighbourhood Development Plan but a community policy to support measures to reduce the impact of traffic may be appropriate.

Future baseline

- 2.8 Although not significant in scale, future growth in the Hoxne Neighbourhood area will ultimately affect the levels of traffic and congestion experienced to some extent, and in the absence of suitable planning and mitigation this could lead to a deterioration in air quality. Positive planning could also be beneficial for air quality through opportunities to improve accessibility, particularly in terms of active travel and encouraging more local journeys and sustainable connections.
- 2.9 The closest AQMA is Breckland AQMA (declared 09/05/2005) which is designated for Particulate Matter (PM10) exceedances⁵. Future development in Hoxne has the potential to induce subsequent impacts on this AQMA via the A143 and connecting A1066 road. Future growth in Hoxne which may lead to

⁴ Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council (2020): 'Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR)' [online] available at: <https://www.babergh.gov.uk/assets/Environment/ASR-2020.pdf>

⁵ DEFRA (2022) Air Quality Interactive Map [online] available at [AQMAs interactive map \(defra.gov.uk\)](https://www.defra.gov.uk/air-quality/interactive-map/)

increased emissions at Breckland AQMA should consider appropriate mitigation.

Key issues

- 2.10 There are no AQMAs declared within the Neighbourhood area, or significant air pollution issues associated with the main B1118 trunk road north of the Parish. However, localised congestion is a minor issue in Hoxne – as discussed further in **Chapter 10**.
- 2.11 Increased congestion and reduced air quality have the potential to negatively affect the health of future residents. Such effects will be explored under the ‘community wellbeing’ SEA theme.
- 2.12 The Neighbourhood Plan also presents opportunities to enhance accessibility and support more local and sustainable journeys / connections around Hoxne. These opportunities will be explored in more depth under the ‘transportation’ theme.
- 2.13 New development in Westbury can induce pressure on road capacity and can potentially contribute to increased traffic and congestion on both local roads and roads within the nearby main towns.
- 2.14 Although there are no AQMAs in the Hoxne Neighbourhood area, residents are likely to travel through Breckland AQMA (primarily via the A143 and A1066) to access goods, services, employment opportunities which has the potential to negatively impact this designated area.

SEA objective

- 2.15 With regards to the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objective and assessment questions in relation to air quality:

Table 2.2: Proposed SEA objective for air quality

SEA objective	Assessment questions
Improve air quality in the Hoxne Neighbourhood area.	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the use of sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport? Implement measures (such as appropriate planting and provision of green infrastructure) which will help support air quality in the Hoxne Neighbourhood area

3. Biodiversity

3.1 This theme focuses on nature conservation designations, habitats, and species within and surrounding the Hoxne Neighbourhood area.

Policy context

3.2 **Table 3.1** (below) presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan SEA.

Table 3.1 Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to biodiversity

Document title	Year of publication
<u>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)</u>	2021
<u>The 25 Year Environment Plan</u>	2018
<u>Biodiversity 2020 Strategy</u>	2011
<u>Environment Act 2021</u>	2020
<u>UK Biodiversity Action Plan</u>	2007
<u>The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act</u>	2006
<u>Suffolk's Nature Strategy</u>	2015
<u>Mid Suffolk Core Strategy (CS)</u>	2008
<u>Mid Suffolk Core Strategy Review</u>	2012
<u>Regulation 19 'Pre-Submission' draft Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan (JLP)</u>	2020

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

- The Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan should have regard to the NPPF, which highlights that opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity. This includes utilising a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure at the wider catchment or landscape scale.
- Support is given through the Framework to establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures. Trees notably make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, and that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards).

- Over the past decade policy (e.g., The Natural Environment White Paper and Biodiversity 2020) has demonstrated a move away from the traditional approach of protecting biodiversity, to a wider landscape approach to enhancing biodiversity, as part of the overall aims to halt biodiversity loss. The 25 Year Environment Plan places emphasis on improvements to the natural environment; identifying the need to “*replenish depleted soil, plant trees, support wetlands and peatlands, rid seas and rivers of rubbish, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, cleanse the air of pollutants, develop cleaner, sustainable energy and protect threatened species and habitats.*” Working at a landscape scale transformation is expected to connect habitats into larger corridors for wildlife.
- The Environment Act 2021 (through amendments to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) will require all planning permissions in England (subject to exemptions) to be granted subject to a new general pre-commencement condition that requires approval of a biodiversity gain plan. The planning authority can only approve the biodiversity gain plan if the biodiversity value attributable to a development exceeds the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat by 10% which, for the purposes of the legislation, is known as the ‘*biodiversity gain objective*’.
- Suffolk’s Nature Strategy identifies nature priorities in relation to the natural environment, economic growth and health and wellbeing. Recommendations and actions are identified under these broad themes, relating specifically to protected sites, landscapes, habitats and species, green spaces, woodland and forestry, climate change, infrastructure, tourism, agriculture, water management, education, and neighbourhood plans. Specifically, Recommendation 26 identifies the opportunity for neighbourhood plans to conserve, enhance, and link Suffolk’s green and natural spaces.
- The Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan should also have regard to the adopted CS and the emerging JLP.

Baseline summary

Internationally designated sites

- 3.4 There are no internationally designated sites within the Hoxne Neighbourhood area. The closest is Redgrave and South Lopham Fen Ramsar site, which is located approximately 10.6km north-west of the Neighbourhood Plan boundary. The Redgrave and South Lopham Fen Ramsar designation is due to it being an ideal example of spring-fed lowland base-rich valley, which is remarkable for its lack of fragmentation and the range of rare and scarce invertebrates, including the Fen Raft spider (*Dolomedes plantarius*). The lateral and longitudinal zonation of the vegetation types are characteristic of valley mires which accounts for the widespread diversity of the site⁶.
- 3.5 Furthermore, this site is also a designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (Waveney and Little Ouse Valley) designated for its habitats: *Molinia* meadows on calcareous, peaty, or clayey-silt-laden soils, and Calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and species of the *Caricion davallianae*, and also, for

⁶ JNCC (2008) Redgrave and South Lopham Fens Ramsar Available at [untitled \(jncc.gov.uk\)](https://www.jncc.gov.uk)

supporting the Desmoulin's whorl snail *Vertigo moulinsiana*⁷. This site is managed by Suffolk Wildlife Trust as a Nature Reserve.

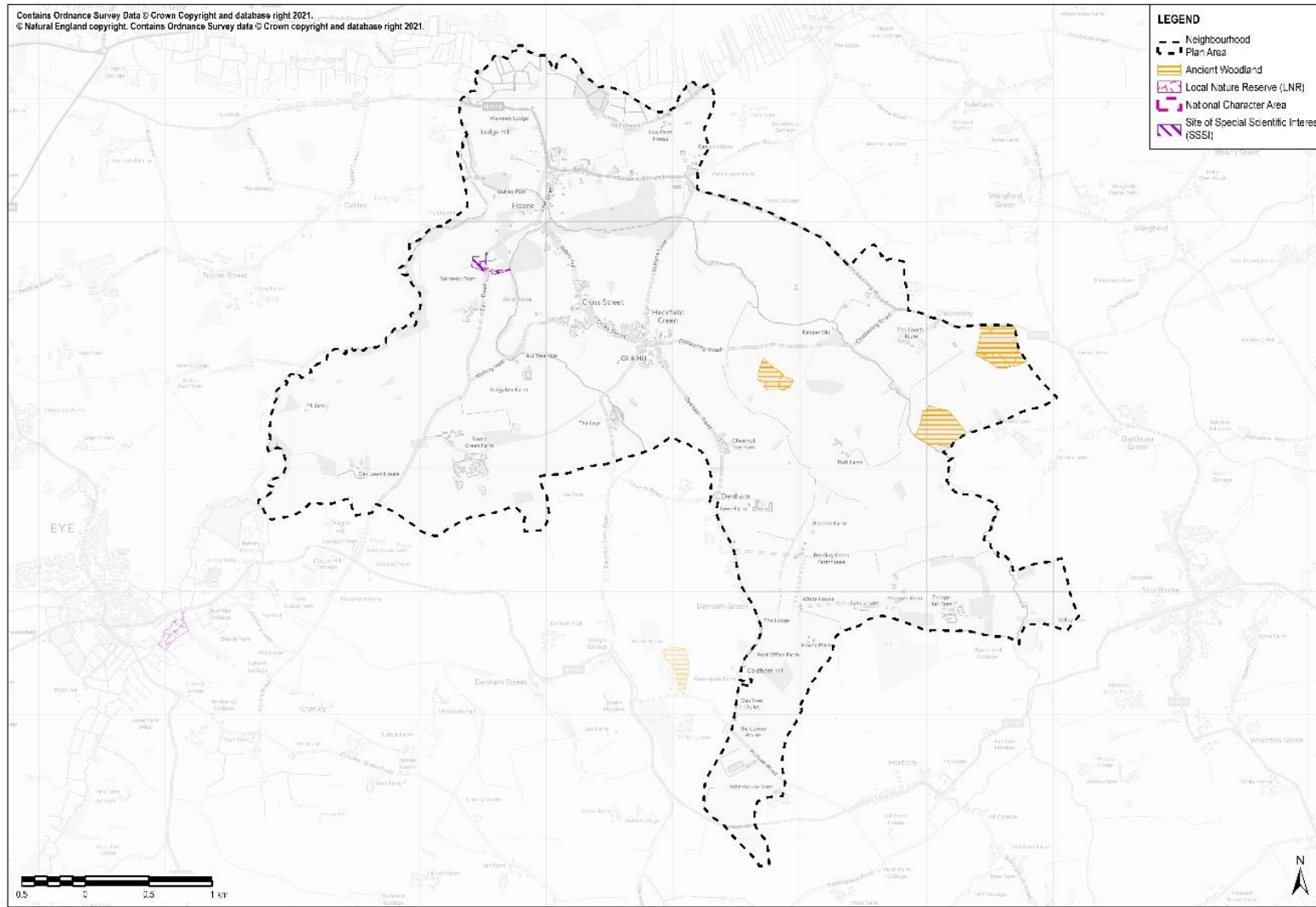
Nationally designated sites

- 3.6 There is one Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within Hoxne Neighbourhood area, Hoxne Brick Pit. Hoxne Brick Pit SSSI is a world-famous geological site; one of the most important Pleistocene sites in Britain; with research dating back to the 18th Century. The sediments are described as interglacial lacustrine deposits occupying a basin in the chalky till, overlain by fluviatile deposits penetrated by ice-wedge casts. The upper deposits contain abundant vertebrate material⁸.
- 3.7 Natural England's SSSI condition summary illustrates that Hoxne Brick Pit SSSI is 69.38% favourable and 30.62% unfavourable – declining. The unfavourable – declining unit of the SSSI encompasses a total area of 0.3872 ha. The assessment description justifies this rating, highlighting that the site is scrubbed over with small/medium sized trees and vegetation and is beginning to conceal the features of interest. Conversely, the assessment descriptions for both favourable units of the SSSI (0.5299 ha and 0.3476 ha) state that it is possible to easily create exposure on the sites and there are no damaging operations obscuring the exposure reserves.
- 3.8 Hoxne Brick Pit SSSI is located to the north-west of the Hoxne Neighbourhood area, as depicted in **Figure 3.1**, below.

⁷ JNCC (2021) Waveney and Little Ouse Valley SAC. Available at: [Waveney and Little Ouse Valley Fens - Special Areas of Conservation \(jncc.gov.uk\)](https://www.jncc.gov.uk)

⁸ Natural England (2022) Hoxne Brick Pit SSSI available at [SSSI detail \(naturalengland.org.uk\)](https://www.naturalengland.org.uk)

Figure 3.1 Nationally Designated Sites



- 3.9 Although there are no further designated SSSIs within the Hoxne Neighbourhood area, the Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) of Wortham Ling SSSI stretch across the western boundary of the Plan area (near Cookshill Wood). Wortham Ling SSSI is located approximately 7.1km north-west of the Hoxne plan area and is designated for its heath/acid grassland mosaic remains in favourable condition. The high rabbit population appears to be bucking the trend of other heaths in the area where numbers have crashed. The habitat remains open, being grazed short by the rabbits.
- 3.10 The Neighbourhood area includes areas of Ancient Woodland, notably Hoxne Wood, and The Slades, which are located to the south of the Plan area. These can be seen in **Figure 3.1** overleaf.

Locally important sites

- 3.11 County Wildlife Sites (CWSs) are areas known to be of county or regional importance for wildlife. They have a key role in the conservation of Suffolk's biodiversity and are important links in Suffolk's 'Living Landscape', as described on the Suffolk Wildlife Trust website⁹. Although CWS designations are non-statutory they are recognition of a site's high value for biodiversity.
- 3.12 Suffolk currently exhibits over 900 County Wildlife Sites representing approximately 2.6% of the county's land area. CWSs have been identified throughout Suffolk and range from small meadows, green lanes, dykes, and hedges through to much larger areas of ancient woodlands, heathland, greens, commons, and marsh. Outside of areas with statutory protection (such as SSSIs, Local and National Nature Reserves), CWSs are thus the most important areas for wildlife in Suffolk and can support both locally and nationally threatened wildlife species and habitats.
- 3.13 There are currently six County Wildlife Sites associated with the Hoxne Neighbourhood area. Five are located within the Parish boundary; Hoxne Wood, The Slades; Hoxne Meadow, Depperhaugh Wood, and Grove Wood. The final CWS overlaps with the adjacent Parish of Syleham; River Waveney. Extracts from the citations are listed below.
- 3.14 Hoxne Wood 3.84 ha: Ancient Woodland (Listed on Ancient Woodland Inventory). This small, isolated wood is an important feature in a largely arable landscape. It is dominated by hornbeam coppice, but also contains oak, ash, and sycamore with a small conifer plantation in the south eastern corner. There are also areas of dense blackthorn, although the understorey is sparse with mainly elder. Some less common woodland species such as ramsons, early purple orchid, and wood sedge can be found amongst mainly dog's mercury, nettle, primrose, bluebell, and lords-and ladies. The woodland is used for timber production and pheasant shooting.
- 3.15 The Slades (9.65 ha): Another Ancient Woodland (Listed on Ancient Woodland Inventory), dominated by hornbeam, with frequent ash, oak, and field maple with a dense canopy.
- 3.16 Hoxne Meadow (2.03ha): Lowland Meadow. This agriculturally unimproved meadow has borders of species-rich mature hedgerows and a stream running through the centre. Representative indicator species of this habitat are present

⁹ Suffolk Wildlife Trust (2019) County Wildlife Sites Available at: [County Wildlife Sites | Suffolk Wildlife Trust](#)

including pepper saxifrage, lesser burnet saxifrage, field wood rush, and cowslip, making this rare and declining habitat of high conservation value.

- 3.17 Depperhaugh Wood (9.02 ha): Ancient Woodland (Listed on Ancient Woodland Inventory). A large proportion of this wood is considered medieval in origin, enclosed by typical ancient woodland features of ditches and banks. The southern half is mainly hornbeam with some large, coppiced stools, along with ash, oak, and field maple. Spruce has been planted in the woodland, which has caused a depreciation in the shrub and herb layers by overshadowing. Dog's mercury dominates the woodland floor but there are some uncommon species such as wood melick and Midland hawthorn.
- 3.18 Grove Wood (14 ha): Ancient woodland (not Listed on Ancient Woodland Inventory). This woodland represents an important feature in a largely arable landscape. This woodland is also mainly comprised of hornbeam coppice with field maple, ash, and oak. There are old hornbeam pollards which testify to its age. Ground flora is largely dog's mercury, bramble, and nettle. The woodland is used for pheasant shooting.
- 3.19 River Waveney (8.02 Ha): River flora and fauna; One of five sections of the River Waveney selected for its importance for aquatic wildlife, with species-rich marginal flora such as pond sedge, reed, marsh marigold, and nodding bur-marigold providing habitat for wildfowl. Within the water course there is arrowhead, yellow water lily, and spike watermilfoil. The River Waveney supports a notable population of breeding kingfisher and hairy wood rush.
- 3.20 The principal ecological network throughout the parish is associated with the water courses, including the rivers Waveney and Dove and their associated habitats, as well as the Gold Brook and Chickering Beck. Continuous riparian habitat is associated with the river corridors marking the northern and western boundaries of the parish.

Network Enhancement Zones

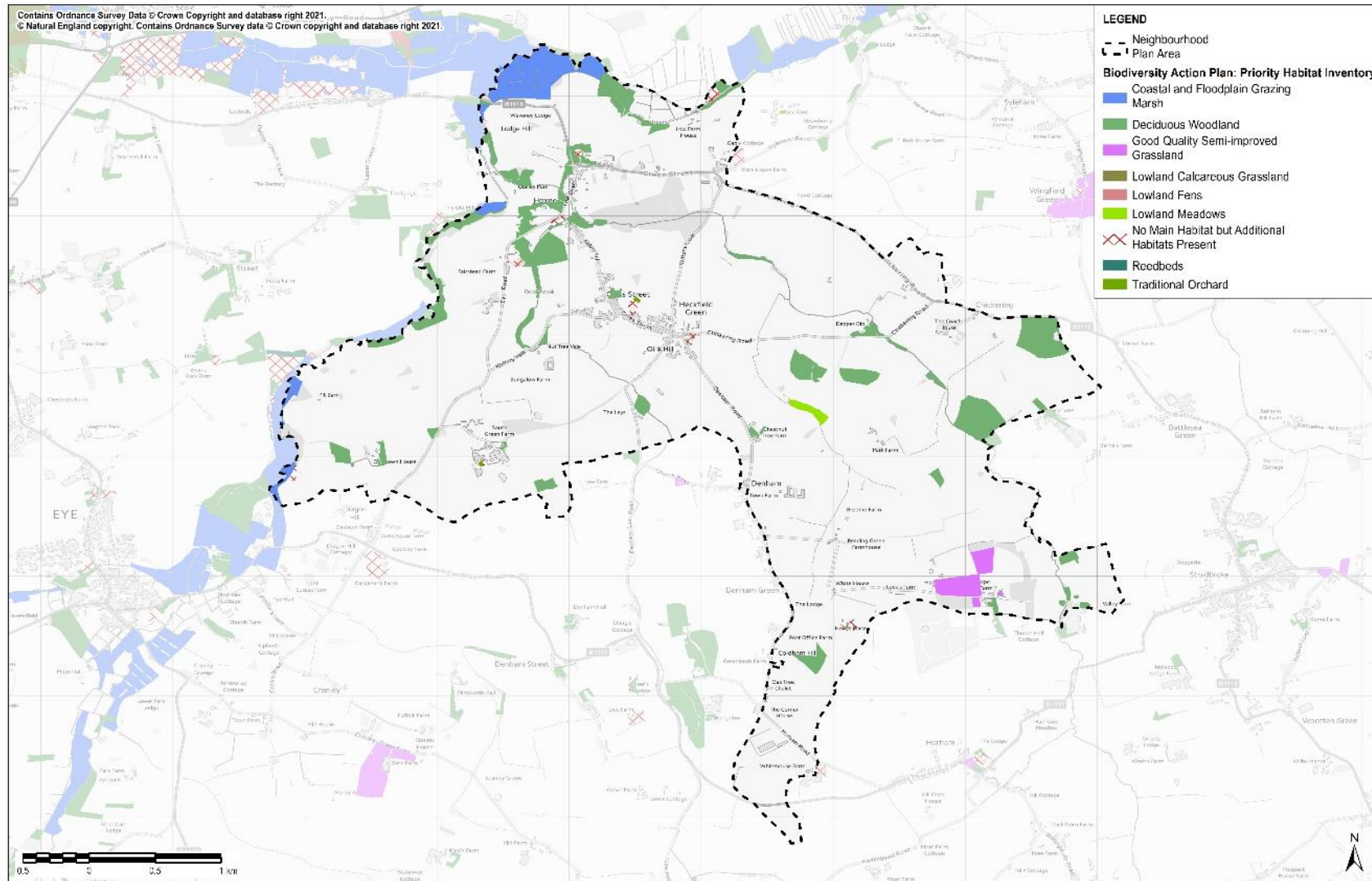
- 3.1 A series of habitat network maps have been collated by Natural England to provide a baseline for habitat creation, enhancement, and restoration. They also identify a number of 'Network Enhancement Zones' that are presented on Defra's Magic Map software. Parts of the Plan area fall within Network Enhancement Zone 1 ('land connecting existing patches of primary and associated habitats which is likely to be suitable for creation of the primary habitat').

Priority Habitats

The Priority Habitat Inventory¹⁰ describes the geographic extent and location of Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) Section 41 habitats of principal importance. There are a number of priority habitats present within the Neighbourhood area as shown in **Figure 3.2** below.

¹⁰ Gov data (2020): 'Priority habitat inventory' [online] available at: <https://data.gov.uk/dataset/4b6ddab7-6c0f-4407-946e-d6499f19fcde/priority-habitat-inventory-england>

Figure 3.2 Priority Habitat Inventory



3.2 According to the Hoxne Landscape and Biodiversity Evaluation Submission Draft document¹¹ there are a total of nine Important Habitats which can be found in Hoxne, as listed below:

- Hedgerows
- Mixed deciduous woodland
- Ponds
- Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh
- Wet woodland
- Lowland Meadows
- Wood Pasture and Parkland
- Traditional Orchards
- Rivers and Streams

3.3 The main concentration of hedgerows is associated with the south-east of the Hoxne Neighbourhood area with fewer hedgerows to the north due to their removal between field boundaries leaving only ditches between fields which delivers an open 'prairie' impression to the area.

Figure 3.3 Hedgerow lining the northern side of Chickering Road



¹¹ Hoxne Council (2021) Hoxne Landscape and Biodiversity Evaluation Submission Draft Available at: [Supporting Document 8: Hoxne Landscape and Biodiversity Evaluation Submission Draft Stage – Hoxne NDP \(hoxneneighbourhoodplan.co.uk\)](https://www.hoxneneighbourhoodplan.co.uk/Supporting%20Document%208%20-%20Hoxne%20Landscape%20and%20Biodiversity%20Evaluation%20Submission%20Draft%20Stage)

- 3.4 There are several blocks of Mixed Deciduous Woodland Priority Habitat which can be found throughout the Hoxne Neighbourhood area. There are linear stretches of Priority Habitat woodland along the Dove and Waveney River valleys, Gold Brook and Chickering beck including Big Carr and Little Carr on the River Waveney, as well as a number of small copses associated with farm steadings and manor houses. Other examples include but are not limited to, blocks include The Plantation, The Willows, and Well Plantation around Hoxne village, New Plantation, Oak Plantation, Colcy's Corner, and Coney Wood in the south of the Neighbourhood area, and The Grove in the east.
- 3.5 According to the Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service and from aerial images there are approximately 201 ponds spread throughout the Hoxne Neighbourhood area. Several of the ponds are associated with the arable field network and are spread evenly throughout Hoxne.
- 3.6 Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh habitat is represented by the low-lying grassland within the valley of the River Waveney and parts of the River Dove on the western and northern boundaries of the Hoxne Neighbourhood area. The largest area of this habitat within the parish occupies the north-western extremity (north of the B1118 between Hoxne and Oakley), where a large area of grazing marsh is present, bisected by a number of ditches all connecting to the southern bank of the River Waveney. This is depicted in **Figure 3.4**, below.

Figure 3.4 Grazing land north of Mill Stream



- 3.7 The wet woodland in the Hoxne Neighbourhood area is associated with the River Waveney riparian corridor, it is largely willow and alder carr, with cricket bat willow plantations punctuating the landscape.
- 3.8 Hoxne Meadow CWS is an ideal example of a Lowland Meadows habitat within the Hoxne Neighbourhood area.

- 3.9 There are several areas of Wood Pasture and Parkland Priority Habitat listed on Natural England's Priority Habitat Inventory on Defra's Magic Maps¹²: Namely, the area surrounding The Coach House, south of Chickering Hall, Land associated with Oak Lawn House in the south of the parish, and the ground of Oakley Park, within Hoxne Village.
- 3.10 There are two traditional orchards listed on Natural England's Priority Habitat Inventory on Defra's Magic Maps¹³, one at South Green and the other associated with the gardens of a large house within the hamlet of Heckfield Green.
- 3.11 The rivers and streams throughout the Hoxne Neighbourhood area are an important feature of the landscape. The River Dove runs along the western boundary, meeting the River Waveney in the north, which marks the County boundary between Suffolk and Norfolk. In addition, there are several tributaries including the Gold Brook which flows via Nuttery Vale through Hoxne Village before meeting Chickering beck which in turn flows into the River Dove as illustrated below.

Figure 3.5 River Dove as it passes through Hoxne



Priority Species in Hoxne

- 3.12 Several priority species of mammals are present throughout the Hoxne Neighbourhood area: bats including soprano pipistrelle, Daubenton's, Natterer's, Leisler's, serotine, Western barbastelle, brown long-eared and several records of unidentified species, including pipistrelles. There are hedgehog records for the more residential areas. Additionally, water vole and otter have been recorded in association with the rivers in the north of the

¹²Defra (2022) Wood Pasture and Parkland Priority Habitat Available at: [Magic Map Application \(defra.gov.uk\)](https://magicmap.defra.gov.uk/)

¹³Defra (2022) Traditional Orchard Priority Habitat Available at: [Magic Map Application \(defra.gov.uk\)](https://magicmap.defra.gov.uk/)

Parish. N.B. Badger is also recorded and whilst is not a Priority species, it is protected under its own specific legislation.

- 3.13 With regards to birds: numerous Red List and Amber List Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) have been recorded within the Hoxne Neighbourhood area, the majority of which are also Priority Species. Many also breed in Hoxne parish; others arrive as winter visitors or are recorded on passage.
- 3.14 Several Invertebrate priority Species are exhibited throughout the Plan area. Moth species recorded include the Lunar yellow underwing, which is a Priority species and a number of moths listed as 'Research-only' including but not limited to oak hook-tip, sallow, grey dagger, mouse moth, dot moth, rustic, rosy minor, mottled rustic, beaded chestnut, flounced chestnut, shaded broad bar and large wainscot
- 3.15 A total of three amphibian and reptile species have been recorded in the Hoxne Neighbourhood area such as grass snake, common toad and great crested newt, the latter of which has several records in surrounding parishes also. Moreover, the European eel has also been recorded in association with the River Waveney.
- 3.16 A high number of Suffolk Rare Plant species have also been documented throughout the Plan area such as hoary plantain, wild strawberry, treacle mustard, sulphur clover, spiny restharrow, and night-flowering.

Future Baseline

- 3.17 All designated sites will continue to be afforded protection through the NPPF and Local Development Frameworks. CWS, locally designated sites and important habitats have the potential to come under pressure through future development in the Hoxne Neighbourhood area. Therefore, the Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan provides the opportunity to ensure that future growth over the Plan period limits direct effects such as habitat fragmentation, and indirect effects such as recreational pressures, noise, light, and air pollution. Furthermore, the Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan provides scope to identify opportunities for enhancement. These could include measures that the local community support or measures which address the effects of climate change and support ecological resilience.
- 3.18 To maintain and improve the condition of biodiversity in the future, it will be important to not only protect and enhance priority habitats but maintain the connections between them, such as the network of hedgerow lining which extends throughout the Plan area.
- 3.19 It will be crucial to effectively coordinate the delivery of housing, employment, and infrastructure to ensure that opportunities to improve these networks, wider green infrastructure, and ecological corridors, are realised - both within the Plan area and in the surrounding areas.

Key issues

- 3.20 The Hoxne Neighbourhood area encompasses the statutorily designated geological site, Brick Pit SSSI, along with 6 County Wildlife Sites. In addition to the above, several Priority habitats have been identified within the parish making it highly diverse ecologically, offering a wide variation of habitats supporting protected/and or Priority species including amphibians, reptile, birds, mammals, invertebrates in addition to plants, which are extremely vulnerable to new development.
- 3.21 Linear features such as the rivers and streams and their associated habitats, along with hedgerows, mature trees and ditch networks offer the foundation of an important network across the Plan area. New developments within the area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan should seek to protect existing ecological assets and restore, enhance, and reconnect the ecological network, for example through capitalising upon Defra’s Network Enhancement Zones, which extend throughout the west of the Parish.
- 3.22 Activities most likely to affect important hedgerow habitats in Hoxne (such as that found north of Chickering Road) include the removal of hedgerow to facilitate development, which may cause the subsequent fragmentation of the hedgerow network arising from development.
- 3.23 Consideration should also be paid to activities and developments that could affect the Rivers and Streams in Hoxne (such as the River Dove), which facilitate ecological growth in the area. This might include inappropriate management of and adverse events within the river channel such as extensive dredging or channel re-alignment.

SEA objective(s)

- 3.24 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objectives:

SEA objective	Assessment questions (will the option/ proposal help to...)
Enhance biodiversity and geodiversity sites and features, by avoiding impacts on regionally and locally designated sites, and delivering demonstrable biodiversity net gains.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and enhance regionally and locally designated sites, including supporting habitats and mobile species that are important to the integrity of these sites? • Protect and enhance priority habitats and species and the areas that support them? • Achieve a net gain in biodiversity? • Support enhancements to multifunctional green infrastructure networks? • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of biodiversity and geodiversity? • Protect and support Network Enhancement Zones?

4. Climate change

- 4.1 This theme focuses on existing and future flood risk and the wider impacts of climate change, activities in the district which contribute to climate change, and measures to mitigate the effects of climate change and increase resilience.

Policy context

- 4.2 **Table 4.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the Hoxne SEA.

Table 4.1 Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to climate change

Document title	Year of publication
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	2021
UK Climate Change Act	2008
UK (second) National Adaptation Programme 2018 to 2023	2018
The Clean Air Strategy	2019
Clean Growth Strategy	2019
UK Sixth Carbon Budget	2020
25-Year Environment Plan	2019
National Infrastructure Assessment	2018
UK Climate Change Risk Assessment	2017
Flood and Water Management Act	2010
National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy	2020
How Local Authorities Can Reduce Emissions and Manage Climate Change Risk	2012
The National Design Guide	2021
National Model Design Code	2021
Heat Networks: Building a Market Framework	2020
Summary of Climate Change Risks for the East of England Report	2017
Local Energy East Strategy	2018
Interim Climate Change Planning Policy	2021
Climate Change Strategy	2021
Renewable Energy Study	2008
Mid Suffolk Core Strategy (CS)	2008

<u>Mid Suffolk Core Strategy Review</u>	2012
<u>Regulation 19 'Pre-Submission' draft Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan (JLP)</u>	2020

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

- The Neighbourhood Plan will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF, which requires proactive planning to both mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies are expected to improve the resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts, avoid inappropriate development in the flood plain, and support the move to a low carbon economy. The NPPF recognises the potential for planning to shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, and deliver long-term resilience, including through reuse, regeneration, and conversion.
- Notably, access to a network of high-quality open spaces can deliver wider benefits for nature, supporting efforts to address climate change, while improvements in green and other infrastructure can reduce the causes and impacts of flooding.
- Planning Practice Guidance presents the following list of 'examples' of ways local planning can support adaptation:
 - *“Considering future climate risks when allocating development sites to ensure risks are understood over the development’s lifetime;*
 - *Considering the impact of and promoting design responses to flood risk for the lifetime of the development;*
 - *Considering availability of water and water infrastructure for the lifetime of the development and design responses to promote water efficiency and protect water quality;*
 - *Promoting adaptation approaches in design policies for developments and the public realm relevant.”*
- The UK Climate Change Act requires Government to present to Parliament an assessment of the climate change risks for the UK every five years. Following the publication of each Change Risk Assessment, the Government must lay out its objectives, policies, and proposals to address the climate change risks and opportunities. The second National Adaptation Programme (NAP2, 2018-2023), setting out these objectives, policies, and proposals, was published in 2018. The ASC is required by the Act to assess the NAP and present progress reports. The most recent report was published in 2019, concluding that climate change adaptation needs to be addressed at a national scale and the Government’s response to date has not been successful.¹⁴ The Sixth Carbon Budget, required under the Climate Change Act, provides ministers with advice on the volume of greenhouse gases that the UK can emit during the period 2033 to 2037.

¹⁴ CCC (n.d.): ‘UK adaptation policy’ [online] available at: <https://www.theccc.org.uk/tackling-climate-change/preparing-for-climate-change/uk-adaptation-policy/>

- The Clean Growth Strategy, Clean Air Strategy, and the 25-year Environment Plan are a suite of documents which seek to progress the government's commitment under the UK Climate Change Act to becoming net zero by 2050. The documents set out detailed proposals on how the government will tackle all sources of air pollution, whilst maintaining an affordable energy supply and increasing economic growth. This parallels with the 25-year Environment Plan, which further seeks to manage land resources sustainably, recover and reinstate nature, protect soils and habitats, increase resource efficiency, improve water quality, and connect people with the environment. The documents also interlink with the government's commitment to decarbonising transport, a recognised challenge that needs more work in a timely manner if government are to achieve net zero targets. Furthermore, the decarbonisation plan recognises the twinned need to undertake action to adapt the transport sector and increase resilience to climate change risks; and this challenge is more directly addressed through the UK's National Adaptation Programme.
- The National Infrastructure Assessment identified the key national challenges, and the government is developing a National Infrastructure Strategy. The NIC also published two key reports in 2019:
 - Strategic Investment and Public Confidence – this report is clear that *“the regulatory system has not adequately addressed societal interests: it needs to work more effectively to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, transition to full-fibre digital networks, and manage the increasing risks of floods and drought.”* It calls for a much more coordinated approach, explaining that:¹⁵ *“The current system leaves strategy primarily to infrastructure owners and providers. But they may not be best placed to assess the coming challenges, and they do not have the right incentives to build the right infrastructure to address them... There are some good examples of the system delivering strategic, long-term investment, however in general the system is not designed to deliver this... [R]egulators should demonstrate how they have taken consideration of the strategic vision of... local government...”*
 - Resilience Study Scoping Report - includes a section on 'Resilience in the planning system', although the focus is on Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) more so than local infrastructure.¹⁶
- The UK Climate Change Risk Assessment is published on a 5-yearly cycle in accordance with the requirements of the Climate Change Act 2008. It required the Government to compile an assessment of the risks for the UK arising from climate change, and then to develop an adaptation programme to address those risks and deliver resilience to climate change on the ground. For both the 2012 and the 2017 UK Climate Change Risk Assessment, the Adaptation Sub-Committee commissioned an evidence report aiming to understand the current and future climate risks and opportunities. The evidence report contains six priority risk areas requiring additional action between 2017 and 2022, see below:

¹⁵ NIC (n.d.): 'Strategic Investment and public confidence' [online] nic.org.uk/publications/strategic-investment-and-public-confidence/

¹⁶ NIC (n.d.): 'Strategic Investment and public confidence' [online] nic.org.uk/publications/resilience-study-scoping-report/

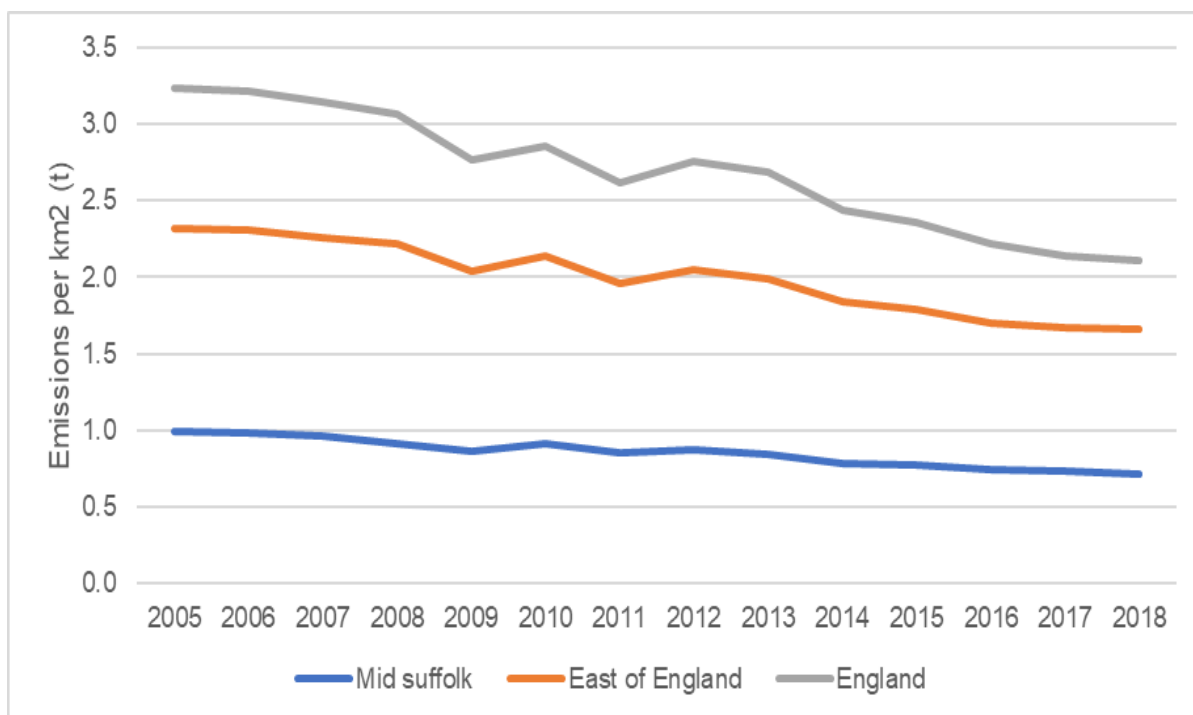
- Flooding and coastal change risks to communities, businesses, and infrastructure.
 - Risks to health, well-being, and productivity from high temperatures.
 - Risk of shortages in the public water supply, and for agriculture, energy generation and industry.
 - Risks to natural capital, including terrestrial, coastal, marine, and freshwater ecosystems, soils, and biodiversity.
 - Risks to domestic and international food production and trade; and
 - New and emerging pests and diseases, and invasive non-native species, affecting people, plants, and animals.
- The CCRA is presented through a number of different reports, including the summary of Climate Change Risks for the East of England Report, which summarises the most relevant findings from the UK level evidence report.
 - The Flood and Water Management Act was introduced in 2010 as a response to the need to develop better resilience to climate change. The Act requires better management of flood risk, creating safeguards against rises in surface water drainage charges, and protecting water supplies for consumers. Good flood and coastal risk management is further outlined through the National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy (2020).
 - The Committee of Climate Change's 2012 report entitled 'How Local Authorities Can Reduce Emissions and Manage Climate Change Risk' emphasises the crucial role councils have in helping the UK meet its carbon targets and preparing for the impacts of climate change. It outlines specific opportunities for reducing emissions and highlights good practice examples from Local Authorities.
 - Opportunities for reducing emissions are further explored through the Local Energy East Strategy which recognises the East region as one of the most important energy producing areas in the UK and a leading area for renewable energy. Collective actions are identified which seek to; grow the local energy sector, support the delivery of new smart grid systems which underpin housing and commercial development, increase energy efficiency, improve energy affordability and reduce fuel poverty, and support the transition to electric vehicles.
 - The National Design Guide (NDG) and the National Design Code address how the Government recognises "*well-designed places*" including opportunities for climate change measures. Notably the NDG defines what constitutes a well-designed place using ten characteristics under three themes of climate, character, and community. Under the climate theme, homes and buildings should be functional, healthy, and sustainable, resources should be efficient and resilient, and buildings should be made to last.
 - The Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan should also have regard to the adopted CS and the emerging JLP, which contains policies directly relating to the climate change theme, including flood management and sustainable design.

Baseline summary

4.4 In March of 2019, Suffolk County Council declared a climate change emergency. In particular, CO₂ emissions are associated with a changing climate and will become an area of even greater focus for mitigating climate change following this declaration. In July 2019, Mid-Suffolk and Babergh Councils formed a task force to examine ways in which the Councils will respond to the climate change challenge on a spend to save basis, with the intention to make Babergh & Mid Suffolk Councils carbon neutral by 2030. Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have also produced a Carbon Reduction Management Plan with the objective of realising this target.

4.5 CO₂ emissions from the built environment are monitored and recorded at the Local Authority level.¹⁷ As shown in **Figure 4.1**, emissions per km²/t for Mid Suffolk are lower than emissions for the East of England and England as a whole. Emissions in Mid Suffolk have decreased over the period of 2005-2018. However, national emissions have decreased at a higher rate (34.9%) when compared to emissions for Mid-Suffolk (28.1%).

4.6 **Figure 4.1 Mid Suffolk CO₂ emissions (2005- 2018)**¹⁸



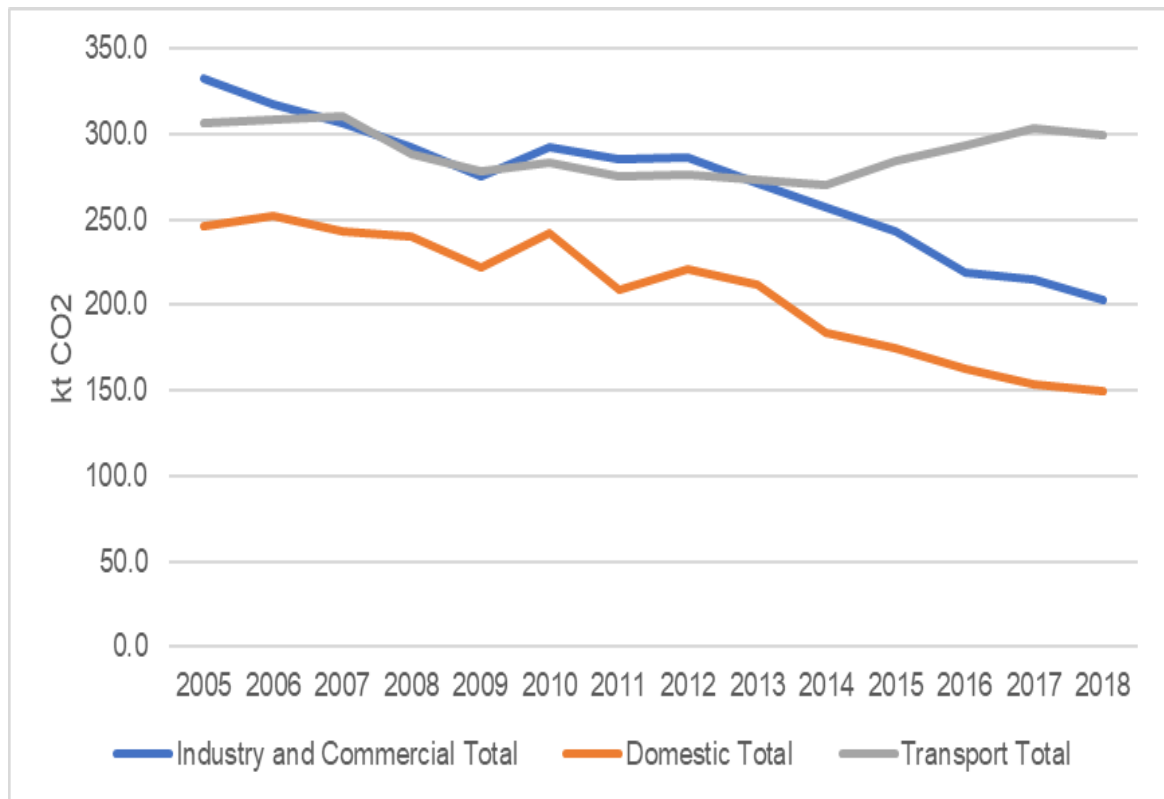
4.7 **Figure 4.2** overleaf, demonstrates that Industry and Commercial and Domestic carbon emissions have both decreased over the 2012- 2018 period (by 29.3% and 32.2% respectively). Conversely, emissions produced by the transportation sector have fluctuated over the same period; increasing substantially between

¹⁷ Department of Energy and Climate Change (2011) 2005 to 2018 UK local and regional CO₂ emissions: Per capital local CO₂ emissions estimates; industry, domestic, and transport sectors [online] available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2018>

¹⁸ Department of Energy and Climate Change (2011) 2005 to 2018 UK local and regional CO₂ emissions: Per capital local CO₂ emissions estimates; industry, domestic, and transport sectors [online] available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2018>

2014 – 2017) and in 2018, was the largest contributing sector in terms of CO₂ emissions in Mid Suffolk.

Figure 4.1 Emissions by sector (2005- 2018), Mid Suffolk¹⁹



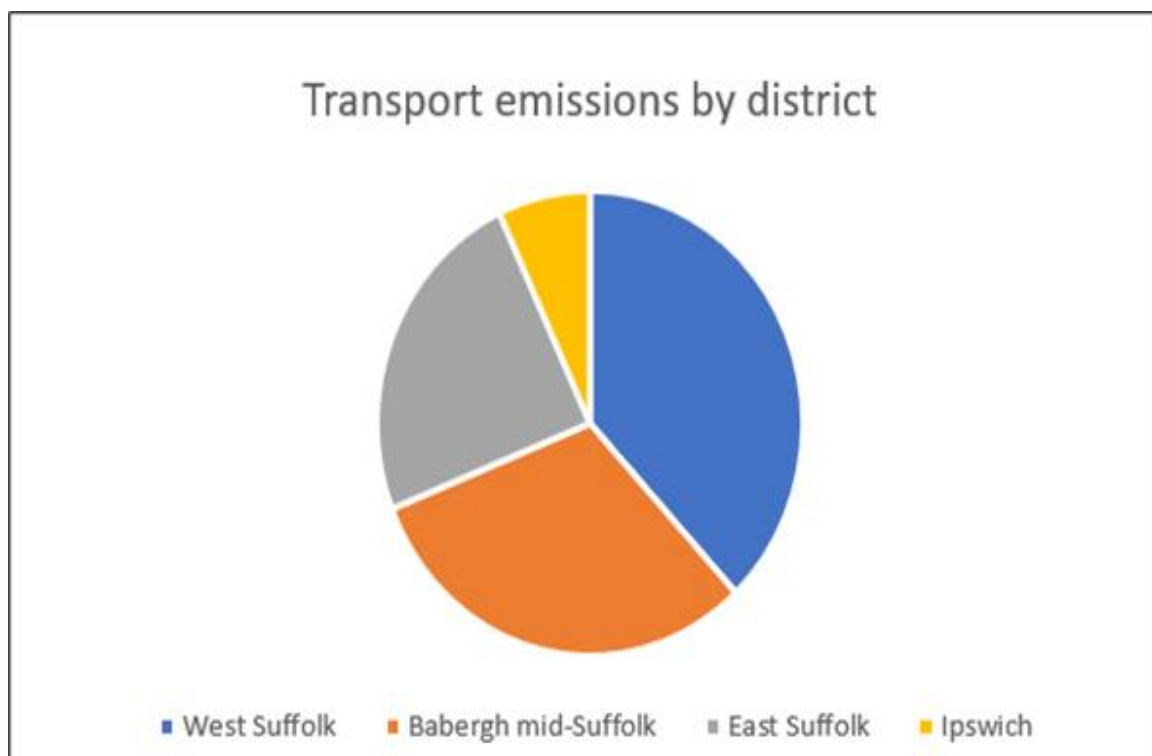
4.8 Road transport is the largest emitter of GHG, with cars contributing 55% of UK domestic transport emissions (68 Metric tonnes CO₂ equivalent (MtCO₂e)) in 2018. Within Suffolk County, nearly all transport emissions are derived from road transport, with a small percentage being produced from diesel railways. The majority of all road transport emissions is from activity on A roads with a smaller proportion originating from activity on minor roads.²⁰ This is also the case for emissions in Mid Suffolk, although it is worth noting that there are no A roads within the Hoxne Neighbourhood area. Therefore, the B1118 remains the largest contributor of emissions in the Plan area.

4.9 Emissions can be further broken down into the districts within Suffolk, as illustrated in **Figure 4.3**, below, which highlights that emissions in Babergh and Mid Suffolk are the second largest out of all the districts within Suffolk.

¹⁹ Department of Energy and Climate Change (2011) 2005 to 2018 UK local and regional CO₂ emissions: Per capital local CO₂ emissions estimates; industry, domestic, and transport sectors [online] available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2018>

²⁰ Ricardo Energy & Environment (2020) Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan Technical Report [online] available at: <http://www.greensuffolk.org/assets/Greenest-County/SCCP/SCCP/Misc/2020-06-01-REE-SCEP-Technical-Report-FINAL.pdf>

Figure 4.2 Emissions by sector²¹



- 4.10 The uptake of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs) will contribute positively towards the reduction of road transport related emissions. In accordance with the assumptions made by the Department for Transport’s ‘Road to Zero’ report (2018), it is assumed that ULEV uptake will increase rapidly in the coming decade and therefore aside from HGVs, all vehicles could be ultra-low emission (powered either by hydrogen or electricity) by 2030.
- 4.11 Electric vehicles (EVs) do not burn fuel and generate almost no noise. They are battery powered and have the potential to be ‘zero-emission vehicles’ (ZEVs) when powered by renewable electricity. As of February 2022, 0.5% of vehicles in Suffolk County are fully electric and there are 120 charging points across the County.²² With reference to the Hoxne Neighbourhood area, **Figure 4.4** shows that there are no EV charging points, but highlights there is a large distribution of slow to rapid charging points to north-west of the Plan area.

²¹ Ricardo Energy & Environment (2020) Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan Technical Report [online] available at: <http://www.greensuffolk.org/assets/Greenest-County/SCCP/SCCP/Misc/2020-06-01-REE-SCEP-Technical-Report-FINAL.pdf>

²² Ricardo Energy & Environment (2020) Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan Technical Report [online] available at: <http://www.greensuffolk.org/assets/Greenest-County/SCCP/SCCP/Misc/2020-06-01-REE-SCEP-Technical-Report-FINAL.pdf>

Figure 4.3 EV charging points²³



4.12 The closest rapid charging station is located at the BP garage along the A143 as illustrated in **Figure 4.4**. Several charging stations ranging from fast to rapid are positioned towards Diss. There is a notable absence of charging stations to the north and south-east of the parish, potentially discouraging sustainable transport methods in this direction.

4.13 The Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan (2020)²⁴ sets out “*Encouraging greater take-up of public transport and active travel (walking and cycling) and a massive roll-out of zero emissions vehicles*” as a key priority for local action.

4.14 The Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy publishes annual statistics on renewable energy generation, disaggregated by Local Authority. The most recent available data available is for 2020, presented in **Table 4.2**. Photovoltaics contribute 33.0% of total renewable energy capacity in Mid Suffolk in 2020 and have increased by 25.5 MW since 2014.

Table 4.2 Renewable energy capacity (MW) for Mid Suffolk²⁵

	Photo-voltaics	Onshore Wind	Hydro	Anaerobic Digestion	Offshore Wind	Wave /Tidal	Sewage Gas	Landfill Gas	Municipal Solid	Animal Biomass	Plant biomass	Cofiring	Total
2014	7.5	0.1	-	0.5	-	-	-	0.1	-	-	-	-	7.5
2020	33.0	12.4	-	1.6	-	-	-	6.3	26.0	14.3	-	-	93.6

²³ Zapmap (2020) Zap Map [online] available at: <https://www.zap-map.com/live/>

²⁴ Ricardo Energy & Environment (2020) Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan Technical Report [online] available at: <http://www.greensuffolk.org/assets/Greenest-County/SCCP/SCCP/Misc/2020-06-01-REE-SCEP-Technical-Report-FINAL.pdf>

²⁵ DBEIS (2019), Regional Renewable Statistics [online] available at: [Renewable electricity by local authority 2014 to 2020 rev.xlsx \(live.com\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/421112/Renewable_electricity_by_local_authority_2014_to_2020_rev.xlsx)

4.15 Following the success of the UK Climate Projections released in 2009 (UKCP09), the Met Office recently released the UK Climate Projections for 2018 (UKCP18).²⁶ UKCP18 provides the most up to date climate observations and projections out to 2100, using cutting-edge climate science. Projections are broken down to a regional level across the UK and are shown in probabilistic form, which illustrate the potential range of changes and the level of confidence in each prediction.

4.16 As highlighted by the research, the effects of climate change for the East of England by 2050 in a 'medium emissions' scenario are likely to be as follows:

- An increase in winter mean temperature of 2.2 °C and an increase in summer mean temperature of 2.8 °C; and
- A change in winter mean precipitation greater than +10% and summer mean precipitation greater than -10%.

4.17 Resulting from these changes, a range of risks may exist for the Neighbourhood area, including:

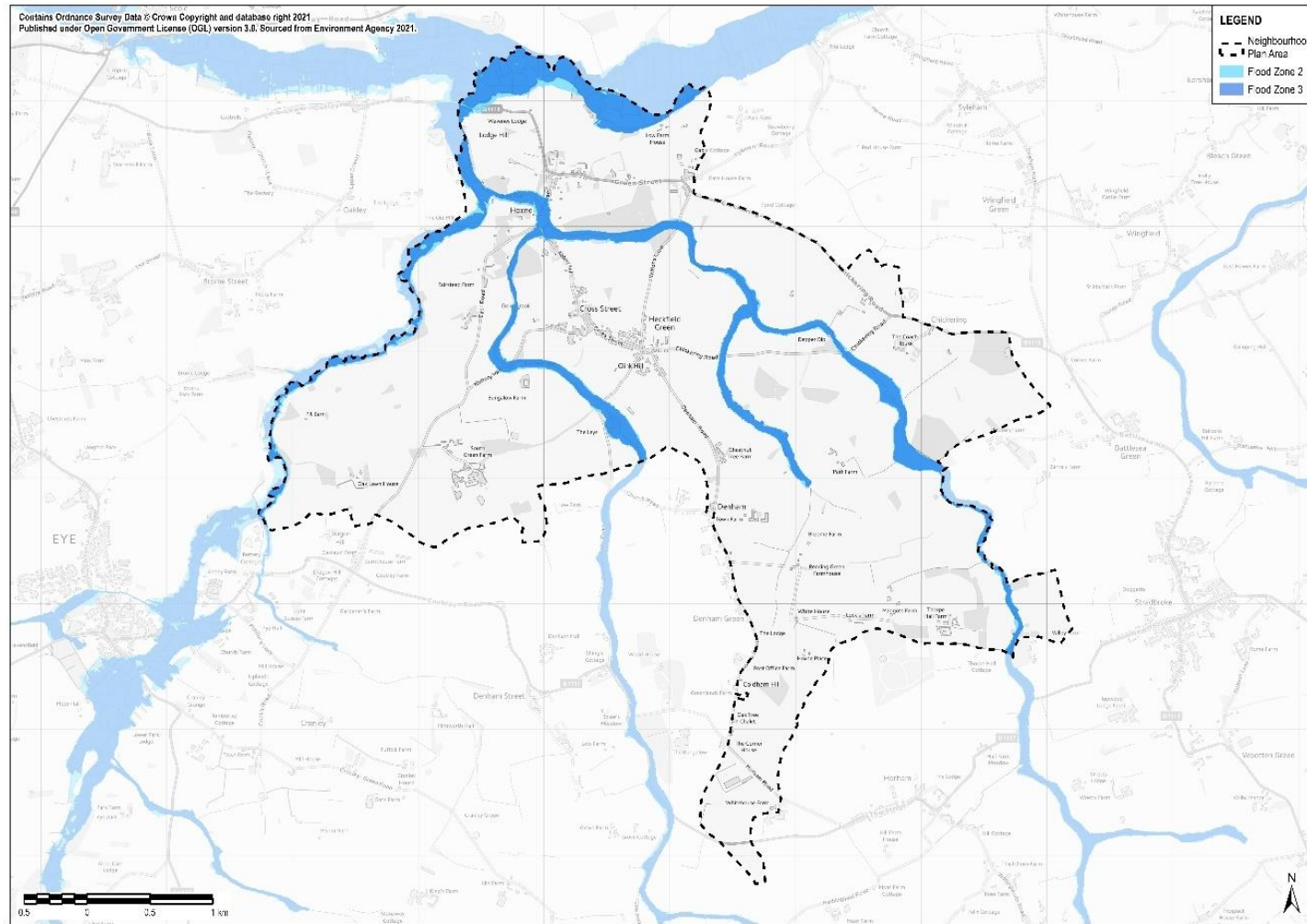
- Effects on water resources from climate change.
- Reduction in availability of groundwater for extraction.
- Adverse effect on water quality from low stream levels and turbulent stream flow after heavy rain.
- Increased risk of flooding, flooding of roads, including increased vulnerability to 1:100-year floods.
- A need to increase the capacity of wastewater treatment plants and sewers.
- A need to upgrade flood defences.
- Soil erosion due to flash flooding.
- Loss of species that are at the edge of their southerly distribution.
- Increased demand for air-conditioning.
- Increased drought and flood related problems such as soil shrinkages and subsidence; and
- Risk of road surfaces melting more frequently due to increased temperature.

4.18 Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils also ran a project in 2019 to install Electric Vehicle charging points in the districts and in locations in Suffolk, Norfolk, and Essex via a grant from Highways England.

4.19 With regards to flooding, fluvial flooding in the Plan area is highest at the broad flood corridors of the River Dove, including areas around Low Street, the north of Abbey Hill towards Hoxne Village Hall and towards Goldbrook. Flood Zone level 2 and 3 along the River Dove is shown in **Figure 4.5**, below. As can be seen, the primary areas of risk are along the River Dove.

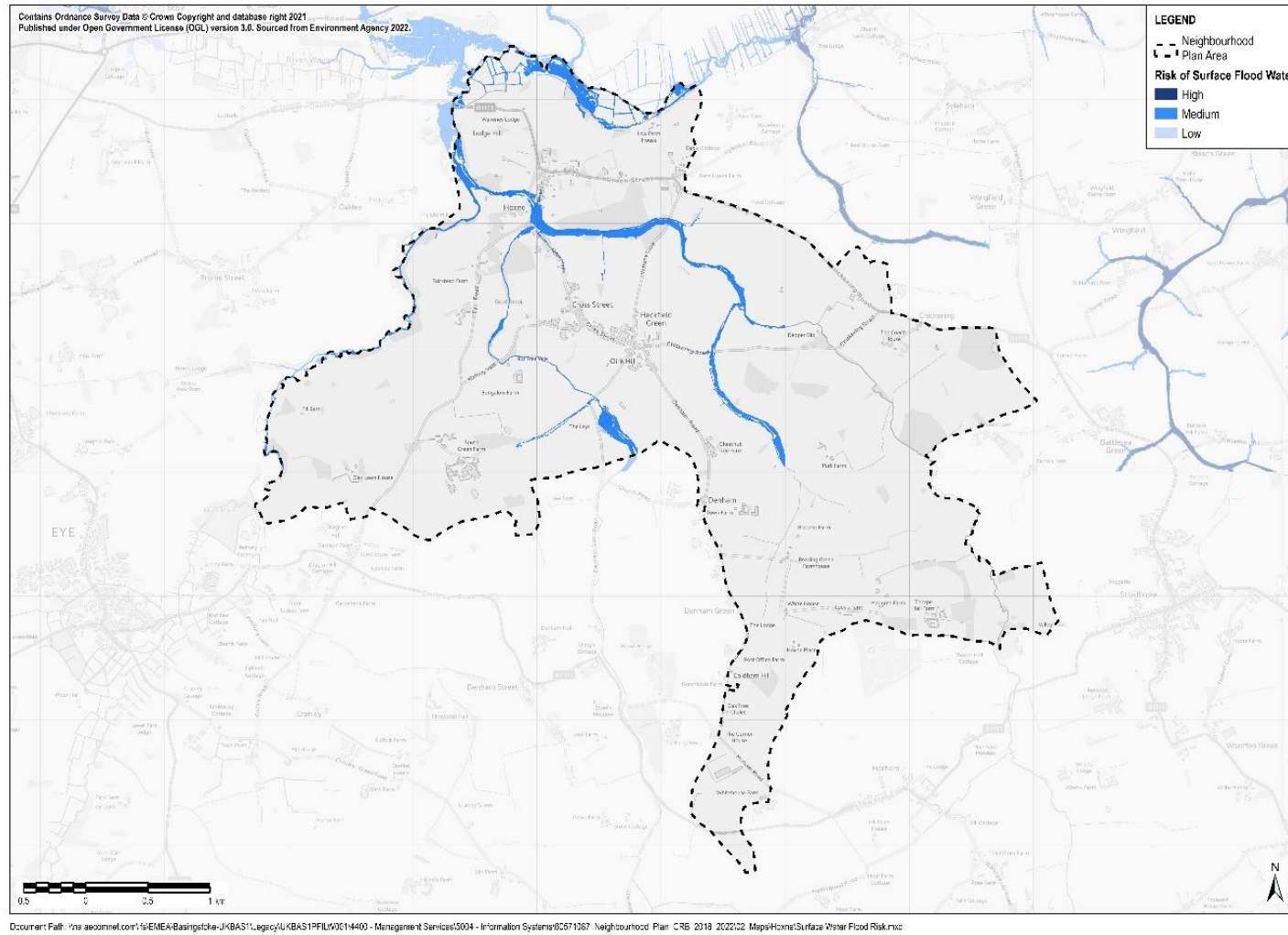
²⁶ Data released 26th November 2018 [online] available at: <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/collaboration/ukcp>

Figure 4.5 Fluvial flood risk²⁷



²⁷ Gov UK (n.d.): 'Flood map for planning' [online] available at: [Flood map for planning - GOV.UK \(flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.flood-map-for-planning.gov.uk/)

Figure 4.6 Surface water flood risk²⁸



²⁸ Gov UK (n.d.): 'Flood risk' [online] available at: <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk/map>

- 4.20 Similarly, surface water flooding in the Hoxne Neighbourhood area (depicted in **Figure 4.6**, overleaf) is highest in areas along, or directly adjacent to the River Dove, particularly at Low Street and towards Oakley Park.
- 4.21 Floodplain Grazing Marsh habitat in Hoxne (refer to **Figure 4.7**) type is represented by the low-lying grassland within the valley of the River Waveney and parts of the River Dove on the western and northern boundaries of the Parish. The largest area of this habitat within the parish occupies the north-western extremity (north of the B1118 between Hoxne and Oakley), where a large area of grazing marsh is present, bisected by a number of ditches all connecting to the southern bank of the River Waveney. The River Waveney is prone to seasonal flooding during the winter months, often leaving the grazing areas inundated for several weeks at a time.

Figure 4.7 Grazing land north of Mill Stream



- 4.22 As can be seen from **Figure 4.7** this section of the Hoxne Neighbourhood area is partially flooded from seasonal rainfall.
- 4.23 The River Waveney 37km and the River Dove, are the largest waterbodies to intersect the Hoxne Neighbourhood area. Changes in the flow patterns in the land drainage systems causes changes to woodland hydrology; increased flooding due to climate change can cause changes in the structure and flora, leading to poor regeneration and changes in the floristic diversity. Climate change may have a significant impact on the hydrology and biology of the rivers throughout the Hoxne Neighbourhood area and the direct loss of the habitat should be considered through a change to other land uses.

Future baseline

- 4.24 In line with UK trends and national commitments, emissions are likely to continue to fall as energy efficiency measures, renewable energy take-up and new technologies, such as EVs and solar PV, become more widely adopted. Notably, the Government has consulted on changes to England's Building Regulations introducing a 'Future Homes Standard' and the Department for Transport recently published 'Decarbonising Transport; setting the challenge' a first step towards publishing a full transport decarbonisation plan. This is particularly important for the Hoxne Neighbourhood area, which has limited access to EVs.
- 4.25 In the future, new development could have the potential to increase flood risk through factors such as changing surface and ground water flows, overloading existing inputs to the drainage and wastewater networks or increasing the number of residents exposed to areas of existing flood risk. It is further recognised that climate change has the potential to increase the occurrence of extreme weather events. This has the potential to put residents, property, and development at increased risk of flood exposure. However, in line with the NPPF (2019) sequential testing is likely to ensure that development within areas at highest risk of flooding is largely avoided, and development is likely to deliver mitigation such as Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).
- 4.26 Potentially longer periods of drought may lead to increased pressures on already stressed levels of water availability. Future development in the Plan area will need to address these potential pressures; new systems of water management techniques will play a vital role, such as taking forward green infrastructure strategies.
- 4.27 Future development should also seek to retain and enhance NCAs in order to ensure the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services.

Key issues

- 4.28 The Hoxne area is partially affected by areas of high and medium fluvial and surface water flood risk, notably adjacent to the River Dove. The Neighbourhood Plan has the potential to direct growth away from areas of current, or potentially future flood risk. In areas of surface water flood risk, development which provides improved drainage could also reduce flood risk in the long-term. Furthermore, it will be important for any development in the vicinity of the floodplain to ensure that suitable drainage is provided which ensures development will not lead to adverse effects on water quality.
- 4.29 Increased water abstraction from the groundwater aquifers as well as the rivers for public water supplies, agriculture, and industry has led to reduced river flows and water levels in the valley fens resulting in scrub communities taking hold. New development should consider these risks in relation to the impacts to the River Dove and other streams in the Plan area.
- 4.30 Climate change impacts may also come from increased levels of rainfall particularly during storm events, which may result in flash flooding in the river valleys as well as across the flat plateau. River valleys prevented from evolving naturally may increase flood risks. Increased flash flood events or seasonal

flooding events may also impact on footpaths and infrastructure increasing their maintenance requirements.

- 4.31 As a rural area, the transport sector continues to be a key challenge in Hoxne in terms of reducing emissions. The Neighbourhood Plan provides opportunities to guide development towards the most accessible locations in the Plan area and require local infrastructure (including walking and cycling infrastructure) improvements where appropriate.
- 4.32 The Neighbourhood Plan should seek to maximise opportunities for local renewable energy and electric vehicle infrastructure development, as well as new green infrastructure and improved ecological links, to complement the existing district, county, and regional climate change plans. Supporting proposals for EV charging points will be beneficial to improve access for residents (particularly in the south of the Plan area where there is a notable lack of charging points).

SEA Objective(s)

- 4.33 Considering the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objectives and assessment questions:

SEA objective	Assessment questions (will the option/ proposal help to...)
Reduce the contribution to climate change made by activities within the Neighbourhood Area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the number of journeys made? • Promote the use of sustainable modes of transport including walking, cycling, and public transport? • Increase the number of new developments meeting or exceeding sustainable design criteria? • Generate energy from low or zero carbon sources? • Reduce energy consumption from non-renewable resources? • Support proposals for EV charging infrastructure?
Support the resilience of the Neighbourhood Area to the potential effects of climate change, including flooding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that inappropriate development does not take place in areas at higher risk of flooding, considering the likely future effects of climate change? • Improve and extend green infrastructure networks in the plan area to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change? • Sustainably manage water runoff, reducing surface water runoff (either within the plan area or downstream)? • Ensure the potential risks associated with climate change are considered through new development in the Neighbourhood area? • Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the area to the effects of climate change, including through enhancements to ecological networks?

5. Landscape

5.1 This theme focuses on designated and protected landscapes within or near to the Hoxne Neighbourhood area, as well as landscape character, landscape quality and visual amenity.

Policy context

5.2 **Table 5.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan SEA.

Table 5.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to landscape

Document title	Year of publication
<u>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)</u>	2021
<u>The 25 Year Environment Plan</u>	2018
<u>The National Design Guide</u>	2019
<u>National Model Design Code</u>	2021
<u>Mid Suffolk Core Strategy (CS)</u>	2008
<u>Mid Suffolk Core Strategy Review</u>	2012
<u>Regulation 19 'Pre-Submission' draft Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan (JLP)</u>	2020

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

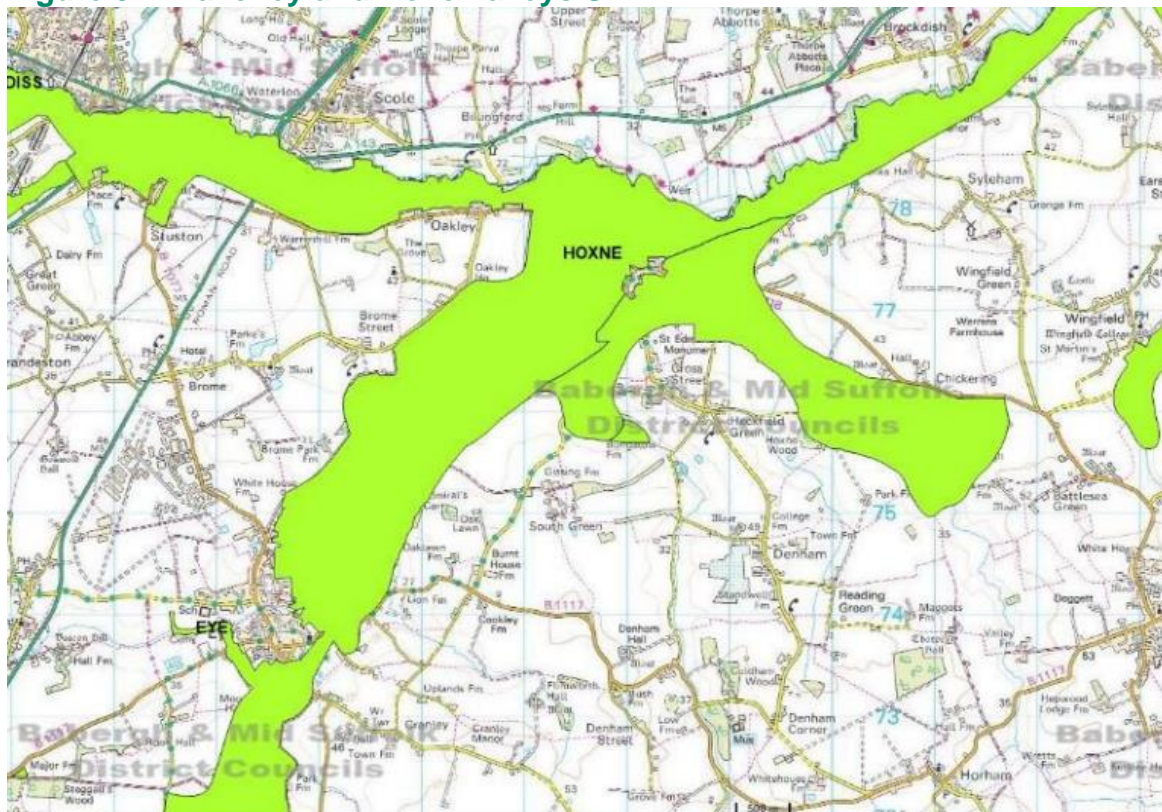
- The Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan should have regard to the NPPF which gives great weight to conserving and enhancing protected landscapes, as well as landscape character and scenic beauty. The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.
- The NPPF recognises the role of green infrastructure in landscape settings, as well as the importance of designated biodiversity sites, habitats, woodland, historic features, agricultural land, and cultural landscapes. The positive contribution that land remediation can make in terms of addressing despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land is also recognised.
- The NPPF states that Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of intonational, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in the Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.

- a. by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan); and
 - b. by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services — including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.
- The 25-year Environment Plan and National Design Guide complement each other with their aims for a cleaner, greener country which puts the environment first and celebrates the variety of natural landscapes and habitats. Design is focused on beautiful, enduring, and successful places, which respond to local character and provide a network of high quality green open spaces.
 - The Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan should also have regard to the adopted CS and emerging JLP, which contains policies specifically relating to valued landscapes, landscape character, settlement identity, green infrastructure, and design.

Baseline summary

5.4 There are no Nationally designated landscapes in the Plan area, Hoxne does not lie within or close to any Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) nor does it intersect any National Parks (NPs). However, the Waveney and Dove Valleys Special Landscape Areas (SLA) runs along the northern and eastern boundaries associated with the rivers and extends through Hoxne Village via Low Street into Cross Street and Heckfield Green.

Figure 5.1 Waveney and Dove Valleys SLA



- 5.5 It is important to note that when adopted, the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Pre-Submission (Reg 19) Document (November 2020) will replace the policies of the adopted local plan, and the SLA designation will cease to exist.

National Character Areas (NCA)

- 5.6 The entirety of the Hoxne Plan area falls within South Norfolk and High Suffolk Claylands (NE544) NCA²⁹. This landscape occupies a large area of central East Anglia stretching from just below Norwich in the north down to the River Gipping in the south. The area is bounded to the north by Mid Norfolk and The Broads NCAs and to the east by the sandy heathland of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths NCA. To the west the landscape merges into the drier and more open character of The Brecks NCA and to the south it meets the South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland NCA with its noticeably more undulating topography. 'High' Suffolk originally derives its name from the contrast between this formerly well-treed area and the openness of the adjacent areas to the east and west.

- 5.7 Today it is probably better understood as meaning the high and predominantly flat clay plateau that dominates the character of the NCA. The plateau is incised by numerous small-scale wooded river valleys with complex slopes that in places are much unexpected for East Anglia. The underlying geology is chalk, which forms the principal aquifer, and shallow marine deposits overlain with glacial till, buried river gravels, lake sediments and bands of glacial outwash deposits. The NCA profile identifies Statements of Environmental Opportunity (SEOs) as shown in **Table 5.2** below.

Table 5.2 SEOs for The South Norfolk and High Suffolk Claylands NCA

SEO 1: Maintain and enhance the rural character of the landscape and the contrast between the arable plateau and pastoral river valleys by maintaining agricultural productivity and encouraging sustainable land management practices that protect and enhance the landscape, geodiversity and biodiversity assets while benefiting water quality and water availability, as well as the rural sense of place and tranquillity.

SEO 2: Encourage measures that conserve and enhance the characteristic historic settlement patterns including notable village commons and greens, and historic features such as moated farmsteads and windmills, ensuring that access and educational opportunities are maximised; and ensure that the design and location of new developments add to the sense of place and history across the NCA.

SEO 3: Maintain and enhance the river valleys and their grazed flood plains which provide linkages through the landscape, including their valley fens and riparian habitats. This will support the operation of natural processes and their contribution to biodiversity, geodiversity, soil quality, water availability and regulating water flow and their function in contributing to the traditional rural character of the area.

SEO 4: Protect and enhance the area's ancient semi-natural woodlands, copses, river valley plantations and ancient boundaries including hedgerows and

²⁹ Natural England (2022) NCA Profile Available at: [NCA Profile: 83 South Norfolk and High Suffolk Claylands - NE544 \(naturalengland.org.uk\)](https://naturalengland.org.uk/nca-profile/83-south-norfolk-and-high-suffolk-claylands-ne544)

Table 5.2 SEOs for The South Norfolk and High Suffolk Claylands NCA

hedgerow trees, through the management of existing and the creation of new woods and hedgerows to benefit biodiversity, landscape character and habitat.

- 5.8 Natural England describes landscape character as what makes an area unique. It is defined as "*a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements, be it natural (soil, landform) and/or human (for example settlement and development) in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another.*"
- 5.9 The majority of the Hoxne Neighbourhood area falls into a Plateau Claylands Character Area. This can be defined as a gently rolling heavy clay plateau with sparse woodland cover and some extensive areas of post WWII field boundary loss. This landscape character covers a large area in central north Suffolk from Great Ashfield and Walsham-le-Willows across the district border into Suffolk Coastal and extending down to the edge of the Gipping valley. This landscape type covers the majority of the district and is the core landscape of the High Suffolk and south Norfolk National Character Area.
- 5.10 The north of the Hoxne Neighbourhood Area falls into Rolling Valley Claylands. These landscapes occur on the sides of the valleys that cut through the central clay plateau of Suffolk. Most of the valleys are moderately sloping, however, occasional notable steeper slopes occur. At Hoxne, the narrow, steep ridge between the Waveney and the Chickering Beck valleys inspired comparison with a heel sinew (hohsinu in Old English) and hence the name 'Hoxne'. Altogether, these slopes make an unexpected and striking contribution to the landscape. The soils tend to be medium clay but can be more mixed, especially in the valley of the river Dove.
- 5.11 Another subsection to the north of the Hoxne Neighbourhood Area falls into a Wooded Valleys Meadowlands and Fens Character Area. This landscape consists of damp flat valley floors largely dominated by grassland, with pockets of small carr woodlands and willow plantations.
- 5.12 Both the River Waveney 37km and the River Dove, the first and third largest major rivers/canals (by length) found in this NCA, intersect the Hoxne Neighbourhood area³⁰.
- 5.13 NCAs provide a wide range of benefits to society, each derived from the attributes and processes (both natural and cultural features) within the area. These benefits are known collectively as 'ecosystem services'. Of these ecosystem services, the following regulating services in the South Norfolk and High Suffolk Claylands NCA have been identified: climate regulation, water availability, and purification.
- 5.14 Both groundwater and surface water quality are critically dependent on the land management in the NCA. Woodlands, hedgerows, grasslands, riparian vegetation, and the filtering qualities of the underground sand and gravel and chalk deposits all contribute to the service. The main land use in the catchment

³⁰ Natural England (2022) NCA Profile Available at: [NCA Profile: 83 South Norfolk and High Suffolk Claylands - NE544 \(naturalengland.org.uk\)](https://naturalengland.org.uk/nca-profile/83-south-norfolk-and-high-suffolk-claylands-ne544)

is arable agriculture which has the potential to affect water quality (both ground and surface waters) through agricultural run-off. Subsequently all river catchments are priority catchments under the Catchment Sensitive Farming Project.

5.15 The Key Design Principles for the Wooded Valleys Meadowlands and Fens Character Area state:

- Any changes or developments will have a significant effect on the landscape therefore all proposals should provide mitigation strategies to minimise the detrimental impact on both the visual amenity and the landscape character of the valley floor.
- All development must take into consideration the cultural and historic importance of this area and the impact on the ecological environment.
- Alder carrs and woodland plantations are to be protected and maintained within this landscape character.
- Fens, marshes and pasture areas are to be protected and maintained within this landscape character.
- Roofscapes are to be in keeping with existing development within this very sensitive landscape.
- Retains the undisturbed scenic and tranquil quality of the hidden Wooded Valley Meadowlands Landscape

5.16 The Key Design Principles for the Plateau Claylands Character Area state:

- Maintain the distinctive settlement pattern, ensuring the sense of separation between settlements is maintained.
- Retain rural character of the small settlements and conservation areas by avoiding the use of standardised and intrusive urban materials and features.
- Restore, maintain and enhance green and woodland areas.
- Hedging for boundaries will be designed to reflect the local planting scheme to reduce visual impact on the distinctive character of the area.
- To maintain the character and condition of the landscape any major developments will enter into a Section 106 Legal Agreement for on- and off-site landscaping including enhancing field boundaries with local hedging and tree species.

Hoxne's Local Landscape

5.17 The village of Hoxne consists of two main settlements: to the north Low Street and to the south Cross Street. These sit on two spurs of higher land separated by a small stream, the Goldbrook, which flows westwards between them. A little to the west of Low Street, this tributary joins the river Dove which flows northwards before joining the east flowing river Waveney which passes to the north of the village. Norfolk is only half a mile away (beyond the Waveney) and Low Street is almost an island.

5.18 The most sensitive landscape within the Hoxne Neighbourhood area primarily follows along the River Dove extending north/south through the western edge

of the parish and east/west through the Parkland of the former Oakley Park and the land between Cross Street and Low Street where the Gold Brook joins the Dove.³¹

Key Views in Hoxne

- 5.19 Whilst external views from Low Street and Cross Street cores are not perfect, they do highlight a complex mixture of timber framed and brick buildings indicative to Hoxne Parish. This includes several high-status buildings and complexes – largely on the edge of these foci, such as the church and moated complex near the vicarage, the remnants of the parkland and surviving buildings of Oakley Hall and the Priory on Abbey Hill.
- 5.20 There are other significant views throughout Hoxne that make the Parish landscape distinctive and produce a sense of place. The principal elements of Hoxne's settlement groups being: Cross Street, Heckfield Green, and Low Street, have never been historically conjoined. In filling between the 1960's and 1980's has resulted in the distinctly separate Cross Street settlement and Heckfield Green combined into a single and linear development.
- 5.21 The open space between the northern end of Cross Street (Abbey Terrace) and southern end of Low Street (Goldbrook) currently remains largely intact. Of note, the view from the Abbey Hill/Low Street pavement towards St Edmunds Monument highlights this open space and in doing so functions as a critical component in defining the nature of the historic development of the Parish. Recently this location has been subject to speculative planning applications in front of St Edmunds Monument (now a scheduled Ancient Monument – refer to **Section 6**) which has significantly compromised the views observed from public footpaths down to the monument.
- 5.22 Other distinctive local views from numerous publicly accessible locations include views from Cross Street Meadow, Public Footpath 18, across the Goldbrook Valley to Clink Hill and Fir Lane from the edge of Cross Street Meadow, which functions as an important open space itself, offers panoramic scenes sweeping from Clink Hill to the Gold Brook stream and the Bridleway beyond that connects Clink Hill to South Green.
- 5.23 Views southwards from Shreeves Farm towards Denham at the junction of Nuttery Valley and Eye Road, emphasise the rolling valley clayland landscape on which Hoxne is situated and delivers an unobstructed scenic quality of the wooded Gold Brook Valley below.³²

³¹ Hoxne Parish Council (2019) Landscape Submission Draft Stage Available at: [Hoxne NDP – Developing the Future for Hoxne \(hoxneneighbourhoodplan.co.uk\)](https://www.hoxneneighbourhoodplan.co.uk)

³² Hoxne Parish Council (2019) Landscape Submission Draft Stage Available at: [Hoxne NDP – Developing the Future for Hoxne \(hoxneneighbourhoodplan.co.uk\)](https://www.hoxneneighbourhoodplan.co.uk)

Future baseline

- 5.24 New development, including infrastructure development, has the potential to lead to incremental changes in landscape quality in and around the Neighbourhood area. This may negatively impact upon the landscape features which contribute to the distinctive character, in particular the unique qualities of the SLA.
- 5.25 Moreover, future development within the Hoxne Neighbourhood area on the boundary of the plateau claylands should take into account the cultural and historic importance of the area and mitigation measures including screening from views from the Plateau Claylands and the wooded valley areas to the west is required.
- 5.26 However, locally distinctive landscape features, characteristics and special qualities can be protected, managed, and enhanced through the Neighbourhood Plan. New development that is appropriately designed/ masterplanned, and landscape-led, has the potential to support the area's inherent landscape character and quality. This may, for example, include regeneration and brownfield development that improves the village setting, delivering green infrastructure improvements and/ or new recreational opportunities and identification of and enhanced framing of key views.
- 5.27 The Key Design Principles for the Wooded Valleys Meadowlands and Fens Character Area as well as the Plateau Claylands Character Area provide a number of design principles that can guide development to some degree in the absence of the NP (explained further in **Baseline Summary**).

Key issues

- 5.28 Important viewpoints have been identified in Hoxne, which reflect the special qualities of the Neighbourhood area and are highly valued by local residents. Development should seek to preserve these views and countryside visibility where possible.
- 5.29 In particular, any future development in the area surrounding and in front of St Edmunds Monument would have a significant impact on the landscape and should be considered throughout the Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.30 Several landscapes within the Hoxne Neighbourhood area are vulnerable to new development. Of note, the historic separation between Cross Street and Low Street should be maintained and the area protected from development which may disrupt the position and character of the two distinct areas.
- 5.31 Any changes or developments could have a significant effect on the landscape therefore all proposals should provide detailed impact assessments and mitigation strategies to minimise any detrimental impact on both the visual amenity and the landscape character of the valley floor.

SEA objective(s)

5.32 Considering the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objective and assessment questions:

Table 5.3: Proposed SEA objective for landscape

SEA objective	Assessment questions (will the option/ proposal help to...)
To protect and enhance the character and quality of the immediate and surrounding landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and/ or enhance local landscape character and quality of place? • Conserve and enhance local identity, diversity and settlement character? • Identify and protect locally important viewpoints which contribute to character and sense of place? • Protect visual amenity and locally important views in the Plan area? • Retain and enhance landscape features that contribute to the river setting, or rural setting, including trees and hedgerows?

6. Historic environment

6.1 This theme focuses on designated and non-designated heritage assets (including archaeology) and their setting.

Policy context

6.2 **Table 6.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan SEA.

Table 6.1 Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to the historic environment

Document title	Year of publication
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	2021
The 25 Year Environment Plan	2018
The National Design Guide	2019
National Model Design Code	2021
Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management	2019
Historic England Advice Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets	2017
Historic England Advice Note 8: Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	2016
Mid Suffolk Core Strategy (CS)	2008
Mid Suffolk Core Strategy Review	2012
Historic England Advice Note 11: Neighbourhood Planning and the Historic Environment	2018
Regulation 19 'Pre-Submission' draft Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan (JLP)	2020

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

- The key high-level principles for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment are as follows:
 - The historic environment is a shared resource
 - Everyone should be able to participate in sustaining the historic environment
 - Understanding the significance of places is vital

- Significant places should be managed to sustain their values
- Decisions about change must be reasonable, transparent and consistent
- Documenting and learning from decisions is essential.³³
- The significance of places is the key element which underpins the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. Significance is a collective term for the sum of all the heritage values attached to a place, be it a building an archaeological site or a larger historic area such as a whole village or landscape
- The Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan should have regard for the NPPF, which ultimately seeks to conserve and enhance historic environment assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. The NPPF seeks planning policies and decisions which are sympathetic to local character and history without preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation of change. The NPPF supports the use of area-based character assessments, design guides and codes and masterplans to help ensure that land is used efficiently while also creating beautiful and sustainable places.
- As set out in the NPPF, it should be ensured that the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code. Design Codes can set out a necessary level of detail in sensitive locations, for example, with heritage considerations, and they can set out specific ways to maintain local character.
- Planning Practice Guidance expands on the NPPF recognising the proactive rather than passive nature of conservation.
- The role of the historic environment, as part of healthy and thriving ecosystems, landscapes and cultural values, including settlement identity, is reiterated through the key messages of the 25 Year Environment Plan and National Design Guide.
- Historic England's Advice Notes provide further guidance in relation to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. Of particular relevance for the Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan is the emphasis on the importance of:
 - Understanding the different types of special architectural and historic interest which underpin designations, as well as how settings and/ or views contribute to the significance of heritage assets;
 - Recognising the value of implementing controls through neighbourhood plans, conservation area appraisals and management plans; and
 - Appropriate evidence gathering, including clearly identifying those issues that threaten an area or assets character or appearance and that merit the introduction of management measures.
- The Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan should also have regard for the JLP which contain policies directly relating to the historic environment.

³³ Historic England: Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance

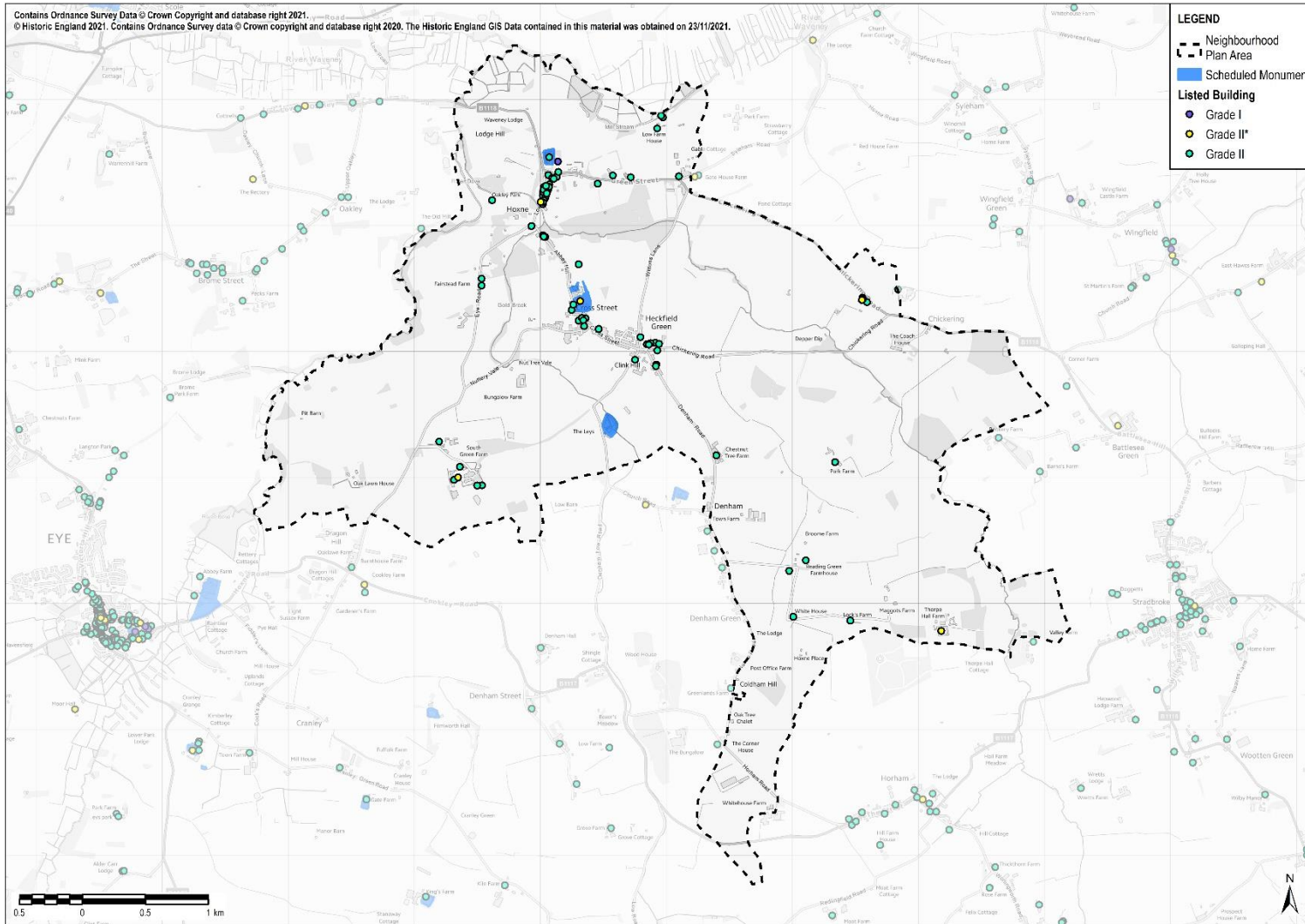
- In addition to conserving the historic environment, the Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan should seek to identify opportunities to enhance the fabric and setting of the historic environment. It should also seek to rejuvenate features and areas which are at risk of neglect and decay.

Baseline summary

Designated heritage assets

- 6.4 The Hoxne Neighbourhood Area exhibits one example of a grade I listed building at the Church of SS Peter and Paul, Green Street. This includes the Church of SS. Peter and 29.7.55 Paul GV I Parish church and Medieval chancel, rebuilt in 1853 (restored in 1879 -80). Other important structures found at this site include but are not limited to, the north aisle, west tower, south porch, north vestry. The tower face in knapped flint with stone dressings. The Nave roof clad is copper, and the chancel roof is slated. The fine C15 square tower, exhibits diagonal buttresses and crenellated parapet, with polygonal stair turret projects on south side.
- 6.5 There are a total of five grade II* listed buildings in the Hoxne Neighbourhood area. The Swan Inn at the southern end of Low Street dates back to the 16th century, whilst the timber framed farmhouse (referred to locally as the Abbey) is located on the site of the former Priory at the northern end of Cross Street. The remaining three buildings Chickering Hall, Red House and Thorpe Hall are all located in outlying hamlets. All three of these listed buildings are timber framed structures positioned on moated sites.
- 6.6 The remaining listed grade II buildings are primarily timber framed which have been rendered in typical Suffolk fashion and tend to be situated in clusters throughout the Hoxne. There is a total of 65 grade II listed buildings in the Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan Area: Nine of which are located along Chickering Road (off Heckfield Green); one along Church Street; eight along Cross Street; three on Denham Low Road; two on Eye Road; ten on Green Street; seventeen on Low Street; one at Oakley Park; four at Reading Green; five at South Green; three on Watermill lane; one at Abbey Hill; and one on Wittons lane.
- 6.7 There are a total of three Scheduled Monuments located throughout the Hoxne Neighbourhood area:
- The Remains of Hoxne Priory at Abbey Farm, Cross Street is in two separate areas of protection and includes visible and buried remains of a Benedictine prior.
 - Remains of medieval fishponds at The Leys, Denham Low Road includes the remains of an array of medieval fishponds located in the bottom of the valley of the Goldbrook, in an isolated position to the south of Hoxne village and south west of Heckfield Green.
 - Moated site at the vicarage of St Peter and St Paul's Church, Green Street. The Vicarage is well preserved and will retain archaeological evidence for its construction and subsequent occupation during the medieval period.

Figure 6.1 Designated heritage assets

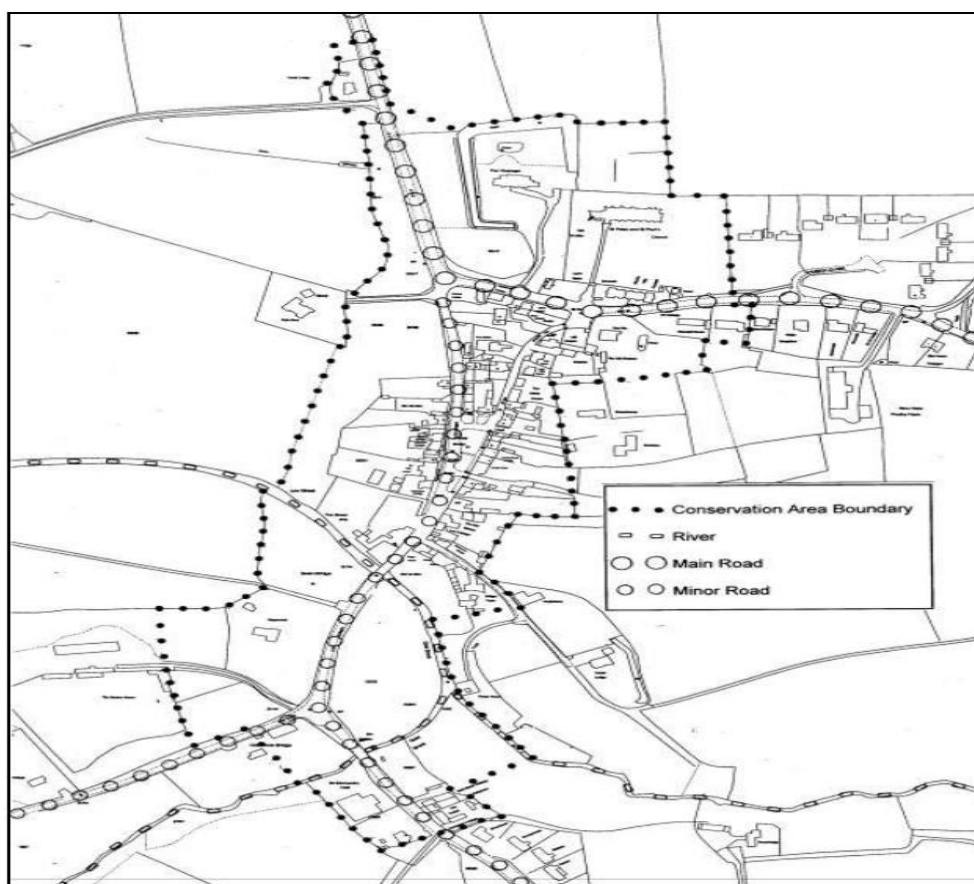


Document Path: \\na.aecomet.com\fs\EMEA\Basingstoke-UKBAS1\Legacy\UKBAS1\PFILW0011400 - Management Services\5004 - Information Systems\60571087 Neighbourhood Plan CRB 2018 2022\02 Maps\Hoxne\Designated Historic Assets.mxd

Hoxne Conservation Area

- 6.8 Hoxne's history can be traced back to the Domesday Book and its built character has contributed to the designation of its distinct Conservation area. The manor of Hoxne was listed in the Domesday survey of 1086 as belonging to William, Bishop of Thetford, and included a church, the Episcopal See of Suffolk before 1066.
- 6.9 The conservation area at Low Street, Hoxne was originally designated by East Suffolk County Council in 1973 and inherited by the newly formed Mid Suffolk District Council at its inception in 1974. The conservation area was last appraised and extended by Mid Suffolk District Council in 2000 to include an area at Cross Street.
- 6.10 According to the Low Street Conservation Area Appraisal³⁴ Hoxne has fared reasonably well against the onslaught of modern intrusions within the village. Along Low Street there are occasional examples of modern windows which exhibit asymmetric night vents, with limited dormer type loft extensions that could have been more sympathetic. The brick cottages located at 46-47 Low Street appear to blend in well, whilst the newer houses on the main road south of the church are reasonably neutral in their impact. In contrast, Cross Street, has fared a little less well, having not had (until recently) the protection afforded by conservation area status.

Figure 6.2 Low Street Conservation Area



³⁴ Mid Suffolk County Council (2010) Low Street Conservation Area Appraisal Available at: [Introduction \(midsuffolk.gov.uk\)](https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/)

6.11 The majority of Low Street Conservation Area is situated around a triangular green on the south facing slope between the B1118 road that runs east-west and the parallel Goldbrook to the south as shown in **Figure 6.2**.

6.12 Consideration should also be given to the Hoxne Conservation Area Appraisal³⁵ which stated that Hoxne is a rare surviving example of a polyfocal village – a fact also recognised by The Heritage and Settlement Sensitivity Assessment³⁶ which assessed that the settlement was very vulnerable to change and that the development of the “*settlement would have a significant adverse impact on the key aspects that contribute to the significance, special interest and importance of the heritage assets.*” The Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan therefore needs to ensure that there are no adverse impacts on its known heritage assets or landscape setting.

Non-Designated Assets

6.13 Non-designated assets that should be protected throughout the Hoxne Neighbourhood Area may include:

- The Village Hall (Goldbrook).
- The old forge (Cross Street/Nuttery Vale).
- The Chapel (cross Street).
- The Goldbrook Bridge (Goldbrook).
- The Swan Bridge (Low Street).
- St Edmunds Primary School. (Heckfield Green).
- The Banham Brickyard (Eye Road).
- The Pump (Cross Street).
- The Old Surgery (Church Hill).
- Home Farm (Eye Road).
- Heath Lodge (Oakley Road).
- Waveney Lodge (Oakley Road).
- Pit Barn (South Green).

Suffolk Historic Environmental Record (HER)

6.14 The Suffolk Historic Environmental Record (HER) identifies the important distinctive structures or features that positively contribute to the local distinctiveness and sense of place of the Neighbourhood area. Following a high-level review of the HER, there are several assets within the Plan area, mostly clustered at the village core, depicted in **Figure 6.3**, below.

³⁵ Mid Suffolk County Council (2010) Low Street Conservation Area Appraisal Available at: [Introduction \(midsuffolk.gov.uk\)](https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk)

³⁶ Mid Suffolk District Council (2018) Heritage and Settlement Sensitivity Assessment Available at: [Heritage and Settlement Sensitivity Assessment » Babergh Mid Suffolk](#)

significant artefacts is the Silver Tigris – now forming a centre piece of the exhibition in the British Museum.³⁸

6.17 None of the designated assets within the Hoxne Neighbourhood area are known to be ‘at risk’.³⁹

Future baseline

6.18 Hoxne village has a rich diversity of heritage assets, which make an important contribution to the wider character of the area and local distinctiveness. However insensitive design, layout and massing of new development has the potential to affect the historic landscape, villagescape, and valued features. Designated and undesignated heritage assets within the Neighbourhood area, notably concentrated in the village core and at Low Street have the potential to be adversely impacted from development in this respect.

6.19 Where possible, future development should seek to capitalise upon opportunities to enhance the historic environment, including by achieving the aspirations set out within the Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan. This could include (for example) opportunities to enhance or better reveal the significance of an asset, or public realm improvements that contribute to the quality of place, including within the Low Street conservation area.

Key issues

6.20 The parish is rich in heritage assets, notably Low Street Conservation Area which extends throughout Hoxne. There are also three Scheduled Monuments and 65 listed buildings within the Hoxne Neighbourhood area; one of which is Grade I listed and five of which are Grade II* listed.

6.21 Mid Suffolk District Council’s Heritage and Settlement Sensitivity Assessment⁴⁰ (which forms part of the evidence base for the emerging local plan) identifies Hoxne as having an overall high rating for historic values, but also in susceptibility to change. The assessment recognises Hoxne as particularly vulnerable to poorly located development, concluding that the historic nature of Hoxne should be preserved with any new development designed to preserve and respect Hoxne’s settlement pattern. Development within the plan area requires the preservation and maintenance of these assets and their settings, subject to detailed matters of design and layout.

6.22 Similarly, given archaeological evidence present within the Plan area, proposals will need to consider, where appropriate, the need for investigation and possible remediation in accordance with Historic England advice (2020).⁴¹

6.23 The parish is also rich in non-designated assets, notably the Goldbrook Bridge (Goldbrook), the Swan Bridge (Low Street) as well as several prominent buildings and walls within the conservation area. The Hoxne Neighbourhood

³⁸ Suffolk Historic Environment Record (2020) Available at: [HeritageGateway - Historic Environment Record Details](#)

³⁹ Historic England (2022) Risk Register Available at: [Search the Heritage at Risk Register | Historic England](#)

⁴⁰ Mid Suffolk District Councils (2018) Heritage and Settlement Sensitivity Assessment Available at: [Heritage and Settlement Sensitivity Assessment » Babergh Mid Suffolk](#)

⁴¹ Historic England (2020) Enabling Development and Heritage Assets [online] available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/find/latest-guidance/>

Plan may present further opportunities to better protect non-designated assets, or support measures to better reveal the significance of these assets.

SEA objective(s)

6.24 Considering the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objective and assessment questions.

Table 6.2: Proposed SEA objective for the historic environment

SEA objective	Assessment questions (will the option/ proposal help to...)
To protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment within and surrounding the Hoxne Neighbourhood Area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve and enhance buildings and structures of architectural or historic interest, both designated and non-designated, and their settings? • Conserve and enhance the Low Street Conservation area? • Protect the integrity of the historic setting of key monuments of cultural heritage interest as listed in the Suffolk HER? • Support the undertaking of early archaeological investigations and, where appropriate, recommend mitigation strategies? • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic evolution and character of the Neighbourhood area?

7. Land, soil, and water resources

7.1 This theme focuses on the quality of soil resources, the extent of mineral resources, water supply resources, and water quality in the Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan area.

Policy context

7.2 **Table 7.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan SEA.

Table 7.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to land, soil and water resources

Document title	Year of publication
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	2021
The 25 Year Environment Plan	2018
Safeguarding our Soils: A strategy for England	2009
Future Water: The government's water strategy for England	2011
Water for Life	2011
The National Waste Management Plan	2013
Anglian Water's Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP)	2019
Suffolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan (SMWLP)	2020
Regulation 19 'Pre-Submission' draft Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan (JLP)	2020
Mid Suffolk Core Strategy (CS)	2008
Mid Suffolk Core Strategy Review	2012
Babergh and Mid Suffolk Water Cycle Study	2020

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

- The Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan should have regard to the NPPF, which seeks to protect high quality soil resources, and improve the water environment; recognising the wider benefits of natural capital and derived from ecosystem services. Furthermore, the NPPF recognises the need to take account of the long-term implications of climate change and build resilience in this respect. The NPPF encourages efficient land use, utilising brownfield land opportunities and land remediation schemes where appropriate and delivering environmental gains.

- The 25-year Environment Plan presents a focus for environmental improvement in the next couple decades, with aims to achieve clean air, clean and plentiful water, and reduced risk from environmental hazards. This includes measures to improve soil quality, restore and protect peatlands, use water more sustainably, reduce pollution, maximise resource efficiency and minimise environmental impacts. This leads on from and supports the soil strategy for England (Safeguarding our soils) which seeks to ensure that all England's soils will be managed sustainably, and degradation threats tackled successfully by 2030, as well as the national water strategies which seek to secure sustainable and resilient water resources and improve the quality of waterbodies, and the national waste plan which seeks to identify measures being taken to move towards a zero-waste economy.
- Anglian Water's WRMP further highlights the acute stresses that the catchment faces in the coming years and the challenges faced by the WRZ for Hoxne, in terms of securing water resources into the future in one of the driest regions in England. The Plan outlines how Anglian Water aim to confront and manage these issues to ensure the timely provision of clean water to all residents in the period up to 2045.
- The Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan should also have regard for the Norfolk and Suffolk Minerals and Waste Local Plans, which form part of the Local Development Frameworks for each county. These plans identify and safeguard sites and resources important to the continued sustainable management of mineral extractions and waste arisings.
- Furthermore, the Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan should have regard for the adopted CS and emerging JLP, which contain policies specifically relating to efficient land use (including prioritising brownfield land for development), the sustainable use of resources, and agricultural land use.

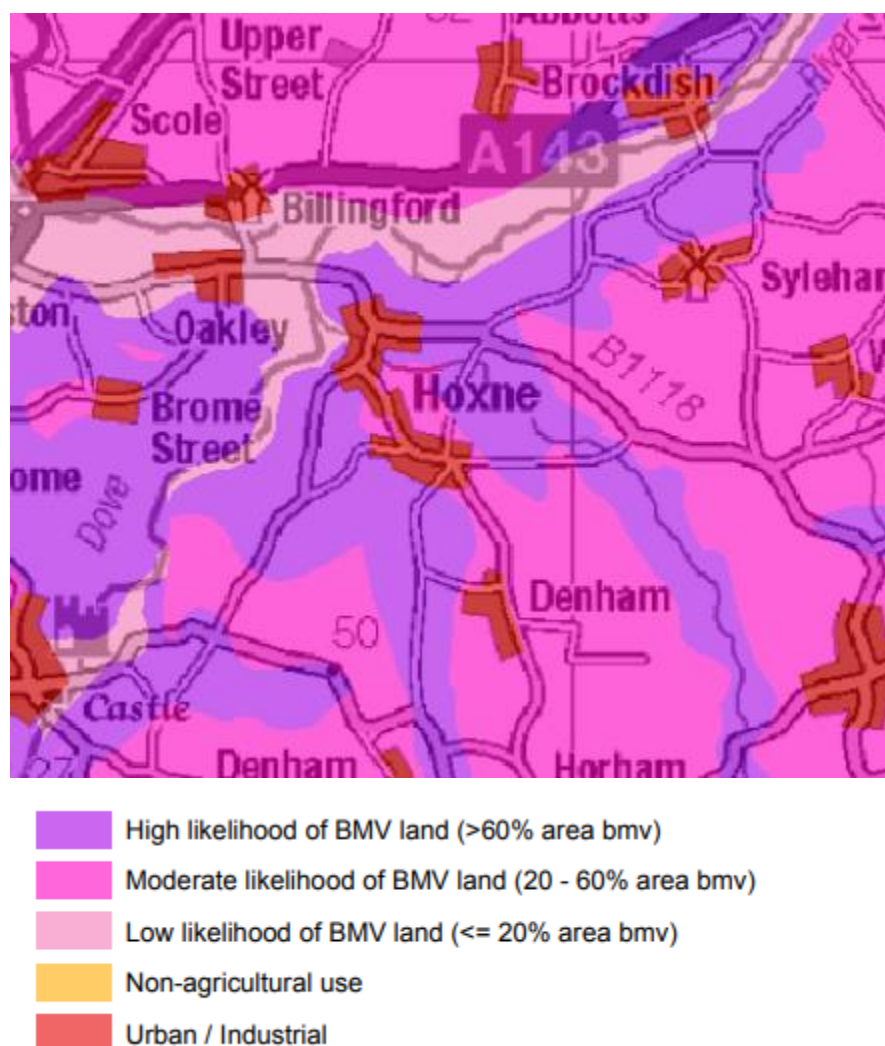
Baseline summary

Soil resources

- 7.4 The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) classifies land into six grades (plus 'non-agricultural land' and 'urban'), where Grades 1 to 3a are recognised as being the 'best and most versatile' (BMV) land and Grades 3b to 5 of poorer quality. In this context, there is a need to avoid loss of higher quality BMV agricultural land.
- 7.5 The majority of the HNP area is underlain by Grade 3 (Good to Moderate) agricultural land, with two areas of Grade 2 (Very Good) north-east and south-west of Cross Street. There is also an area of Grade 4 (Poor) agricultural land to the north of the HNP area. In the absence of a detailed assessment at these locations, it is currently not possible to determine whether the Grade 3 areas are Grade 3a (i.e., best and most versatile land) or Grade 3b quality (not best and most versatile).
- 7.6 The results of the 'Predictive Best and Most Versatile (BMV) Land Assessment' for the Eastern Region indicates that outside of the 'urban' settlement core,

parts of the HNP area have a high likelihood of containing BMV land (>60%) (see **Figure 7.2**)⁴².

Figure 7.2. Likelihood of BMV within the Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan Area



7.7 Bedrock geology is a term used for the main mass of rocks forming the Earth that are present everywhere, whether exposed at the surface in outcrops or concealed beneath superficial deposits or water. The bedrock has formed over vast lengths of geological time ranging from ancient and highly altered rocks of the Proterozoic, some 2500 million years ago or older, up to the relatively young Pliocene, 2.6 million years ago⁴³.

7.8 In this regard the bedrock geology of the Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan area is predominantly underlaid with Norwich Crag Formation - Sand. Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 0 to 3 million years ago in the Quaternary Period. Local environment previously dominated by shallow seas. These sedimentary rocks are shallow marine in origin. They are detrital, ranging from coarse- to fine-grained (locally with some carbonate content) forming interbedded sequences.

7.9 Superficial deposits (which we used to call 'drift') are the youngest geological deposits formed during the most recent period of geological time, the

⁴² Natural England (2017): 'Likelihood of Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land' [online] can be accessed [here](#)

⁴³ British Geological Survey (2022) BGS Geology themes can be accessed [here](#)

Quaternary, which extends back about 2.6 million years from the present. They rest on older deposits or rocks referred to as bedrock.

- 7.10 In terms of superficial geology, the Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan area consist primarily of Lowestoft Formation - Diamicton. Superficial Deposits formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period in a local environment previously dominated by ice age conditions. These sedimentary deposits are glacial in origin. They are detrital, created by the action of ice and meltwater, and form a wide range of deposits and geomorphologies associated with glacial and inter-glacial periods during the Quaternary⁴⁴.

Mineral resources

- 7.11 With regards to minerals resources, the HNP is within a Minerals Consultation Area and will therefore be subject to Policy MP10 in the Suffolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan⁴⁵. Additionally, Hoxne itself is within a Waste Water Treatment Plant Safeguard Area.
- 7.12 According to the Suffolk Minerals and Waste Plan Safeguarding and Proposals Map, part of the HNP area overlaps with the proposed Belstead minerals site, which would involve sand and gravel extraction on land that is currently in agricultural use. This means part of the HNP will be subject to Policy MS3.
- 7.13 In this respect, consultation with Suffolk County Council is likely to be required to determine whether there are likely to be any significant impacts to mineral resources within the HNP associated with new development proposals.

Water resources and quality

- 7.14 The Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan area is located within the Anglian River Basin District⁴⁶ and the Waveney Operational Catchment⁴⁷. There are two watercourses that intersect the neighbourhood area – Chickering Beck and the Dove. Chickering Beck passes through the middle of the parish area and the Dove passes adjacent to and through to the west.
- 7.15 As shown on the Environment Agency’s Catchment Data Explorer⁴⁸, Chickering Beck was awarded a moderate ecological status in 2019. However, it failed the chemical status examination for the same period due to the presence of Polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDE).
- 7.16 Similarly, the Dove Water Body was awarded a moderate ecological status in 2019 and also failed the chemical status examination for the same period, again due to the presence of PBDEs⁴⁹
- 7.17 PBDEs are man-made compounds that are persistent in the environment, with a degradation half-life estimated between months to years. They also have the potential for long-range transport⁵⁰. There are currently national and international measures in place to prevent the use of PBDEs in products, however, there are a wide range of old consumer products still being used. Releases occur during use and disposal of these products (including building demolition) and they continue to enter wastewater treatment works. There is

⁴⁴ British Geological Survey (2022) Geology of Britain viewer can be accessed [here](#)

⁴⁵ Suffolk Minerals and Waste Plan Safeguarding and Proposals Map can be accessed [here](#).

⁴⁶ Map of River Basin Districts can be accessed [here](#).

⁴⁷ Map of the Waveney Operational Catchment can be accessed [here](#).

⁴⁸ Chickering Beck Water Body information can be accessed [here](#).

⁴⁹ Dove Water Body information can be accessed [here](#).

⁵⁰ Polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs): sources, pathways and environmental data can be accessed [here](#).

continuing widespread low-level emissions of PBDEs to surface water via effluent from wastewater treatment works.⁵¹

7.18 Groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZs) protect groundwater sources that are used for human consumption. The whole HNP area is designated as Zone 3 Total Catchment.

7.19 Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs)⁵² represent areas at risk from agricultural nitrate pollution. The HNP area is within the SWSGZ1020 safeguard zone which is at risk of Nitrate and various Pesticide (Carbetamide, Clopyralid, Metaldehyde and Propyzamide) contamination. The area also falls within the Surface Water S396 - River Waveney NVZ.

Future baseline

7.20 Future development has the potential to affect water quality and availability through increased consumption and pollution, wastewater discharges, water runoff and modification. It is recognised that this would be a significant issue for the parish due to be located in one of the driest regions in England and that Anglian Water will be required to address any water supply and wastewater management issues in line with their WRMP.

7.21 New development has the potential to lead to the loss of BMV agricultural land and safeguarded mineral resources in the parish.

7.22 It is unlikely that new development within the parish would have an impact on the wider area's NVZ designations given the strategic scale of the overall NVZs. Additionally, a large source of detriment to NVZ comes from agricultural use, which is not anticipated to be brought forward through the Neighbourhood Development Plan. Demolition should also ensure no additional PBDE emissions affect water quality and plan policy can provide the necessary mitigation.

Key issues

7.23 Following the consideration of the baseline information and policy context review, the following key issues within the Neighbourhood Plan area are identified in relation to land, soil and water resources:

- The HNP area has the potential to be underlain by best and most versatile (BMV) land as shown by Figure 7.2. However, a full classification of the quality of this land has not been undertaken and whilst new development is likely to be focussed on the existing settlement, as a finite resource BMV land should be retained where possible in future growth.
- Water resources located in the HNP area include Chickering Beck and the Dove. As of 2019 both these water bodies had a moderate ecological status but failed the chemical status examination due to the presence of priority contaminants. Further impacts to water quality, including any additional PBDE release in demolition should be avoided.

⁵¹ Environment Agency (2019) Polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs): sources, pathways, and environmental data: accessed [here](#)

⁵² Information on NVZs can be found [here](#).

- The HNP overlaps an SPZ Zone 3 Total Catchment designation where water quality will need to be protected.
- Plan making should consider how local decisions will affect water supply and ensure appropriate infrastructure is in place to accommodate new development areas.
- The HNP is within a Minerals Consultation Area and a Wastewater Treatment Plants Safeguarding Area. It is also within the Belstead proposed mineral site. This has implications for the spatial strategy of the draft Plan.

SEA objective(s)

7.24 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objectives and assessment questions.

SEA Objective	Assessment questions to consider for the allocations/proposals within the HNP
Land, Soil, and Water Resources	
Ensure the efficient and effective use of land.	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid the loss of high-quality agricultural land resources? • Promote any opportunities for the use of previously developed land, or vacant/underutilised land? • Protect the integrity of mineral resources?
Protect and enhance water quality in addition to the use and sustainable management of water resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid impacts on water quality? • Support improvements to water quality? • Ensure appropriate drainage and mitigation is delivered alongside development? • Protect waterbodies from pollution? • Support enhancements to sewerage and wastewater capacity? • Maximise water efficiency and opportunities for water harvesting and/or water recycling?

8. Community wellbeing

8.1 This theme focuses on population structure, deprivation issues, community assets and infrastructure, as well as influences on health and wellbeing in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

Policy context

8.2 **Table 8.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan SEA.

Table 8.1 Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to community wellbeing

Document title	Year of publication
<u>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)</u>	2021
<u>The 25 Year Environment Plan</u>	2018
<u>Healthy and safe communities - Planning practice guidance</u>	2019
<u>Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review 10 Years On</u>	2020
<u>Planning for Sport Guidance</u>	2019
<u>Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils Joint Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy</u>	2019
<u>Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils Homes and Housing Strategy</u>	2019
<u>Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils Leisure, Sport and Physical Activity Strategy - Update 2021</u>	2021
<u>Mid Suffolk Core Strategy (CS)</u>	2008
<u>Mid Suffolk Core Strategy Review</u>	2012
<u>Regulation 19 'Pre-Submission' draft Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan (JLP)</u>	2020

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

- The Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan will need to have regard for the principles set out in the NPPF, which seek to retain and enhance access to community services and facilities such as educational facilities and open spaces. The NPPF recognises the benefits of having a range of local provision to support

community needs. In addition, the NPPF recognises the benefits of creating cohesive communities in safe environments where the fear of crime (and crime itself) does not undermine resident quality of life. This contributes to ensuring settlement and community identities are protected.

- The NPPF recognises the role of development plans in helping to deliver access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity, therefore contributing to the health and wellbeing of communities. The health benefits of access to nature, green spaces and green infrastructure are further reiterated in the 25-year Environment Plan.
- The 2020 Health Equity in England Report identifies a health gap less and more deprived areas, which has grown in the last decade. This means an increased amount of people can expect to spend more of their lives in poor health with a stalled, or even declined, life expectancy.
- The Planning for Sport Guidance seeks to help the planning system provide formal and informal opportunities for everyone to take part in sport and be physically active, setting out twelve principles.
- The Joint Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out six priorities for the Babergh and Mid Suffolk councils to engage with in order to prevent or relieve homelessness:
 - Priority 1: Prevention of Homelessness
 - Priority 2: Supporting Vulnerable Households to Secure and Maintain Accommodation
 - Priority 3: Mitigating Against the Impact of Welfare Reforms
 - Priority 4: Increasing Access to Suitable Accommodation
 - Priority 5: Raise Aspirations of Positive Health and Wellbeing amongst Homeless Persons
 - Priority 6: End Rough Sleeping

The document also provides a plan on how to ensure that sufficient accommodation, support, and advice is and will be made available for residents of the Districts who are at risk of becoming homeless or may already be homeless.

- The Homes and Housing Strategy provides nine strategic aims that underpin the delivery of Babergh and Mid Suffolk's housing vision and key priorities. The strategy demonstrates a commitment to meeting future housing challenges and builds upon the vision for "*residents to live in affordable and high-quality homes that enable them to build settled, safe and healthy lives, within sustainable and thriving communities*".
- The Leisure, Sport and Physical Activity Strategy articulates Babergh and Mid Suffolk's vision of supporting, encouraging and inspiring their communities to be more active and achieve a better quality of life.

- The Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan should also have regard to the adopted CS and emerging JLP, which contains policies relating to community wellbeing, i.e., housing and services policies.

Baseline summary

Population and age structure

- 8.4 According to the City Population website⁵³, which uses the 2011 Census data, there were 889 residents in the parish in 2011. This was expected to have decreased to 875 by 2020.
- 8.5 Within 2020, it was estimated that approximately 16.9% of the population of the HNP area was between the ages of 0-17, with 50.4% between the working ages of 18-64 and 32.7% within the over 65 band.

Index of Multiple Deprivation

- 8.6 The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 (IMD) is an overall relative measure of deprivation and is the combination of seven different domains as described below. The seven deprivation domains are as follows:
- Income: the proportion of the population experiencing a deprivation relating to low income. There are a further two subsets of this measure:
 - Income deprivation affecting children: the proportion of children aged 0-15 living in income deprived families.
 - Income deprivation affecting older people: the proportion of all adults aged 60 and above that experience income deprivation.
 - Employment: the proportion of the working-age population involuntarily excluded from the labour market, including those who want to work but cannot.
 - Education, skills and training: the lack of attainment and skills in the population.
 - Health deprivation and disability: this risk of premature death and the impairment of quality of life through poor physical or mental health.
 - Crime: the risk of personal and material victimisation at the local level.
 - Barriers to housing and services: the physical and financial accessibility of housing a local services, split into 'geographical barriers' linked to the physical proximity and 'wider barriers' linked to access to housing.
 - Living environment: the quality of the local environment, categorised into 'indoors living environment' to measure the quality of housing and 'outdoors living environment' to measure indicators like air quality and road traffic accidents.
- 8.7 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs)⁵⁴ are designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics in England and Wales. They are standardized geographies

⁵³ Hoxne population data via the City Population website can be accessed [here](#)

⁵⁴ The Indices of Deprivation Explorer is available [here](#).

intended to be as consistent as possible, with each LSOA containing approximately 1,000 to 1,500 people. In relation to the IMD 2019, LSOAs are ranked out of the 32,844 in England and Wales, with 1 being the most deprived.

- 8.8 In this respect, the HNP is within the Mid Suffolk 001B LSOA. The 2019 rankings for this neighbourhood can be found in **Table 8.2** below.

Table 8.2 The LSOAs of the PNDP area against each Index of Multiple Deprivation

Deprivation Indices	Mid Suffolk 011B LSOA
Index of Multiple Deprivation	14,072 (amongst 50% most deprived neighbourhoods)
Income	24,044 (amongst 30% least deprived neighbourhoods)
Employment	21,666 (amongst 40% least deprived neighbourhoods)
Education, skills and training	22,017 (amongst 40% least deprived neighbourhoods)
Health and disability	31,780 (amongst 10% least deprived neighbourhoods)
Crime	29,909 (amongst 10% least deprived neighbourhoods)
Barriers to housing and services	531 (amongst 10% most deprived neighbourhoods)
Living environment	571 (amongst 10% most deprived neighbourhoods)
Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI)	22,336 (amongst 40% least deprived neighbourhoods)
Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index (IDAOPI)	27,534 (amongst 20% least deprived neighbourhoods)

- 8.9 **Table 8.2** above demonstrates that whilst, on balance, Hoxne parish is mostly classed as least deprived, it has serious deprivation issues when it comes to the 'Barriers to housing and services' and 'Living environment' categories.

Housing needs

- 8.10 The following information regarding housing tenure in Hoxne has been extracted from the Hoxne Housing Needs Assessment (2020)⁵⁵:

⁵⁵ Hoxne Housing Needs Assessment can be accessed [here](#).

- According to the 2011 Census, 64.6% of homes in the HNP were owned outright, 1% were shared ownership, 18.8% were socially rented and 13.8% privately rented.
- In 2018, the average detached house price was £465,000; the average semi-detached price was £239,000 and the average terrace price was £281,000. There is no data for flats.
- There was a 166.4% growth in house prices in Hoxne between 2010-2019. In 2010, the average house price was £181 and in 2019 it was an average of £482,000 – however there were no sales of house types other than detached homes in that year, so this price growth is not representative.
- The 2011 Census shows that there were 384 households in Hoxne, living in 199 detached houses, 120 semi-detached, 60 terraced houses, and 28 flats.

Community assets and infrastructure

8.11 The availability of services, facilities, and amenities within the HNP area varies dependent on location. An overview of the services and facilities within each settlement is provided below⁵⁶:

- St Peter and St Paul's Church.
- Businesses including Greengold health food shop, Luckhams Landscapes, Rosebank Cottage Bed & Breakfast, Goldbrook boarding kennels and cattery, Shake It London sporting goods shop, Babs Cabs car rental, and Castleden Trees plant nursery.
- The Swan Inn of Hoxne.
- Hoxne Village Hall.
- Hoxne St Edmunds Primary School.

Green infrastructure networks

8.12 Access to gardens, parks, woodlands, and rivers have played a huge part in helping people through the pandemic. Almost nine in ten adults surveyed by Natural England reported that being in nature makes them feel happy and nearly three quarters of adults were concerned about biodiversity loss in England⁵⁷.

8.13 Green spaces in the HNP area include⁵⁸:

- Low Street Green.
- The playing field.
- Heckfield Green.

⁵⁶ The examination of the services, facilities and amenities within each settlement was conducted via a high-level Google maps search – focusing on each area in turn and making a note of the different features.

⁵⁷ Natural England's survey can be accessed [here](#).

⁵⁸ Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan Background Document 4 - Local Green Spaces can be accessed [here](#).

- The green area adjacent to and behind the Primary School.
- Brakey Wood.
- Community orchard off Wittons Lane.
- The area leading up to St. Edmund's monument; and
- Hoxne meadow Cross Street.

Future baseline

8.14 The 2019 IMD indicates deprivation in the HNP area is high for the 'Barriers to housing and services' and 'Living Environment' categories. To reduce deprivation levels in these areas in the longer term, the HNP should seek to utilise opportunities to support the delivery of the right mix of housing types, tenures and sizes according to local needs, to support sustainable growth of the community.

8.15 As the population of Hoxne increases and ages, there is likely to be increasing pressure on healthcare services. Therefore, the lack of direct healthcare services in the HNP area has the potential to lead to the decline in access to core services for residents. This highlights a need to support the retention and improvement of important facilities within the neighbourhood plan area. This also includes open green space provision in Hoxne, which has been increasingly highlighted through the ongoing COVID19 pandemic. These factors are more likely to be appropriately considered and addressed through planned development rather than unplanned development.

8.16 The COVID-19 pandemic has also changed the way people work and shop. For many people, working from home is likely to continue to form part of a more flexible approach. The effects of increased levels of home working are further discussed under the transportation theme (Chapter 9).

Key issues

8.17 Following the consideration of the baseline information and policy context review, the ensuing key issues within the HNP area are identified in relation to community wellbeing:

- The HNP area has experienced a decrease in population for the period 2011-2020, with 32.7% of the 2020 population within the over 65 age band. This suggests there is an ageing population within the parish and a need to plan for specialist and adaptable homes.
- Based on the 2019 IMD data, Hoxne parish has significant deprivation issues in the 'Barriers to housing and services' and 'Living environment' categories. Planned development should seek to deliver an appropriate range of housing types, tenures, and sizes to reduce barriers to housing. Service and facility improvements and infrastructure development (including green infrastructure) can also help reduce barriers to accessing services and improve the living environment.
- While there are a range of existing services, facilities, and amenities within the HNP area, health services are notably limited. A wider variety

of services can be found in the neighbouring settlements of Eye, Diss and Harleston and sustainable links to these areas should be enhanced where possible.

- There is no secondary school in the parish, development should seek to enhance links to secondary school where possible.
- As the requirements of the working population continue to change, there is likely to be a greater need for adaptable dwellings that can accommodate flexible working practices which might include. co-working facilities/hubs. Plan-making can help facilitate this.

SEA objective(s)

8.18 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objective and assessment questions.

SEA Objective	Assessment questions to consider for the allocations/proposals within the HNP
Community Wellbeing	
<p>Ensure growth in the neighbourhood plan area is aligned with the needs of all residents, improving accessibility, anticipating future needs and specialist requirements, and supporting cohesive and inclusive communities.</p>	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality and affordable housing? • Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes? • Meet the needs of all sectors of the community? • Provide flexible and adaptable homes that meet people's needs? • Improve the availability and accessibility of key local facilities, including specialist services for disabled and older people? • Encourage and promote social cohesion and active involvement of local people in community activities? • Facilitate green infrastructure enhancements? • Promote the use of sustainable building techniques, including use of sustainable building materials in construction? • Minimise fuel poverty? • Maintain or enhance the quality of life of existing residents?

9. Transport

Policy context

9.1 This theme focuses on; transport infrastructure and movement networks within and surrounding the District, traffic flows, and congestion.

Policy context

9.2 **Table 9.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan SEA.

Table 9.1 Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to transportation

Document Title	Year of publication
<u>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)</u>	2021
<u>The Transport Investment Strategy – Moving Britain Ahead</u>	2017
<u>The Department for Transport’s Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy</u>	2016
<u>Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge</u>	2020
<u>Suffolk Local Transport Plan (2011- 2031)</u>	2011
<u>Mid Suffolk Core Strategy (CS)</u>	2008
<u>Mid Suffolk Core Strategy Review</u>	2012
<u>Regulation 19 ‘Pre-Submission’ draft Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan (JLP)</u>	2020

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

- The Hoxne Neighbourhood should have regard to the NPPF, which seeks the consideration of transport issues from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals to address any known issues and maximise opportunities to increase accessibility, particularly by walking, cycling and public transport. Larger developments are expected to be delivered in areas which are or can be made sustainable by limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. However, it is recognised that sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural environments.
- National transport strategies set out investment priorities which ultimately all seek to improve the connectivity, effectiveness and reliability of transport networks, whilst reducing impacts on the natural environment (including through decarbonisation). Furthermore, they place great emphasis on making cycling and walking the natural choice for shorter journeys, or as

part of a longer journeys. This includes investment in new and upgraded infrastructure, changing perceptions and increasing safety.

- The Suffolk Local Transport Plan 2011-2031, published by Suffolk County Council sets out proposed transport solutions for the plan area up to 2031, with a focus on enabling sustainable economic growth.
- Alongside the adopted CS emerging JLP, the Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan should have regard to the strategic policy aims of the plans.

Baseline summary

Local transport infrastructure

9.4 Hoxne has a limited bus service that runs hourly during the day (depending whether it is in operation on school day), connecting to other villages in the immediate area⁵⁹.

9.5 Hoxne is a village in the Mid Suffolk district of Suffolk, England, approximately five miles (8 km) east-southeast of Diss. The parish is irregularly shaped, covering the villages of Hoxne, Cross Street and Heckfield Green, with an area extending southwards to include part of the former RAF Horham airfield. The B1118 is the primary road located in the north of the Neighbourhood area which extends eastwardly towards Chickering. This road also stretches through the village itself where it meets Low street and subsequently Eye Road which runs southwardly through the Hoxne Neighbourhood area.

9.6 Hoxne has 1 bus route, the 319, which serves 9 bus stops as listed below:

- Goldbrook Bridge, opposite Abbey Hill.
- Syleham Road, opposite Lower Oakley.
- Goldbrook Bridge, adjacent to Abbey Hill.
- Low Street, adjacent to Green Street.
- Low Street, opposite Green Street.
- Post Office, adjacent to Low Street.
- Post Office, opposite Low Street.
- Lower Oakley, W-bound, Syleham Road.
- Lower Oakley, E-bound, Syleham Road.

9.7 In addition, the following transport lines have routes that pass near Hoxne: line 112 and 456.

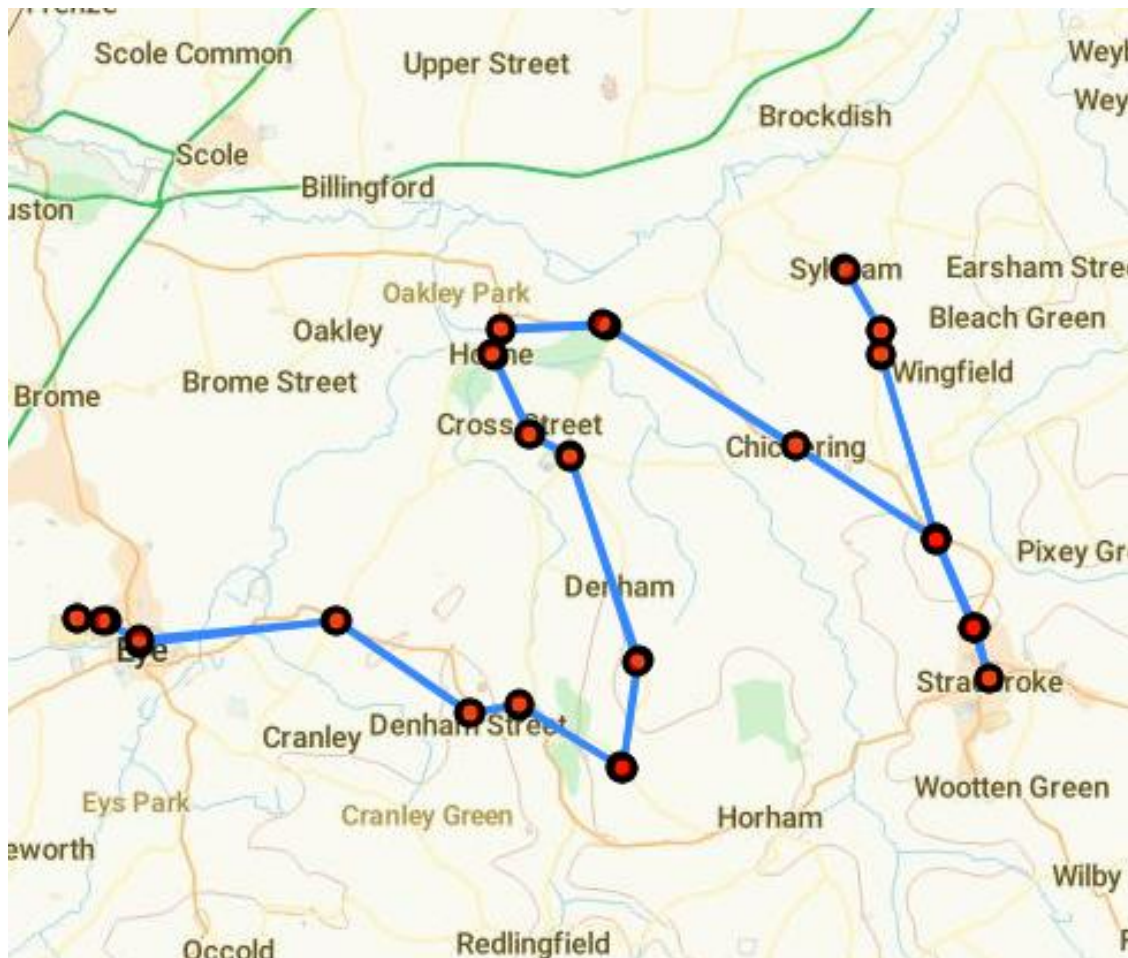
9.8 There is limited access to rail services within the immediate proximity of the Hoxne Neighbourhood area, however, nearby transport links which can be used by Hoxne's residents to connect with nearby villages and towns include:

- Diss Railway Station - 4 miles north-west.
- Attleborough Railway Station - 14 miles north-west.

⁵⁹ Suffolk County Council (2022) Local Transport Links Available at: [Suffolk on Board - Bus / Timetables](#)

- Spooner Row Railway Station - 14 miles north.
- Stowmarket Railway Station - 14 miles south-west; and
- Needham Market Railway Station - 15 miles south-west.

Figure 9.1 The 319 (Syleham - Stradbroke - Hoxne - Denham – Eye) Bus Route

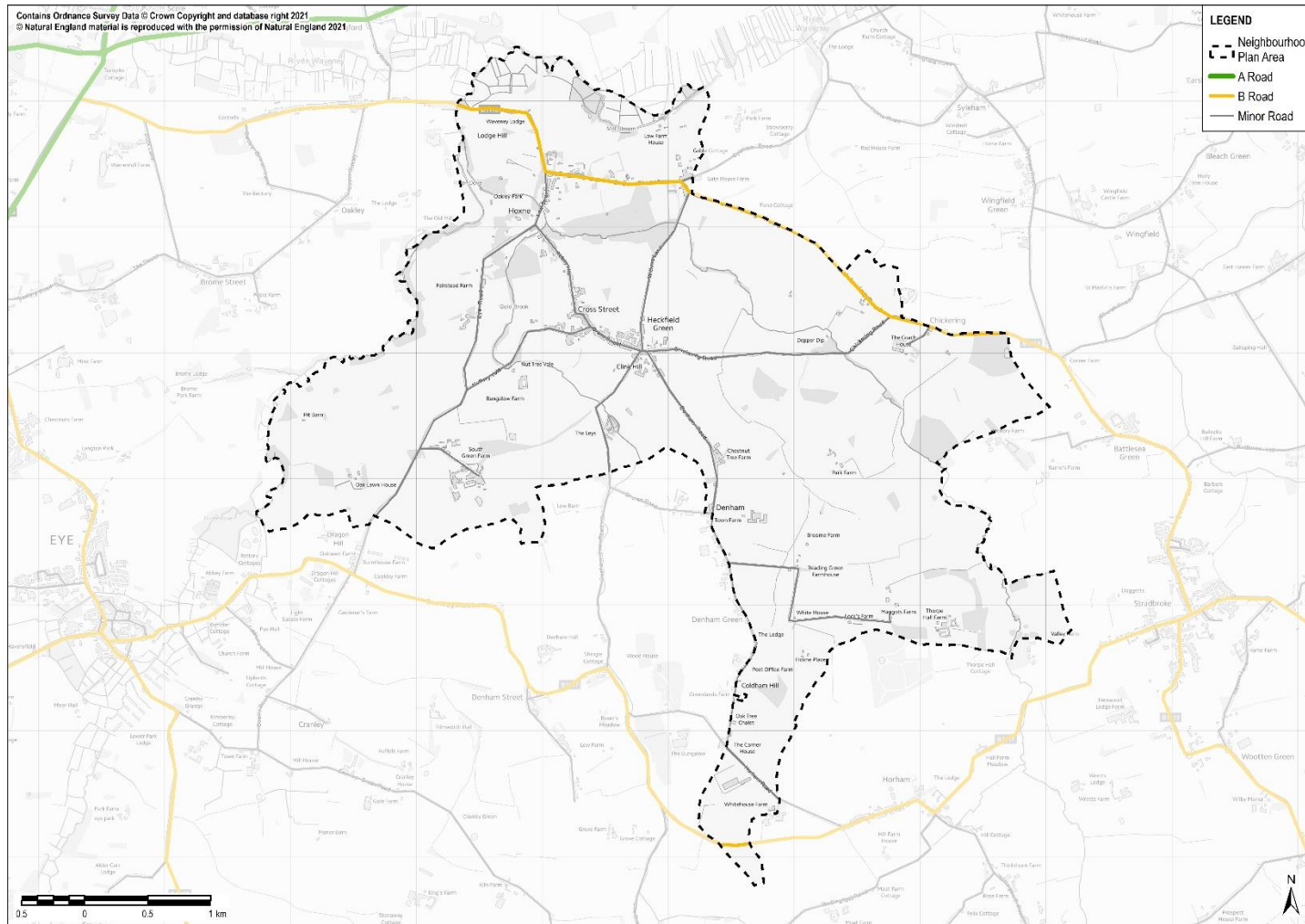


Strategic transport network

9.9 The A143 is a road that is located just north of the Hoxne Neighbourhood Area and runs from the Gorleston-on-Sea area of Great Yarmouth, in Norfolk to Haverhill in Suffolk. The A143 provides Hoxne residents access to larger towns and villages throughout Suffolk such as Stuston to the west or Brockdish to the east. For the majority of the route (between Gorleston-on-Sea and Bury St Edmunds) the road is classified as a primary route. Over the years the road has been improved greatly with new by-passes opening at regular intervals. The last of these being the Broome - Ellingham bypass to the North-West of Hoxne in March 2002.

9.10 The A140 an 'A-class' road which runs from the A14 near Needham Market to the A149 south of Cromer, can also be accessed via the B1118 providing southwardly access to both Brome and Yaxley villages, as illustrated in **Figure 9.2**

Figure 9.2 Hoxne's Strategic Transport Network



Footpaths and cycle network

9.11 The parish has several well used public footpaths providing important links within the village and enabling links to the wider Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network. Many of these are located around St Edmond's Monument and towards Foxborough Plantation. Footways are shown in red in **Figure 9.3**.

Figure 9.3 Footpaths in Hoxne⁶⁰



solid red line: footpath;
solid fuchsia line: bridleway;
solid green line: restricted byway;
solid blue line: byway open to all traffic.

9.12 The Parish Plan is approximately 10 years old but provides the most recent survey of village opinion on development and related issues. According to the resident responses to the Parish Plan, only 22% of respondents thought the traffic situation in Hoxne was acceptable however this was viewed as less of concern in the Denham and Reading Green areas. Concerns particularly related to the use of HGVs, speeding, and congestion near the local school.

9.13 In conjunction with Denham Parish Council, Hoxne Parish Council has been exploring new opportunities to designate certain rural lanes in the village as “Quiet Lanes” which forms part of a larger county-wide project. Quiet Lanes are a nationally recognised designation⁶¹ intended for shared utilisation by cyclists,

⁶⁰ Ordnance Survey (2022) Rights of Way Available at: [The rights of way using an Ordnance Survey map delivered by Bing \(rowmaps.com\)](https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/rowmaps)

⁶¹ Suffolk County council (2021) Launching Quiet Lanes Available at: [Council news | Suffolk County Council](https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-news)

pedestrians, horse riders, and other road users. They encourage drivers to ‘Expect and Respect’ more vulnerable road users therefore enabling non-motorised users to enjoy rural lanes with enhanced safety. It should be noted that this form of lane does not impose traffic restrictions and is not enforced by a local authority. Advisory signs are placed at either end of Quiet Lanes to highlight to motorised users that the road is a clearly a shared space.

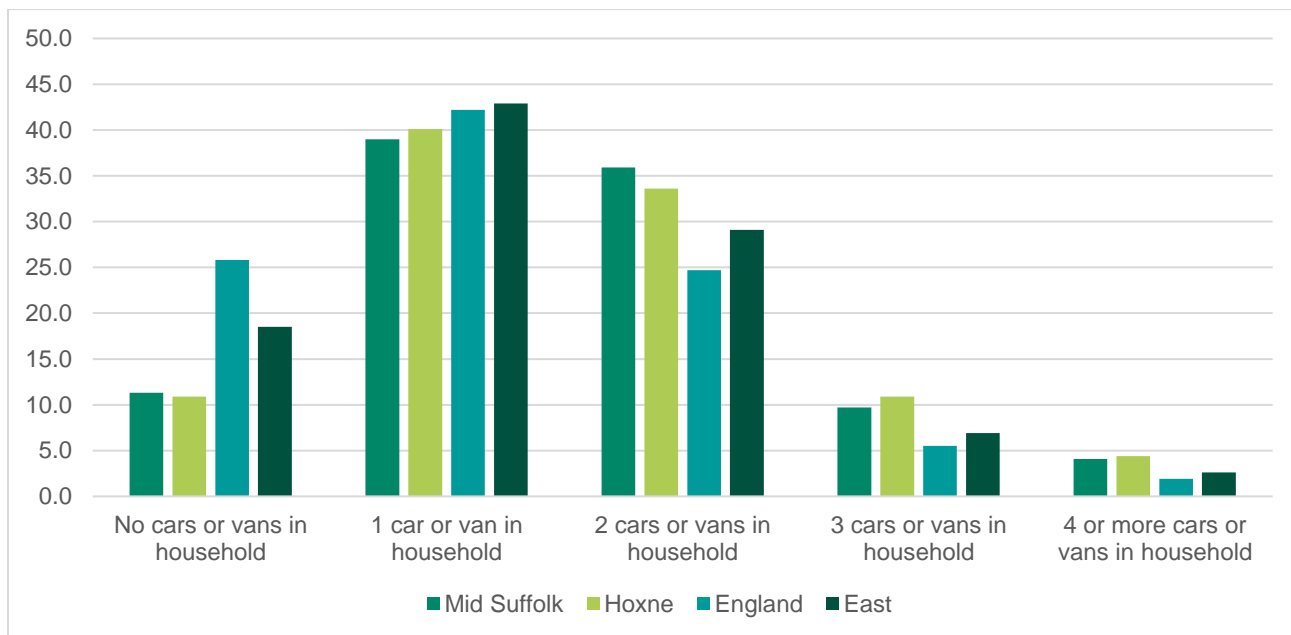
9.14 The lanes being considered in the Hoxne Neighbourhood area are currently used by pedestrians, cyclists, and horse riders and link with existing footpaths and bridleways in throughout the village. They also join Hoxne and Denham and will facilitate walking routes between thus connecting both Villages. In conjunction with Suffolk County Council (Highways), Denham Low Road (to the Hoxne Primary School via Clink Hill) and Wittons Lane are being considered for Quiet Lane designation, as depicted in **Figure 9.4**.

Figure 9.4 Hoxne and Mid Suffolk Proposed Quiet Lanes



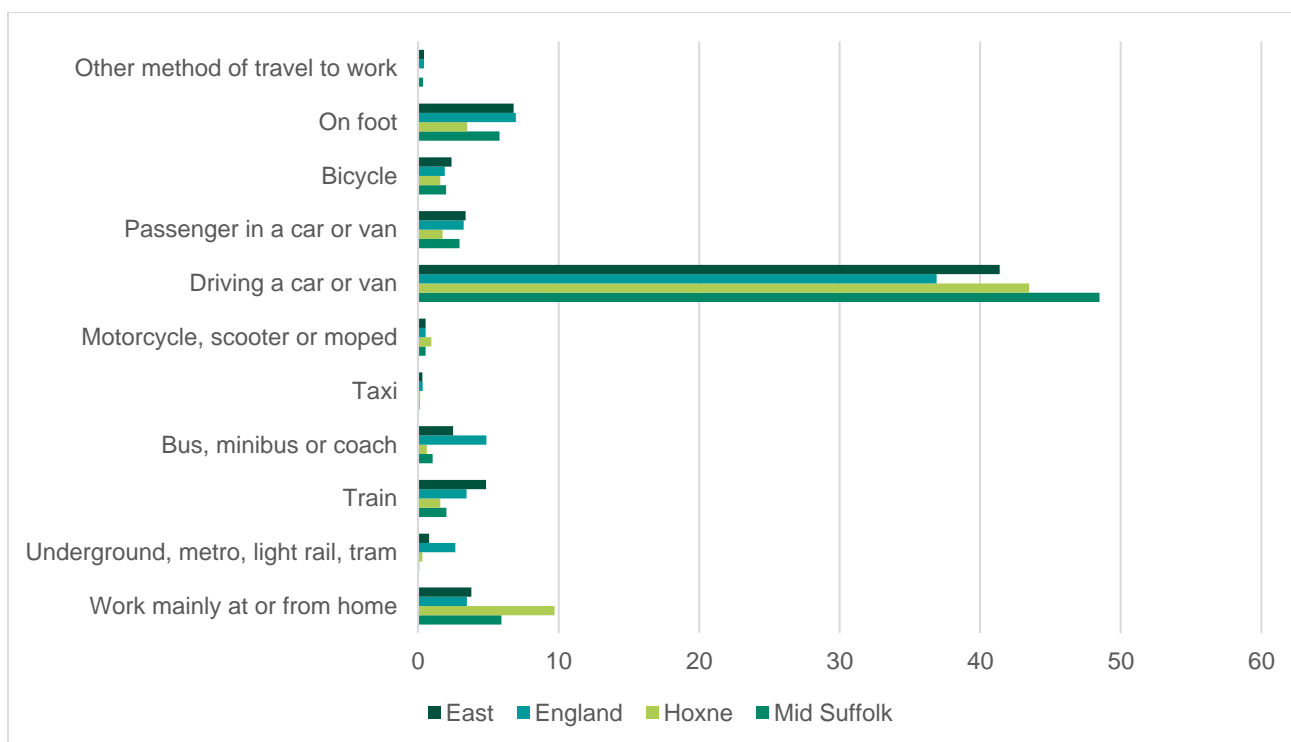
9.15 As shown in **Figure 9.5** below, car ownership in the Plan area is high, whereby 10.9% of households have three cars/vans in their household. Comparative figures for Mid Suffolk (9.7%), the East (6.9%) and England as a whole (5.5%) show lower car ownership in this regard. A similar pattern can be observed in the four or more cars/vans category, with Hoxne exhibiting high figures (4.4%) when compared to Mid Suffolk (4.1%), the East (2.6%) and England as a whole (1.9%). Only 10.9% of households in Hoxne do not own a car/van.

Figure 9.5 Car ownership (2011)⁶²



9.16 Unsurprisingly given the high level of car ownership shown in Figure 9.5 above, most residents in the Hoxne Neighbourhood Area travel to work via car or van (43.5%). This is higher than comparative statistics for the East (41.4%) and England as a whole (36.9%), however lower than figures for Mid Suffolk (48.5%). Further, a relatively large percentage of residents work from home (9.7%) when considered against other comparators, whilst a relatively low percentage of residents travel to work on foot (3.5%) or using a bicycle (1.6%). This is shown in **Figure 9.6 below**.

Figure 9.6 Method of Travelling to Work (2011)⁶³



⁶² UK GOV (2011): '2011 Census' [online] available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/2011census>

⁶³ UK GOV (2011): '2011 Census' [online] available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/2011census>

Future baseline

- 9.17 Given the rural nature of the parish and lack of sustainable transport options, in the absence of strategic transport interventions, growth in the Plan area will likely further reliance on the private vehicle for travel. This has the potential to increase traffic and lead to additional localised congestion issues which in turn may reduce road safety.
- 9.18 The Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan can however support small-scale infrastructure improvements and active travel opportunities that seeks to maximise opportunities for pedestrian and cyclist movement, as demonstrated through the quiet lanes project. Moreover, given increasing levels of working from home exhibited in Hoxne, in light of the recent pandemic, future development should seek to deliver space and services to enable working remotely.
- 9.19 Measures to further reduce the impact of traffic, particularly HGVs, through Hoxne Green Street, Low Street and Hoxne Cross Street/Heckfield Green and improve safety should be supported through the Hoxne Neighbourhood plan.

Key issues

- 9.20 Considering trends which favour cars/vans as the primary mode of transport and low levels of public transport use, planning should seek to maximise opportunities to reduce the need to travel, enable home working, and access a choice of sustainable transport modes where possible including active travel opportunities.
- 9.21 New development has high potential to increase traffic and lead to additional localised congestion and parking issues which in turn may reduce road safety. A key concern in this respect is narrow streets which are already heavily trafficked, and the exacerbation of existing peak time congestion.
- 9.22 There are several traffic hotspots within Hoxne, recognised locally for causing safety issues for pedestrians including around St Edmunds Primary School. Further to this, it is considered that public transport use is likely to remain low compared with private car use given the lack of accessible public transport options.
- 9.23 Opportunities to improve and/ or extend active travel connections, alongside public realm improvements and urban greening within the plan are should be sought.

SEA objective(s)

9.24 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objective:

SEA objective	Assessment questions (will the proposal help to...)
Promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support the key objectives within the Suffolk Local Transport Plan to encourage more sustainable transport?• Enable sustainable transport infrastructure enhancements?• Ensure sufficient road capacity to accommodate new development?• Promote improved local connectivity and pedestrian and cyclist movement?• Facilitate on-going high levels of home and remote working?• Improve road safety?• Reduce the impact on residents from the road network?• Improve parking facilities?

10. Next steps

Subsequent stages for the SEA process

10.1 Scoping (the current stage) is the second stage of the SEA process, which comprises:

1. Screening;
2. Scoping;
3. Assess reasonable alternatives, with a view to informing preparation of the draft plan;
4. Assess the draft plan and prepare the Environmental Report with a view to informing consultation and plan finalisation; and
5. Publish a 'statement' at the time of plan adoption in order to 'tell the story' of plan-making / SEA (and present 'measures decided concerning monitoring').

10.2 The next stage will involve exploring reasonable alternatives for the Hoxne Neighbourhood Plan. The findings of this work will be fed back to the Parish Council so that they might be taken into consideration when finalising the Neighbourhood Plan. The submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan will then be subject to appraisal, and the Environmental Report will be prepared for submission alongside the Plan.

Consultation on the Scoping Report

10.3 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.

10.4 The statutory consultation bodies are the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England. The Scoping Report has been released to these three statutory consultees.

10.5 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.

10.6 The consultation period runs from Tuesday the 15th of March, to Tuesday the 19th of April. Comments on the Scoping Report should be sent to:

Fraser Young, AECOM

Email address: Fraser.Young@AECOM.com

10.7 All comments received on the Scoping Report will be reviewed and will influence the development of the SEA where appropriate.

Appendix A SEA Framework

Table A.1 Proposed SEA framework

SEA theme	SEA objective	Assessment questions (will the proposal help to...)
Biodiversity	Protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity sites and features, by avoiding impacts on regionally and locally designated sites, and delivering demonstrable biodiversity net gains.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regionally and locally designated sites, including supporting habitats and mobile species that are important to the integrity of these sites? • Protect and enhance priority habitats and species and the areas that support them? • Achieve a net gain in biodiversity? • Support enhancements to multifunctional green infrastructure networks? • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of biodiversity and geodiversity?
Climate change	Reduce the contribution to climate change made by activities within the Neighbourhood Plan area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the number of journeys made? • Promote the use of sustainable modes of transport including walking, cycling and public transport? • Increase the number of new developments meeting or exceeding sustainable design criteria? • Generate energy from low or zero carbon sources? • Reduce energy consumption from non-renewable resources? • Support proposals for EV charging infrastructure?
	Support the resilience of the Neighbourhood Plan area to the potential effects of climate change, including flooding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that inappropriate development does not take place in areas at higher risk of flooding, considering the likely future effects of climate change? • Improve and extend green infrastructure networks in the plan area to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change? • Sustainably manage water runoff, reducing surface water runoff (either within the plan area or downstream)? • Ensure the potential risks associated with climate change are considered through new development in the Neighbourhood area? • Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the area to the effects of climate change, including through enhancements to ecological networks?
Landscape		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and/ or enhance local landscape character and quality of place? • Conserve and enhance local identity, diversity and settlement character? • Identify and protect locally important viewpoints which contribute to character and sense of place? • Protect visual amenity and locally important views in the Plan area?

SEA theme	SEA objective	Assessment questions (will the proposal help to...)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain and enhance landscape features that contribute to the river setting, or rural setting, including trees and hedgerows?
Historic environment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conserve and enhance buildings and structures of architectural or historic interest, both designated and non-designated, and their settings? Conserve and enhance the Low Street Conservation area? Protect the integrity of the historic setting of key monuments of cultural heritage interest as listed in the Suffolk HER? Support the undertaking of early archaeological investigations and, where appropriate, recommend mitigation strategies? Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic evolution and character of the Neighbourhood area?
Land, soil and water resources	To ensure the efficient and effective use of land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid the loss of high-quality agricultural land resources? Avoid the unnecessary sterilisation of, or hindering of access to mineral resources in the Plan area? Affect the integrity of waste infrastructure within and surrounding the Plan area? Promote any opportunities for the use of previously developed land, or vacant/ underutilised land?
	To protect and enhance water quality, and use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid impacts on water quality? Support improvements to water quality? Ensure appropriate drainage and mitigation is delivered alongside development? Protect waterbodies from pollution, including NVZs? Maximise water efficiency and opportunities for water harvesting and/ or water recycling? Improve the resilience of water supplies?
Community Wellbeing		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, and affordable housing? Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes? Meet the needs of all sectors of the community? Provide flexible and adaptable homes that meet people's needs, particularly the needs of an ageing population? Improve the availability and accessibility of key local facilities, including specialist services for disabled and older people? Encourage and promote social cohesion and active involvement of local people in community activities? Promote the use of sustainable building techniques, including use of sustainable building materials in construction? Minimise fuel poverty?

SEA theme	SEA objective	Assessment questions (will the proposal help to...)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain or enhance the quality of life of existing local residents?
Transportation		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support the key objectives within the Suffolk Local Transport Plan to encourage more sustainable transport?• Enable sustainable transport infrastructure enhancements?• Ensure sufficient road capacity to accommodate new development?• Promote improved local connectivity and pedestrian and cyclist movement?• Facilitate on-going high levels of home and remote working?• Improve road safety?• Reduce the impact on residents from the road network?• Improve parking facilities?
