

Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan 2025 - 2040

The Parish Council and its Consultants have been working on a Draft Modified Neighbourhood Plan to reflect changes in the village since the current plan was written and to provide a robust framework for the future development the village considering persistent plans for new housing from property developers. We are now at the important stage of asking for feedback from residents of the village on the Draft Modified Plan, before submitting it to Cherwell District Council for the pre-examination publicity period (October – November 2025). During this period there will be a further opportunity for residents to make comments.

Your engagement with this process now and in the coming months is both welcomed and necessary if the final Plan is to reflect our needs and aspirations.

Several questions have been asked of the Parish Council already and we thought it would be useful to capture them and share them with all residents so that you have the best information on which to form your opinions.

Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan FAQ's

Why are you updating the plan when the current version runs from 2016 -2031?

Although most policies are still valid, with an aging plan some policies carry less weight with Planning, specifically those relating to housing developments.

What benefits come with having a new plan?

If we allocate land for a housing scheme, our plan should help Cherwell District Council (CDC) to refuse any other major housing development proposals over the next few years. A more detailed explanation is set out in the consultation documents on the Parish Council's website.

Is the Parish Council trying to push it through with little argument?

No. The correct process is being followed, we are just trying to do it as quickly as possible to gain the protection afforded by having an up-to-date neighbourhood plan, specifically regarding existing and imminent speculative developments.

The Neighbourhood Plan (NP) process requires the Parish Council to consult widely on the Plan before submitting it to CDC. A priority group for consultation are of course the residents of Bloxham. For this reason, several open sessions are planned to be held with residents so that opinions can be sought and listened to.

The NP that is submitted to CDC will include a Consultation Statement that specifies the issues raised by the consultation process and demonstrates how they have been dealt with in the Plan.

What the timeline for implementing the NP?

The timeline is referenced in 2.11, on page 10 of the Draft Plan.

Draft Modified Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Consultation – July – 15 Sept 2025

Submit final Modified Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan to Cherwell District Council including Consultation Statement highlighting the opinions of consultees and how they are represented in the Plan – Oct 2025.

Cherwell District Council pre-examination publicity period including a call for representations from interested parties – Oct - Nov 2025

Independent examination of Modified Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan – Dec - Jan 2026

A referendum on the Modified Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan, allowing residents to vote on the final document - early 2026.

Why are you allocating a development site in the Neighbourhood Plan?

A site needs to be allocated to meet the criteria to afford protection from speculative development.

Bloxham has had two applications approved totalling 160 homes. Why can't these be our allocation?

Sites already having planning consent can't be allocated and we won't be able to secure crucial benefits.

What is the NPPF?

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans can provide for housing and other development in a sustainable manner. Preparing and maintaining up-to-date plans should be seen as a priority in meeting this objective.

The full NPPF (updated Dec 2024) document can be found on the BNP section of the PC website.

Why are so many developers trying to build houses in Bloxham.

Developers see Bloxham as a premium area. With CDC no longer able to show a 5-year housing land supply, a tilted balance in favour of developers comes into play, making it harder for CDC to refuse planning applications, but not impossible. If CDC continue to refuse planning applications, which are then granted at appeal and CDC are deemed not to be adhering to planning regulations, they could have their planning authority taken away.

Why doesn't Cherwell have its 5-year housing land supply?

Changes to housing policies and housing targets brought in by the new Government and CDC losing a High Court case, requiring them to adopt Oxford City unmet housing needs meant that their 5+ year housing land supply figure dropped to 2.2 years.

Does allocating a site mean it has planning permission?

No, the normal planning process will apply, and the developer would still need to obtain planning permission. Crucially, the application must comply with all the key land use, infrastructure and design principles set out in the Plan.

Why are some green spaces not included within the settlement boundary?

If these spaces were included within the settlement boundary and at a future date a developer obtained them, it would be easier to get planning permission than if they were outside the boundary. One of the reasons why we lost the Planning appeal for Dealey Homes

on Ells Lane was that the Inspector felt that there was no settlement boundary shown on a map, so therefore we couldn't argue that the site was outside the boundary (we saw Ells Lane as the natural northern settlement boundary for the village, the Inspector didn't).

Relevant policy references BL1, Spatial Plan for Bloxham and BL15, Local green spaces and other amenity spaces.

The village doesn't have the infrastructure for more houses, how is this going to be fixed?

We believe the most pressing infrastructure problem will be capacity at the primary school., although of course our roads and surgery are also getting busier. The planning system is far from perfect in delivering supporting infrastructure, especially when there's no up to date plan and lots of incremental housing schemes.

We can only control some things in our Plan; the rest is up to CDC, the county council, the NHS and the utility providers. In allocating land at Painters Farm, we can secure land for the inevitable expansion of the school in the next few years, as well as new public open space, a new burial ground and other community benefits.

Where can I view a hard copy of the draft Neighbourhood Plan?

Hard copies are available to view in the White Lion Café, High Street. Wyatts Nursery, Ells Lane and Adderbury Library.

Will developers keep trying to build houses in Bloxham?

They probably will, but they will know the power our Plan will shortly have in bringing back some control to the development of the village. We expect the Plan will give CDC the confidence to refuse major housing proposals that will prejudice the Plan in the coming months. With the adoption of the CDC's new Local Plan not likely until well into 2026 our Plan is the only way this control can be exerted in the meantime.

How was the allocated site determined?

We have followed the national guidance on site assessment and selection, including using the strategic environmental assessment process carried out independently of the Plan. This is explained in more detail in Appendix A of the Plan and the SEA report is available on the PC website.

Does new infrastructure and traffic changes in village centre mean more yellow lines?

Not necessarily, though some traffic management schemes could be required dependent upon the problem.

Additional yellow lines in Bloxham typically go through several phases:

Specific problems raised by enough residents of the village.

Review issues raised with OCC Highways to determine options

Informal consultation with residents on any proposed solutions.

Formal consultation undertaken by OCC with residents.

Painters Farm Site Allocation

Flood Risk

Can we see the flood risk assessment?

How much extra water will flow into Courtington Lane and Tadmarton Road?

The improved drainage system on Bloxham School field causes regular flooding on Workhouse Lane, what guarantees are given by the developer that there will be no impact on existing properties?

Plan should refuse development before Thames Water expand facilities

All aspects of flooding risk will be covered by the CDC Planning Process at the point that a Planning Application is made. CDC will take reports from the relevant external experts including but not limited to OCC, Thames Water, and the Environment Agency in relation to existing and predicted water run-off and measures required to ensure that flood risk is not increased. These measures will be stipulated in the event of an approval for the development.

The November 2024 floods that impacted several sites in the village were subject to an extensive review by OCC and subsequent Section 19 Report that was published on 04.7.25. A copy can be found on the Parish Council website in the Flooding section. It addressed the Workhouse Lane aspect and identified several underlying causes including poor performance of the drainage system on the Bloxham School field and compromised drainage infrastructure at the top of Workhouse Lane. Suggested remedial actions were noted and allocated to interested parties and are further detailed in an update of 08.08.25

Thames Water have been sent a copy of the Neighbourhood Plan for their views and feedback for consideration in the final document.

Primary School Expansion

Why is a larger Primary School required – current pupil numbers do not suggest it is?

Have OCC asked for expansion, and will they fund it?

If it is expanded by 210 places what is the traffic impact?

The OCC submission for the Willam Davies Application 24/02451 indicated 39 Primary School places spread across all year groups would be required for a development of 130 homes. A development of similar scale on Painters Farm would have similar requirements and would have the potential of challenging capacity at the School.

Scope for expansion might also include provision of parking to address the current congestion around the School.

Community Benefits List

No plans for teenagers

Will OCC fund a library?

All Community Benefits will be considered in the CDC Planning process. Suggestions in addition to those published are welcomed. The ability to deliver them will be a function of the scope and scale of any development

Painters Farm Development

Who will pay for conversion of farm buildings 'given' to the village?

What is the impact on existing facilities of these new sites being rented out

Can a VR mock up demonstrate the lack of impact of the development on panoramic view from top of Hobb Hill?

Why does Hobb Hill need a viewing platform?

The current schematic of the site is subject to change and development through the Planning Process should the Plans be submitted. All discussion relating to additional community amenities would be addressed in that process, which is open to all to participate.

The schematic suggests that all existing trees and hedgerows would be retained in the development. This means that the view of the village from the top of Hobb Hill is protected by the hedge line on the top.

Other Planning Applications

What is the impact of other planning applications being granted before the Bloxham NDP is approved?

If other developments successfully pass through CDC Planning before the Bloxham NDP is approved, the volume of houses approved will be in addition to those detailed in the Plan