

Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Statutory and Development Comments Report

Summary of Comments by Policy

Policy BL1 – Spatial Plan for Bloxham

- Cherwell District Council (CDC): Supports defining a settlement boundary but advises adding ‘subject to meeting requirements of other relevant policies’, considering splitting BL1 into two policies (boundary and allocations), including consented sites, and aligning the plan period to 2042.
- Taylor Wimpey (Lichfields): Objects; says housing cap based on infrastructure is unjustified. Claims BNP underestimates housing need and excludes Oxford’s unmet need. Requests allocation of its Milton Road (Site 5) as more suitable than Site 1 (Painters Farm).
- Oxfordshire County Council (OCC): Suggests extending plan period to 2042 and referencing LTCP and Movement & Place Plans. Notes cumulative housing already exceeds 285 dwellings when consents are included.
- Bloxham School: Requests redrawing of settlement boundary to include sports facilities. Notes mapping errors obscure true boundary.
- Bloxham Mill: Requests inclusion of Bloxham Mill Business Park within boundary and explicit support for business development.
- Ainscough Strategic Land (Turley): Objection – Plan period inconsistent (2024–2037 vs 2025–2040). Should align with Cherwell Local Plan 2020–2042. Housing requirement of 285 homes too low; should be 371–392 homes. Plan fails basic conditions and needs additional site allocations.
- David Wilson Homes (DWH): Objection – Supports identifying housing needs but warns plan risks non-conformity with Cherwell Local Plan. Plan should extend to 2042. Criticises consultation process for late publication and inadequate publicity.
- Deeley Homes: Support (with comment) – Supports policy but requests settlement boundary updated to include its committed site north of Ells Lane.

Policy BL2 – Land East of Tadmarton Road (‘Painters Farm’)

- CDC: Notes previous HELAA concerns but accepts mitigation and community benefits justify allocation. Recommends referencing concept plan within policy to ensure delivery.
- Taylor Wimpey: Strong objection; argues site selection process flawed, Site 1 (Painters Farm) less deliverable and visually intrusive than Site 5. Claims both sites could fund school expansion equally.
- OCC (Strategic Planning & Education): Supports safeguarding land for school expansion but warns expansion might not be needed; requests Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment and clarity on overhead cable route.
- OCC (Transport): Requests safe Tadmarton Road access, pedestrian/cycle links, and PRow connection.

- Bloxham CE Primary School: Supports inclusion of expansion land but raises congestion, safety, and pedestrian access concerns.
- OCC Property: Supports car park/play area provision but seeks separation from playfield to prevent overlooking.
- Ainscough Strategic Land (Turley): Objection – SEA site selection process flawed; unjustly excluded alternative sites like Barford Road for lack of on-site infrastructure. Proposes allocation of their Barford Road site (114 homes).
- David Wilson Homes (DWH): Objection – Questions evidence for school expansion; notes declining pupil numbers. Argues reliance on unproven infrastructure is unsound and that Site 15 (South Newington Road) was unfairly dismissed.
- Framptons (Painters Farm): Supportive – Endorses allocation; requests flexibility in masterplan requirements and notes community benefits (school land, green space).

Policy BL3 – Connectivity

- CDC: Defers to OCC for detailed comments.
- OCC (Transport & Place Planning): Supports policy; asks for reference to LTCP, LCWIP, Bus Strategy, and high-quality design standards (LTN 1/20). Suggests collaboration with Public Health to promote active travel.
- Bloxham School: Requests clarification that policy applies only to formal public or permissive paths, not private land.
- Deeley Homes: Supportive – Welcomes emphasis on active travel. Notes Ells Lane scheme supports this with cycle storage and pedestrian links.
- Other respondents: General agreement with sustainable transport principles.

Policy BL4 – Parking

- CDC: Recommends adding reference to cycle parking.
- OCC: Notes over-provision of parking could encourage car use; recommends 'Decide and Provide' approach and EV charging ducting. Warns against rigid refusals where alternative off-street parking exists.
- Bloxham School: Supports policy but requests flexibility for extensions that provide alternative parking.
- Bloxham CE Primary School: Raises local parking congestion and road safety issues near the school.
- Deeley Homes: Supportive – Notes Ells Lane provides compliant parking and addresses on-street issues.
- Other respondents: No objections recorded.

Policy BL5 – Housing Mix

- CDC: Supports policy but advises separating affordable and market housing and aligning viability approach with CDC standards.
- OCC (Public Health): Supports focus on smaller homes and bungalows for ageing population.
- Deeley Homes: Objection – Requirements too rigid and not evidence-based. 40% First Homes discount unviable; suggests lower rate for deliverability.
- Ainscough Strategic Land (Turley): Linked objection – Plan fails to meet affordable housing need; cites AECOM HNA 2024 showing unmet local demand.

Policy BL6 – Adapting Homes to Meet Demographic Change

- CDC: Queries feasibility of requiring 20% bungalows; suggests flexibility.
- OCC (Public Health): Supports lifetime homes and adaptable design.
- Deeley Homes: Objection – 20% bungalow requirement unrealistic for smaller sites; requests threshold before policy applies.

Policy BL9 – General Design Guidance

- CDC Heritage: Comment: Subsection (viii) only refers to non-designated historic assets.
- CDC Heritage: Recommendation: Broaden this to include designated heritage assets (such as listed buildings and scheduled monuments) for completeness and consistency with national heritage policy.
- Deeley Homes: Objection – Supports local materials but seeks flexibility for less visible elevations to ensure viability.

Policy BL10 – Design in the Conservation Area

- CDC Heritage: Comment: The title and scope are too narrow, as the policy only addresses the Conservation Area.
- CDC Heritage: Recommendation:
 - CDC Heritage: Rename to “Development Proposals Affecting Heritage Assets” to encompass all designated and non-designated heritage assets in Bloxham.
 - CDC Heritage: Suggested revised wording:
“The siting, scale, massing, detailing, design, materials, and landscaping of development proposals affecting heritage assets or their setting must conserve or enhance the heritage asset in a manner appropriate to its significance.”
 - CDC Heritage: Cross-reference to the Bloxham Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2025) for detailed local context.

Policy BL11 – Key Streetscenes and Views

- CDC Heritage: Comment: The Bloxham Conservation Area Appraisal includes detailed townscape analysis and character area views that should be incorporated or referenced in the Plan.
- CDC Heritage: Recommendation: Emphasise the importance of the church spire as a key visual landmark and navigational focal point visible from Tadmarton and surrounding approaches.
- CDC Heritage: Include reference to Historic England’s GPA3 guidance (‘The Setting of Heritage Assets’) as the national standard for assessing views and settings.

Policy BL12 – Employment Land

- CDC: Supports policy protecting employment uses.
- Bloxham Mill: Supports protection but seeks flexibility for expansion, modernisation, and reduced marketing tests. Requests recognition of its role in local economy.

- Bloxham School: Queries exclusion of B2/B8 uses and considers 5-year marketing test unreasonable. Suggests separating community and employment policies.
- No specific comments from respondents.

Policy BL13 – Village Centre

- Bloxham School: Supports policy but suggests expanding scope beyond retail to include cafes, cultural, or service uses.
- OCC (Transport & Public Health): Supports pedestrian and active travel improvements; recommends restricting new hot food takeaways.
- No detailed comments from respondents.

Policy BL15 – Local Green Spaces & Amenity

- OCC (Highways): Warns that some LGS designations overlap with highway land and should be removed.
- Bloxham School: Opposes blanket ban on garden development; recommends case-by-case assessment.
- No direct objections, though developers suggest over-designation could limit flexibility.

Other Comments

- CDC & OCC: Recommend aligning plan period to 2042.
- Bloxham School: Requests public access to interactive policies map and improved map clarity.
- CDC: Supports phasing housing delivery and linking development to infrastructure delivery.
- OCC: Requests flood and LVIA assessments for Painters Farm.
- OCC (Public Health): Suggests promoting EV charging, lift-sharing, and 20-minute neighbourhood principles.
- Ainscough (Turley): Plan period should be extended to 2042; SEA methodologically flawed; more housing sites needed.
- David Wilson Homes: Consultation process inadequate; sustainability appraisal missing; housing approach risks conflict with Cherwell Plan.
- Deeley Homes: Generally supportive but calls for flexibility in mix, bungalows, and materials.
- Framptons: Supports Painters Farm allocation with refinements.

Outcomes

Of the comments made by the statutory consultees most related to the proposed spatial plan policy BL1 and site allocation policy BL2. As a result the following changes have been made to those policies in the final version of NP2:

- Update the quantum of housing planned for in BL1 to reflect the most recent planning approval at Land West of Tadmerton Road
- Greater clarity on the local infrastructure improvement rationale for the total housing quantum exceeding the eCLP indicative housing figure in BL1 and the deletion of content relating to how the Standard Method may be used to justify

that quantum in the event that the figure in the adopted eCLP is higher, allowing for a future modified version of NP2 to plan for any higher figure for the plan period instead

- Redraw the Settlement Boundary to include operational land in established Class E use at Bloxham Mill
- Greater clarity to the structure of BL2 to distinguish between land and development principles and to:
 - Be clearer about the need for proposals to adhere to the arrangement of uses in the Concept Masterplan
 - Be clearer about the short-medium term value of the school expansion land to provide car parking space and then to provide for additional operational space if necessary in the longer term
 - Strengthen the references to addressing flood risk management issues
 - Add a reference to the layout responding to the proximity of the school premises

Objections were also raised on the site assessment/SEA and selection process leading to these policies. These objections are not considered valid as they misunderstand how the assessment may consider and weight the direct delivery of on-site infrastructure improvements in a site allocation policy and how a qualifying body can balance those matters in its judgement on site selection. Objectors may come to a different balance and judgement but that does not mean the process is flawed. The site assessment and selection process is explained in full in NP2 and in the Draft Environmental (SEA) Report and SEA Addendum.

In respect of all other policies, most comments have led to material but modest changes being made, primarily to improve the clarity of how a policy should be applied but also to bring it into clearer line with other development plan policies. Other specific changes prompted by the comments that are of note are:

- Clarify the plan period is 2024 – 2042 (in line with that of eCLP)
- Parking policy in BL4 to match that of the county standards for rural settlements
- Add a specific reference to views of the church spire in BL11
- Removal of the maximum unit size of Class E use in BL12 to give greater flexibility

There was no need to change BL5 to bring the housing mix into line with the equivalent eCLP policy as the NP2 evidence base is parish-specific and recent (2024) and therefore of greater validity than the eCLP policy, which provides an average mix across the whole district. A number of other comments related to omitted policy provisions; changes have not been made as all are considered covered already by other national or development plan policies.