

Loxley Neighbourhood Development Plan Site Assessment - July 2017

Site Reference	Site Area (approx.)	Site Capacity
Site D	0.55 ha	12 dwellings (22 dpha)

Site Address

Land west of Lodge, Loxley Hall, Stratford Road, Loxley

Site Description

The site comprises a small parcel of land currently used for residential purposes in connection with the Lodge and a wider parcel of agricultural land. The site is situated to the north of Stratford Road and on the northern edge of the village.

The site benefits from an existing vehicular access off Stratford Road. There are no pavements along this part of Stratford Road, the nearest being on the corner of Hill Top and Stratford Road by the village green.

There is open agricultural land to the north. The Lodge lies to the east and there are residential properties to the south on the opposite side of Stratford Road. There is a dense and mature tree and hedge belt along the southern roadside boundary. The northern boundary is open due to the arbitrary nature of the site.

Aerial Photo



Relevant Planning History

None

Site Photo



Site Constraints

Status – The majority of the site represents undeveloped greenfield land. However, garden land is classed as brownfield land.

Highways – Access would need to be gained from Stratford Road where the site has road frontage and an existing access. There is reasonable visibility in both directions at this point due to the alignment of the road. Access would be within the existing 30mph limit. Traffic speeds would need to be measured to ascertain the required visibility and frontage hedge/tree cut back may be needed.

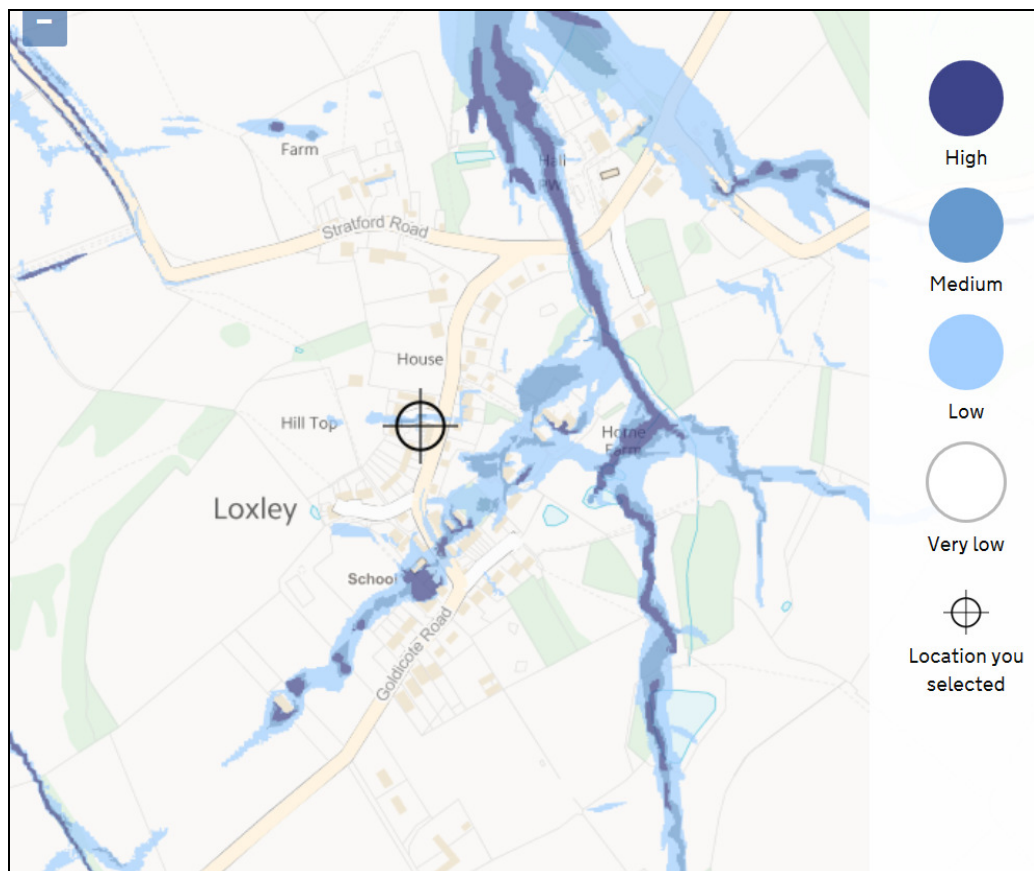
Whilst there are public rights of way in the vicinity of the site, none would be directly affected by any development on the site.

Topography – The site slopes gently to the north but is generally unchallenged by topography.

Landscape – The site is reasonably well contained being enclosed to the south by a mature and dense tree and hedge belt. It abuts a residential property to the east but is very exposed to the north where there is no screening.

The existing roadside tree and hedge belt provides significant amenity value and character to the village street scene. Visibility splays may affect this important feature. A new native hedgerow along the arbitrary northern boundary could provide sufficient screening of the development. The site is reasonably well related to the built form of the village and could be seen as a continuation in the linear settlement pattern along this section of Stratford Road. However, if the tree and hedge belt were to be retained, as recommended, any development would have a hidden appearance and contribute little to the street scene.

Flooding and Drainage – The site falls within Flood Zone 1 (low risk) of river (fluvial) flooding and has a ‘very low’ risk of surface water (pluvial) flooding (see map below). The site appears well drained.



Sustainability and Accessibility – Loxley has a limited range of local amenities. Loxley C of E Community Primary School (ages 4-11) is located in the heart of the village on Main Street. The Croft Preparatory (Independent) School is located approximately 3 miles away. The nearest secondary schools are located in Stratford-upon-Avon approximately 6.5 miles away and Kineton High School approximately 7 miles away.

The Parish Church of St Nicholas is located in a prominent position on the northeastern edge of the village. There is a village pub (The Fox) which is located centrally within the village. However, there is no shop or post office within the village.

Loxley is poorly served by public transport. There is no direct rail access, the nearest railway stations being located at Stratford-upon-Avon (6 miles) and Honeybourne (16 miles). The No 6 & 7 bus service only has 2 buses to Stratford-upon-Avon in the morning and 2 in the evening on weekdays and Saturdays and 1 in the morning to Kineton and Banbury with 4 buses in the evening. The bus stops are located in Main Street near The Fox.

There are pavements and pathways along Hill Top and Main Street providing reasonably good accessibility to the school and bus stops but there are no pavements along the Stratford Road. There is a wealth of rural footpaths in and around the village. The village has no street lighting.

The site is approximately 360m from the village school via a route which requires the crossing of Stratford Road and walk up the steep hill by the village green but the route is via pavements.

Natural Heritage – Being productive agricultural land the site has low ecological value but has potential habitat support for small mammals, birds, insects and invertebrates, some of which may have conservation status. The presence of a significant roadside tree and hedge belt within the site increases the biodiversity value of the site.

Built Heritage – The site is in close proximity to The Church of St Nicholas which is a nationally significant Grade I listed building. Any development of this site is likely to have an impact on the setting of this important heritage asset.

Conclusion

The site is rectangular in shape and is located to the north of the village. The site is reasonably related to the existing built form but this part of the village is characterised with a very low density scattering of development. It is the most historical part of the village and is home to the 8th Century Grade 1 listed Church.

The site has a considerable frontage to the street scene which contributes to the low density rural character of this part of the village. A development of around 12 houses in a linear form is likely to be the most appropriate format for developing this site. Whilst any development on this site would be reasonably well screened by the mature tree and hedge belt, it would result in the loss of a significant open and unspoilt parcel of land and potentially conflict with the low scattered settlement pattern of this part of the village.

Access to the site from Stratford Road would appear deliverable, subject to the provision of the necessary visibility splays. Any development would need to ensure satisfactory car parking arrangements in a design and layout which is not dominated by parked cars.

Stratford Road is one of the principal roads running through the village and the site is close to the junction with Hill Top. A development of 12 dwellings will increase traffic in this part of the village but is not likely to be significant in numbers or severe in its impact. Any scheme would need to be designed to enable vehicles to enter

and leave the site in a forward gear would be a requirement.

Being on the edge of the village and set behind a significant tree and hedge belt, opportunities for social integration will be challenging.

It is important that the existing roadside tree and hedge belt is retained and preserved for its amenity and ecological value. Development has the potential to enhance and strengthen existing ecological features and create new habitats with new planting particularly along the northern boundary.

Due to the compact nature of the village the site is reasonably close (360m) to the village centre, where the school, bus stops and pub are located. The route to the village centre is served by pavements but occupants of the site would need to cross the Stratford Road and climb the steep hill by the village green.

Housing development would be highly visible from the north where the site is currently exposed to the open countryside. Robust landscaping could help soften any development but is unlikely to sufficiently mitigate the full impact of a large development.

The allocation of the site would facilitate the provision of much needed on-site affordable homes. However, due to questions over the impact of the development on the nationally significant heritage asset, the settlement pattern and character of the village and the likely impact on the local landscape, the site has low potential for development.