MODIFIED BLOXHAM COMMUNITY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2025 – 2040

PRE-SUBMISSION VERSION: JULY 2025

IMPORTANT CONSULTATION DETAILS

The Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan (BNP2) is published for statutory consultation under Regulation 14 of the Regulations. Comments on the proposals and content of the plan and its other published documents are welcomed from everyone living and working in Bloxham as well as local organisations and landowners.

> They must be made either; through our online survey <u>https://arcg.is/0qCPPa1</u> email to

bloxhamndpconsultation@bloxhamparishcouncil.gov.uk

or by post to 3 Tanners Close, Middleton Cheney, Banbury, OX17 2GD by Monday 15th September 2025 at the latest.

Any comments made after that deadline may not be considered by Bloxham Parish Council (BPC). Anyone submitting comments to BPC must provide an email or postal address and contact name. BPC will keep this information confidential. However, it must forward this information to Cherwell District Council (CDC) in due course for the sole purpose of notifying all those that have submitted comments that it has received a final version of the plan for examination.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Historical Context

Bloxham is a village steeped in history. Incomplete excavations in 1929-35 opposite the current primary school unearthed evidence of a Romano-British settlement. The village name, however, derives from the 6th century Anglo-Saxon "Blocces Ham" (the home of the Bloccs). By 1316, the name had evolved to Bloxham. The dominant building, situated in the older ironstone part of the village is St Mary's Church, rated by Peysner and by Jenkins as one of the top 100 churches in the country. The site dates back to Saxon times and is mentioned in a charter of 1067. but the present church building dates to the 12th century. In addition to its 198 feet (60m) steeple, it contains important and unique art, carvings and windows all by renowned craftsmen including a 15th century screen said to have been a gift from Cardinal Wolsey. The splendour of the church is largely a consequence of Bloxham being a royal manor, which received the patronage of nobles. This was augmented by wealth derived from the wool trade.

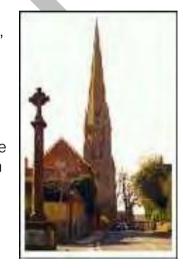
Since earliest times the village was based upon agriculture. Corn grew well and the good grasslands and plentiful water supply

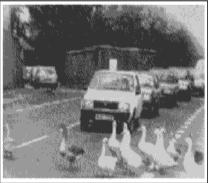
allowed successful sheep rearing,

contributing to the above-mentioned prosperity. In the 1950s there were still 13 working farms employing much of a largely self-sustaining village population. Anyone over 20 will recall traffic grinding to a halt as geese crossed the main road back to their farm in the heart of the village itself.

The winding medieval streets and alleyways are still apparent in the conservation area of the village where many of the village's 45 listed buildings can be found. Most are built of ironstone quarried within the village and many have their origins in the 16th and 17th centuries when the wool trade was at its peak. Weaving became, quite literally, a cottage industry in Bloxham in houses that still exist.



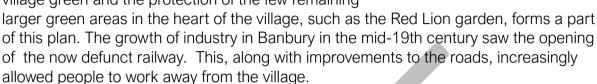




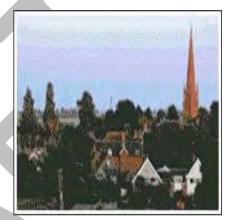


The mid-19th century saw the foundation of Bloxham School: a public school, which became a major landowner and significant employer within the village. The main school buildings still impart a striking visual impact that plays a significant role in defining the 'sense of place' of Bloxham.

Creation of the A361 around 1820 led to loss of the village green and the protection of the few remaining



Bloxham retains a proud affinity with its heritage and rural roots, and the church and the museum (which is run by volunteers) both receive a regular flow of UK and international visitors, seeking to explore this heritage. An ironstone village on the edge of the Cotswolds, Bloxham has a large medieval conservation area, one of the finest churches in the country and many attractive landscape views from the major gateways, from certain public rights of way and within the village itself.



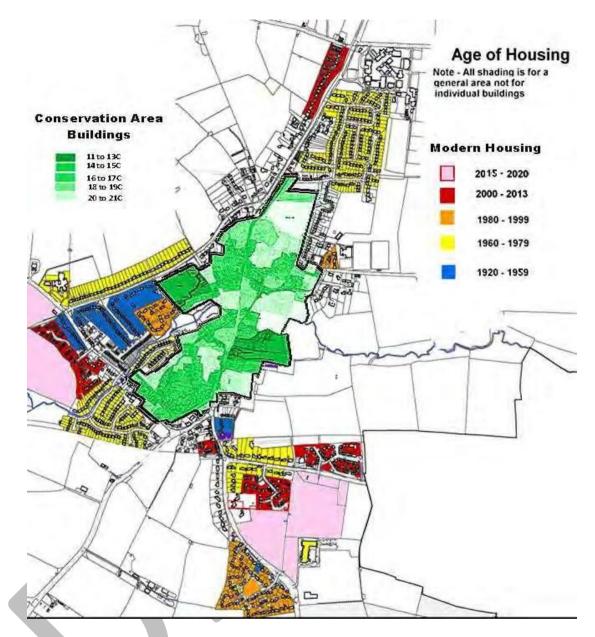
Despite on-going expansion, it remains a largely cohesive community with a 'rural sense of place', the preservation of which features highly in this plan.

Bloxham had little growth until the late 19th to early 20th century other than some building along the main Banbury Road. Around 1940 came development of The Avenue followed in the 1960s through to the 1980s by estates at Chipperfield Park, Brookside (shown alongside), Winters Way and Bloxham



Park. (See map below to track village development) Although of more modern designs, the judicious use of space, trees and materials mostly helped avoid developments with a hard urban feel to them.





Since the previous plan was made in December 2016, growth has followed at the expected pace, with 145 homes built by the end of 2019. Changes in National Planning Policy and several recent speculative planning applications mean permission has been granted for another 160 homes in 2025.

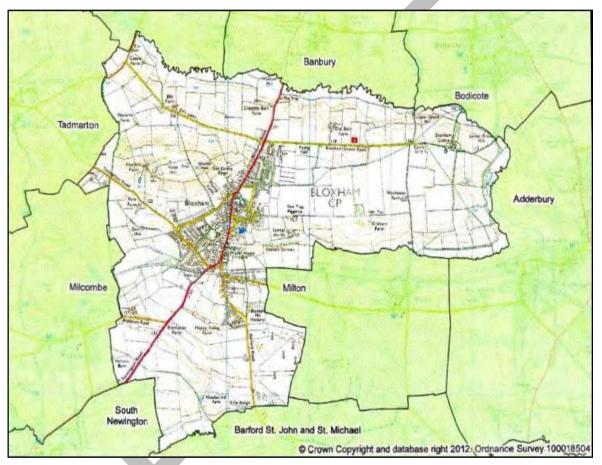
These developments exhibit a variety of styles and a recurrent theme of this Plan is the avoidance of cumulative urbanisation that fails properly to respect our rural ironstone heritage. The map is general rather than detailed but shows the conservation area within the black border and colour codes the approximate ages of buildings in each zone.

2. BACKGROUND

Profile of Bloxham: The Parish and Plan Area

Cherwell District Council (CDC) designated the neighbourhood area in 2013 and the neighbourhood plan was made in December 2016.

Bloxham is a Category A village in the Cherwell District of Oxfordshire. The village is less than 4km from Banbury, and less than 6km from the nearest urban centre, Banbury town centre.¹ The population is approximately 3,700 people residing in 1,400 households.²



Existing cycling connectivity is poor. A shared footpath/cycleway connecting Bloxham to Banbury has been completed but does not go to central areas, starting and ending on the outskirts of each settlement. Public transport is limited to an hourly bus service connecting Bloxham with Banbury and Chipping Norton. Bloxham residents are typically car users. 93% of residents have access to a car or van in the household; for those travelling to work, 89.7% either drive to work, or work from home.³

¹ Banbury LCWIP 2023

² Office of National Statistics, built up area profile, census 2021 data:

https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/#E63003917 (last accessed 7/7/25)

³ Census 2021, car or van availability and travel to work data

Bloxham village has a higher-than-average number of children. 28.8% of residents in the village were aged 19 years and under during the 2021 census, comparatively, the 2023 national average for England is 23.1%.⁴ The number of older people, aged 65 years and older, was broadly in line with the national average. Bloxham also enjoys a high employment rate, with less than 2% of people aged 16 or over unemployed during the 2021 census.

The village has a mix of public facilities, including: Jubilee Park Hall, church, pub, shops, bed & breakfast, playgrounds, museum, nursery, primary school, secondary school. The village has recently opened a new free school for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), Bloxham Grove Academy.

Educational Context

There are five educational settings within Bloxham:

- Bloxham C of E Primary School (Voluntary controlled school) Age 4 – 11. Student capacity: 420, Current: 373
- The Bloxham Grove Academy (Free Schools: SEND) Age 7 – 18. Student capacity: 100, Current: 84
- The Warriner School and Sixth Form (Academy) Age 11 – 18. Student capacity: 1,468, Current: 1,555
- The Warriner School: (Resourced Provision: SEND) Age 11 – 18. Student capacity: 12, Current: 12
- The Bloxham School (Independent) Age 11 – 18. Student capacity: 600, Current: 560

Additionally there are two nurseries, Bloxham Pre-School and Rainbow Village Nursery. At the time of writing the previous Neighbourhood Plan the Primary School was above capacity for student numbers. Due to a dip in birth rates county wide, primary school numbers are now lower than maximum capacity. However, the high percentage of young people in the village, and high numbers of students at the secondary schools, means that preserving the opportunity for expansion of both primary and secondary schools sites remains a key priority.

The Village Economy

The village has a thriving business environment. A mixed retail area in the centre of the village at the high street contains: hair and beauty therapy, groceries, hot food takeaway, and medical.

⁴ Statista, Percentage of children (aged 0-15) in the overall population of the United Kingdom from 1971 to 2023. <u>https://www.statista.com/statistics/478558/children-population-percentage-of-total-united-kingdom-uk/</u> last accessed 22/5/2025

Three pubs: the Joiners Arms, Red Lion and Elephant & Castle occupy a central position in the village.

A newer edition, Bloxham Mill, built in the 2010s to the south of the village currently houses around 70 businesses, including a mix of permanent offices, offering professional and financial services, research and development, training and services. Additional meeting, co-working and office workspace is also available for short term hire.

The exterior of the village settlement features a number of working farms, a nursery and tea room and an additional industrial estate at Yew Tree Farm.

National Planning Policy

2.9 The Neighbourhood Plan must have regard for national planning policy and guidance as set out in the <u>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)</u>. The Basic Conditions Statement contains further details but the key policies are:

- §8 principles of sustainable development
- §13 neighbourhood plans supporting the delivery of strategic policy
- §16 positive plan-making
- §18, §29-§31 scope of neighbourhood plans
- §61 etc delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- §98 meeting community needs
- §103 etc open space and recreation
- §113 parking standards
- §131 etc achieving well-designed places
- §187 conserving the natural environment
- §203 conserving the historic environment

2.10 The Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan must demonstrate how its policies contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and how they will not cause any harm to important ecological areas (in respect of the Habitats Regulations). Both of these matters are also addressed in the Basic Conditions Statement.

Strategic Planning Policy

The Parish Council has had regard to the strategic policies of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 of 2015, notably policies:

- BSC4 Housing Mix
- BSC7 Meeting Education Needs
- BSC10 Open Space ...
- BSC12 Community Facilities
- ESD7 Sustainable Drainage Systems
- ESD13 Local Landscape Protection

- ESD15 Built and Historic Environment
- ESD17 Green Infrastructure
- VILLAGES1 Village Categorisation
- INF1 Infrastructure

CDC approved a replacement of the Local Plan to be submitted for examination earlier this year. Although that plan will not be adopted until after the examination of the modified neighbourhood plan, the Parish Council has reviewed its reasoning and evidence to ensure its plan is not undermined by the new Local Plan.

The proposed spatial strategy, covering the period to 2042, is similar to the adopted plan in respect of the distribution of housing growth for places like Bloxham. Its Policy RUR1 provides an indicative housing figure (per NPPF §69) of 75 homes for Bloxham and its Policy COM13 proposes a 'Settlement Gap' between the village and Banbury.

Project Progress

2.11 Bloxham Parish Council is working to this timetable:

- Draft Modified Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Consultation July Sept 2025
- Submit final Modified Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan to Cherwell District Council Oct 2025
- Cherwell District Council pre-examination publicity period Oct Nov 2025
- Independent examination of Modified Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Dec Jan 2026
- Referendum on Modified Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Early 2026

2.13 Bloxham Parish Council will publish a <u>Consultation Statement</u> as part of the submission documents that will summarise the nature and outcome of the informal engagement and statutory consultation activities and how they have informed the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan.

3. VISION AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Our vision of Bloxham is ...

"Over the next few years the village will have successfully accommodated its new population into village life with a larger, outstanding primary school and new community facilities and public open spaces. In managing this growth the village will have maintained its essential historic, rural character by preserving its special countryside setting and heritage assets."

3.2 The objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan are:

- To plan for a scale of housing growth that can be accommodated within the constraints of the village infrastructure
- To use opportunities to improve the village infrastructure
- To conserve and enhance the special historic character of the village and its countryside setting
- To manage development so that fits well with existing residential amenity

3.3 The Neighbourhood Plan contains 15 policies, each of which is intended to contribute to one or more of these objectives. Each policy has a code number and title and the policy wording is in Bold text. Below each policy is some supporting text to explain the intent of the policy and how it should be understood by applicants and applied by Cherwell District Council to planning applications. The justification of each policy will be contained in the Basic Conditions Statement. Where a policy applies to specific land or sites in Bloxham this is shown on the Policies Map.

Policy BL1: Spatial Plan for Bloxham

- A. The Neighbourhood Plan defines a Bloxham Settlement Boundary, as shown on the Policies Map. Proposals for development within a Settlement Boundary will be supported in principle. Development proposals will not be supported outside a Settlement Boundary unless its use and scale are specifically suited to, or require, a countryside location.
- B. The Neighbourhood Plan provides for approx. 285 homes to be delivered in the plan period 2024 2037 comprising land at:
 - i. North of Ells Lane (30 homes consented)
 - ii. South of Hartshill Close (130 homes consented)
 - iii. East of Tadmarton Road (125 homes allocated)
- C. Additional homes may be delivered through windfall schemes on suitable sites within the Settlement Boundary.

This new policy defines a Settlement Boundary on the Policies Map that reflects the extent of the built-up area boundary of Bloxham village. This brings essential clarity for the local planning authority, the local community and applicants as to how the location of a development proposal will lead to its consideration as either part of the village or its surrounding countryside. In that sense it forms an essential basis for plan-led, development management.

The boundary does not incorporate housing schemes have been approved or allocated but have not yet been built out. It will be modified in a future version of the development plan to reflect the built up area as built out.

Proposals for development suited to a village location inside the Boundary – infill residential, commercial and community facilities for example – are considered appropriate in principle but subject to the application of other relevant planning policies. The policy requires that proposals outside the Boundary must be suited to, or must necessarily have, a countryside location. This could include agriculture and some forms of horticulture, equestrian, sports and recreation uses the scale of which would not have the inevitable, harmful urbanising or traffic effects of new housing schemes.

The policy makes provision in the plan period to 2037 for three major housing schemes: two already consented but not yet implemented at Ells Lane and South of Hartshill Close; and the Painters Farm site allocated in Policy BL2. There may also be some additional supply from windfall schemes approved inside the Boundary.

As explained in Appendix A, the Parish Council has used the new Standard Method as a starting point for deriving an indicative housing figure for this policy which presently equates to 21.8 homes per year. It considers this a firm basis for planning for housing growth for the next decade or more, which will lead to a 20% increase in the number of

homes in the village to 1,700. This scale of growth can be accommodated if the capacity of local infrastructure can be improved.

Policy BL2: Land East of Tadmarton Road ('Painters Farm')

The Neighbourhood Plan allocates land East of Tadmarton Road ('Painters Farm'), as shown on the Policies Map, for a residential-led, mixed development scheme comprising land for residential, education, burial ground, community uses and public open space.

Proposals will be supported, provided:

- The residential scheme is for approx. 125 homes, including a proportion of bungalows suited to older person households
- Land is safeguarded for the expansion of the adjoining primary school and its car parking
- Land is made available for a burial ground with ground conditions that are suited to that purpose
- The existing barn on the western edge of the site is made available and safeguarded for conversion for a flexible community use (Class F1or F2)
- The site is accessed by vehicles and pedestrians from Tadmarton Road and by pedestrians via public footpaths onto Courtington Lane
- A public open space is created as part of a landscape mitigation scheme with a new viewing platform and picnic area at Hobb Hill
- The site layout is formed of development parcels that retain and bolster as much of the existing site hedgerows and trees as possible
- The green infrastructure scheme includes the provision of a new woodland belt to connect existing assets on Hobb Hill with those on the remainder of the site
- The sustainable drainage strategy manages surface and ground water and is integrated with the green infrastructure

This replacement policy (of former BL1) allocates the land on the north-western edge of the village for a housing scheme (including much sought after bungalows for local downsizers) that will also deliver crucial expansion land for the adjoining primary school and a major new public open space on Hobb Hill. The land interest has also agreed to make available land for a new burial ground and to the possible later conversion of a barn for a new community facility once its current agricultural use has ended. An illustrative masterplan is shown below.

The site has been selected after a rigorous assessment process, including the SEA, which explored different growth scenarios as well as the individual attributes of almost two dozen sites around the village edge (see Appendix A for further information). It was chosen to reflect the site's locational advantages relative to many others and the willingness of the land promoter to agree to the scheme delivering a number of community benefits.

A future planning application must adhere to all its development principles, which have been accepted by the land promoter during the assessment and policy drafting process and validated as leading to a viable scheme. The principles have been derived from the site masterplanning work undertaken by the promoter and by the mitigation measures identified as necessary to avoid significant adverse environmental effects. 1. Key views largely retained from and towards Hobb Hill as identified in the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2031, with the proposed development edge set back to the west to preserve the tranquillity of PRoW Footpath 136/6/20. The open views from Hobb Hill of the Grade I listed Church of St Mary and the wider village setting to be enhanced with a new viewing platform via a new permissive footpath on Hobb Hill.

2. Available views towards the Site from Bloxham Conservation Area to the east to be sensitively considered as part of the development so as to remained largely unaffected by the proposals.

3. Existing vegetation including hedgerows and hedgerow trees to be retained and reinforced where possible with mixed native hedgerows comprising locally prominent species including Hawthorn as per the landscape strategy for Landscape Character Type (LCT) 16 'Upstanding Village Farmlands' of the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS, 2004) and the guidelines for new development within the CDS. Minimum 5 metre buffers to be established between existing vegtation and developable areas

4. New structural and buffer planting along existing boundaries to integrate the proposed built form into its setting and to ensure a landscape buffer is established between this and the existing properties to the south. Existing abrupt northern settlement edge along

5. Proposed public access onto Hobb Hill.

6. Proposed developable area to be situated away from the eastern extents of the Site, which displays an open character, with dwellings to complement the existing style and character of the Bloxham village built form. Proposed development to maintain the nucleated settlement pattern of Bloxham and to be of an appropriate scale as per the landscape strategy and guidelines for LCT16 'Upstanding Village Farmlands' of the OWLS and the guidelines for new development within the CDS, with dwellings to front onto public open space (P.O.S) areas where possible to create a positive development edge.

7. A new, large area of P.O.S in the eastern extents of the Site to respect the open character of this area, complemented by linear areas of P.O.S running along the development edges of the Site to maximise connectivity and to comply with the guidelines for new development within the CDS.

8. Opportunities created between links for access from the existing PRoW into the development.

9. Potential location of a play area by the development edge so as to provide sufficient surveillance and in close proximity to Bloxham Church of England Primary School.

10. Potential location of SuDS features within new P.O.S areas in the southern extents of the Site where the ground is at its lowest.

Kev:

Application Site Boundary

Existing/Retained Vegetation

Dwellings to Front onto POS

🛛 🖷 🗧 Public Rights of Way

Listed Buildings

Conservation Area

View Platform and Picnic Area overlooking Bloxham from Hobb Hill

12. Potential land to be reserved for the future expansion of the adjacent Bloxham Church of England Primary School.

13. Vehicular access off Tadmarton Road in the south-western extents of the Site, with a potential access road positioned sensitively in order to minimise the impact of development on existing vegetation as per the guidelines for new development within the CDS.

14. Existing overhead cables to be re-routed to accommodate the proposed developable area.

15. Proposed Permissive Footpath on client-owned land to encourage public access onto Hobb Hill.

16. Proposed pedestrian and cycle access with Courtington Lane and wider village particularly for elderly walkers and users of mobility scooters.



Plan 1. Illustrative Concept Plan for BL2: Land East of Tadmarton Road

Policy BL3: Connectivity

- A. All new development shall be required, wherever appropriate, to promote and improve low-carbon connectivity via new or existing networks of pedestrian paths and cycle routes such that new residents, including those of school age and the mobility impaired, have safe pedestrian, cycle or wheelchair/mobility scooter access to village services.
- B. The public rights of way as shown on the Policies Map will be protected and routes through green landscaped or open space areas will be kept free from nearby vehicular traffic as far as practicable.

This modified policy (of former BL3 and part of former BL17) continues to complement adopted Local Plan Policy SLE4 in reflecting residents' safety concerns about walking Bloxham's narrow streets and medieval pavements to reach local services and facilities. Their frustrations are amplified by parking on pavements, the ever-increasing traffic on the A361, and particularly by HGVs, which often overhang the narrow pavements.

The Sustrans report that informed the made plan is still relevant. It confirmed most of Bloxham's pavements are not fit for purpose, e.g. a parent cannot safely walk along the main village corridors with a buggy and another child. This issue, coupled with high traffic levels, results increasingly in residents travelling by car even within the village. We are keen that developers pay proper regard to low-carbon connectivity, improving it wherever practicable.

The importance of public rights of way from a connectivity perspective has already been highlighted but they are also important from a health and recreation perspective. Paths that still meander through green village fields offer residents of all ages quick access to healthy traffic-free exercise.

Policy BL4: Parking

- A. Residential development proposals resulting in a net-additional number of dwellings must make provision within each plot for a minimum of one parking space (for dwellings of one or two bedrooms) or of two parking spaces (for dwellings of three or more bedrooms).
- B. In addition, proposals must provide either within the site or at another convenient location to the site 0.5 parking spaces per net-additional dwelling for shared visitor parking.
- C. Where garages are proposed they must be physically well related to the properties they serve and be of an appropriate size to accommodate modern

vehicles. Parking courts will not normally be considered an appropriate alternative to provision on the plot.

D. Proposals to alter or extend a dwelling that will lead to the loss of existing offstreet parking capacity will not be supported.

This modified policy (of former BL4 and BL5) refines adopted Local Plan Policy ESD15 by maintaining the approach to managing car parking in the village of the made plan. There is extensive data upon levels of car ownership in Bloxham and all point to the proportion of households with multiple vehicles being around twice the Cherwell and UK average.

Unsurprisingly on-street (or all too often on-pavement) parking presents a further major impediment to the safe flow of both traffic and pedestrians. Although maximum parking standards cannot be imposed, a sensible approach needs to be taken to manage its effects on local amenity, the streetscene and safety. This plan seeks that new developments offer on-plot parking that is commensurate with the evidenced levels of car ownership, rather than the more general County Parking Standards which remain advisory.

Policy BL5: Housing Mix

- A. Proposals for major residential development schemes should comprise the following proportion of housing types unless it can be demonstrated it will lead to a scheme that will be either unviable or will be out of character with the local area:
 - 30% 1-2 bedroom homes
 - 60% 3 bedroom homes
 - 10% 4+ bedroom homes
- B. Where it is proposed to deliver First Homes as an affordable route to home ownership, this must be at a minimum discount of 40% below full market value.

This new policy refines adopted Local Plan Policy BSC4 by establishing the proportion of new home types in Bloxham that will best match the balance of its existing housing stock to maintain a sustainable community. It also sets the minimum discount level for any proposed New Homes to be delivered as part of the 30% affordable home ownership requirement of the adopted Local Plan. Both are evidenced by the Housing Needs Assessment report produced for the evidence base by experts, AECOM, in December 2024.

It is acknowledged that 'minor' housing schemes of 9 or fewer homes on smaller 0.25Ha sites or less often require greater flexibility to meet the site context and scheme viability. The policy does not therefore apply to such schemes.

The policy also allows for an applicant to show that the desired blend of housing types cannot be achieved without harming the character of the local streetscene by way of its existing dominant house type or scheme viability. However, in the latter case, applicants will only be able to justify a scheme is unviable on the basis of abnormal development costs, not land value, which ought to reflect the provisions of the development plan. Policy

Neither the adopted or emerging Local Plans make specific provision for the New Home affordable home product and the NPPF no longer makes it a requirement for the product to form part of the affordable mix. However, it is possible that a developer may consider delivering them on a Bloxham scheme, in which case the evidence indicates that the default 30% discount will not be enough to make a difference, hence the 40% minimum requirement here.

Policy BL6: Adapting Homes to meet Demographic Change

Where practical, proposals for new dwellings should comprise at least 20% of the total number of dwellings as bungalows that are designed specifically to meet the needs of households with older person and those with disabilities, including providing a layout and landscape scheme that confers a sense of space and privacy.

This modified policy (of former BL8) complements adopted Local Plan Policy BSC4 by maintaining the provisions of the made plan on encouraging the delivery of housing that meets the needs of older person households.

In common with the rest of the UK Bloxham has an ageing population where mobility issues will become increasingly common. Sustainable communities enable older members of the community , and those with disabilities, to remain in 'mobility-friendly' homes for as long as practicable and the most economical way of achieving this is by designing it in at the outset

Policy BL7: Residential Amenity

Development proposals must not harm the residential amenity of neighbouring properties by way of their noise and light effects.

This modified policy (of part of former BL9) complements adopted Local Plan Policy ESD15 by restating the importance of planning decisions taking proper account of a village that comprises many small, narrow streets and higher densities of buildings in different uses. The potential for amenity harm is therefore greater in Bloxham than in more modern villages and the matter needs to be addressed sensitively. Noise from traffic accessing and parking at non-residential uses in the village can have an especially harmful effect.

Policy BL8: Local Infrastructure

- A. Development proposals must be able to demonstrate that there is adequate wastewater and water supply capacity to serve the new development and that existing capacity problems will not be worsened.
- B. Proposals for major housing development must demonstrate there is a sufficient capacity at the Bloxham primary school to meet the needs of the assessed number of primary school age children living in the completed scheme.

This modified policy (of part of former BL9) refines adopted Local Plan Policy BSC9 by reflecting past and ongoing problems faced by the local community with the capacity and performance of the village's wastewater and water supply infrastructure. It also anticipates capacity constraints at the primary school in years to come as the many homes already committed and planned for are occupied.

The policy accepts that new developments cannot be made to make good current deficiencies, but new proposals should be expected not to make matters worse. It is not easy to control the timing and scale of water infrastructure improvements but the policy is intended to send a strong signal to the utility provider to plan ahead, rather than waiting for the problem to become acute before acting.

The allocation of land in Policy BL2 for the expansion of the primary school does, however, provide a medium term solution that will shape the phasing of development. Buildings houses and forcing village children to access school places well beyond the village is not a desirable or sustainable alternative outcome.

Policy BL9: General Design Guidance

The appearance, landscaping, layout, scale and design of development proposals must:

- i. Relate in scale, massing and layout to neighbouring properties and the density of new housing development should be consistent and compatible with the existing and prevailing density and reflect the locally distinctive character of the locality in which the new development is proposed and should not usually exceed 30 dwellings per hectare;
- ii. Be in keeping with local distinctiveness and characteristics of the historic form of the village;
- iii. Make a positive contribution to the character of Bloxham and its rural feel;
- iv. Use materials in keeping with the distinctive character of our local brick or ironstone;
- v. Make good use of trees, garden space, hedgerows and green space to soften the street scene;

- vi. Preserve existing areas of open space and take every available opportunity to create new open space to help retain rural character;
- vii. Use smart, energy efficient lighting of public areas that accords with the recommendations of the Institute of Lighting Engineers recommendations on reduction of obtrusive light (or its successors) so as to convey a rural feel and avoid light pollution wherever possible;
- viii. Take account of the scale of any harm or loss that it might impose upon any non-designated historic assets and;
- ix. Take opportunities to protect and wherever possible enhance biodiversity and habitats.

This modified policy (of former BL11) refines adopted Local Plan Policy ESD15 by retaining the key principles of 'rural character' of the made plan but with some minor modifications to improve their clarity. They are derived from community feedback over the last decade on what makes the village special, as well as the first and most recent Conservation Area Appraisals.

Policy BL10: Design in the Conservation Area

In addition to the General Design Guidance of Policy BL9, the appearance, landscaping, layout, scale and design of development proposals in the Bloxham Conservation Area, as shown on the Policies Map, and its setting must conserve and enhance the heritage significance of the Conservation Area as defined in the adopted Conservation Area Appraisal.

This modified policy (of former BL10) complements adopted Local Plan Policy ESD15 to give the full weight of the development plan to the statement of significance of the heritage value of the Conservation Area, within which a significant part of the village is located.

That statement has been updated and made clearer in the definition of the character and appearance of each of the ten 'character areas' set out in the Appraisal. Rather than attempt to extract and repeat the many components that make up the significance of each area, as well as the Conservation Area as a whole in the policy itself, it requires applicants to make clear (in their planning, heritage and design and access statements as relevant) how they have understood and responded to the Appraisal in their proposals. In that sense, the Appraisal is not simply another material consideration in the planning balance but instead forms a fundamental part of the neighbourhood plan and should be given the requisite weight.

Policy BL11: Key Streetscenes & Views

Development proposals located within or adjoining a designated Key Streetscene or Key View, as shown on the Policies Map, must ensure that key features of the view can

continue to be enjoyed and that any development has an acceptable impact in relation to the visual qualities of those views.

This modified policy (of former BL12) refines adopted Local Plan policies ESD13 and ESD15 by identifying on the Policies Map the key streetscene and views described (but not mapped) in the made plan. It does not seek to prevent development in the location of a streetscene or view but does require the design of the proposals to understand how they may have the potential to harm a view and to respond accordingly. A description of each view is included in Appendix A.

Policy BL12: Employment Land

- A. Development proposals that will result in the loss of land or buildings with an established Class E use will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that, in addition to the development plan site marketing requirements:
 - i. there is no realistic prospect of the land or buildings serving another Class E, F1 or F2 use within five years; and
 - ii. to take account of any new demand for employment land later in the plan period there are alternative locations elsewhere within the Settlement Boundary that would be suitable in principle for a Class E use.
- B. Proposals for new live-work development combining living and smallscale employment space within the Bloxham Settlement Boundary will be supported, provided they will not:
 - i. result in the loss of a Class E(a) retail unit or Class F1 or F2 community facility;
 - ii. adversely affect the amenity of any adjoining residential properties; and
 - iii. have a severe adverse impact on the local highway network by way of additional traffic movements to and from the site and of additional parking

C. Proposals to develop a new Class E(g) business use of less than 150 square metres gross internal area will be supported, provided they do not adversely affect the amenity of any adjoining residential property.

This modified policy (of former BL13 and BL14) complements adopted Local Plan SLE1 in seeking to protect precious employment land in this growing village. There is no specifically designated unused employment land in Bloxham although Banbury, some four miles away, has land available. In the interests of sustainability, we should at least seek to protect what little land there is associated with employment.

Bloxham has a dynamic and successful mix of micro-businesses mostly operating from homes or from Bloxham Mill Business Centre. In the interest of sustainability, we will

encourage spaces that foster start-up and expansion of such businesses provided these do not negatively impact neighbouring residential dwellings.

Policy BL13: Village Centre

- A. Within the Bloxham Village Centre as shown on the Policies Map the following development proposals will be supported, provided that they accord with national and local policies to protect heritage assets and their setting, and with the relevant design guidance.
- B. New retail units or the expansion of existing retail units in the Village Centre and on Church Street will be supported provided that the impact of any additional traffic generated has been satisfactorily mitigated and will not adversely affect the highway network and pedestrian safety.

This modified policy (of former BL16) supplements adopted Local Plan Policy SLE2 by highlighting the importance of the village centre in serving the needs of the village and surrounding smaller rural settlements. The centre is focused on the combination of shops, cafe and local services clustered either side of the High Street (A361) as a critical mass of activity serving not just residents but also passing trade travelling through the village.

'Village centres' are not defined in the adopted Local Plan as a policy entity but its future is vital to the sustainability of the village, especially as its population continues to grow. Although there are now permitted development rights and changes of use that no longer require planning permission, some of the buildings in the village centre are listed (in which case that permitted development right does not apply). In addition, in determining a 'prior approval' application for a change of use of a ground floor use, CDC can take into account the evidence and rationale of this Neighbourhood Plan in measuring the impact on the character or sustainability of the Conservation Area within which the whole of the village centre lies.

Village expansion has placed the High Street and Church Street shops and services out of walking range for much of the village. Increasingly customers arrive by car where their attempts to park contribute majorly to village traffic congestion. In consequence, many drive on into Banbury where they can park near the shops with relative safety. An additional retail hub(s) near the village periphery is advocated by some but others fear it would prompt High Street closures, reducing overall sustainability and detracting from the rural aspect. No agreement has been forthcoming upon this other than that any expansion plans for businesses in the High Street or Church St should demonstrate how they would avoid or mitigate increased traffic congestion and pedestrian safety issues.

Policy BL14: Broadband & Mobile Communications

- A. Where it is practicable to do so, broadband connections should be made by way of suitable ducting to enable one or more service providers to provide a fibre connection to individual properties from a connection chamber or chambers located on the public highway, or else from an alternative connection point available to different service providers.
- B. Proposals for new or improved mobile phone infrastructure will be supported, providing that the proposals do not adversely affect the surrounding built or natural environment (including without limitation the setting of heritage assets and key views).

This retained policy (of former BL15) complements adopted Local Plan Policy BSC9 in continuing to address the quality of mobile networks coverage and the speed and variability of broadband, which remain an impediment to business.

Policy BL15: Local Green Spaces & Other Amenity Spaces

- A. The Neighbourhood Plan designates Jubilee Park, the Recreation Ground and Slade Nature Reserve, as shown on the Policies Map, as Local Green Spaces. New development will not be permitted on land designated as Local Green Space except in very special circumstances.
- B. Development on other open spaces and sports and recreational land including those areas designated for amenity use through planning permissions, as shown on the Policies Map, will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated the loss would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in a suitable location.

This modified policy (of former BL17) refines adopted Local Plan Policy ESD17 in retaining the Local Green Spaces designated in the made plan.

Some preceding policies seek to protect certain spaces with the aim of preserving important views or landscapes or to recognise the important contribution space makes to the rural character of Bloxham. This policy focuses upon additional areas that should be protected specifically because they have traditionally offered resident access to land important for village recreation or nature conservation.

The contribution of garden space to the overall visual impact should not be ignored and to prevent a potential cumulative loss of openness proposed development of gardens will not in general be supported.

The Jubilee Park and The Recreation Ground

The village has two recreation areas, one at either end of the village: The South Newington Rd Recreation Ground and the Jubilee Park. They are close to the community they serve and are demonstrably special in terms of their recreational value. Both are run by Trusts that are currently actively working with the Parish Council to improve the overall quality of recreational provision in the village. They provide children with play areas along with the only publicly accessible village sports pitches. The Recreation Ground also confers a welcome soft-edge to the southern village gateway.

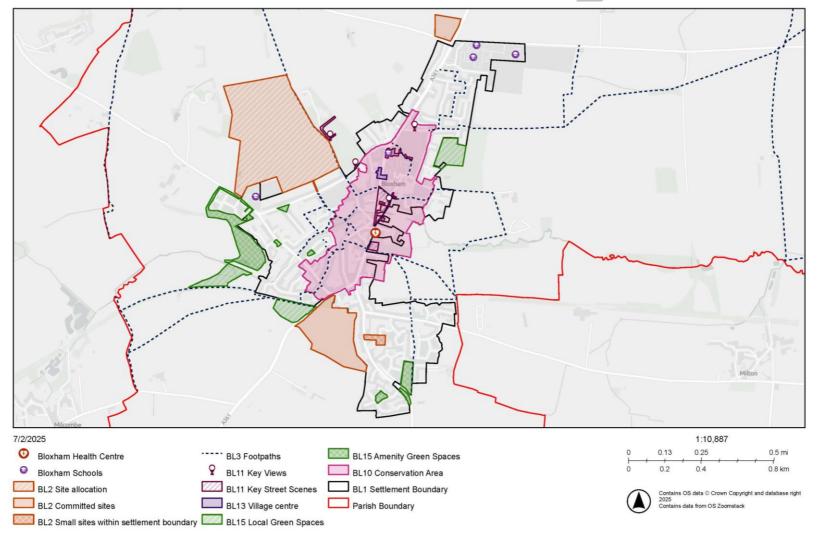
The Slade

This is a longstanding nature conservation area that the Parish Council acquired in July 2015. It is used by naturalists29, schools and families and is demonstrably special for its tranquility and wildlife: 96% of residents are in favour of protecting this area from any development and we propose Local Green Space status.

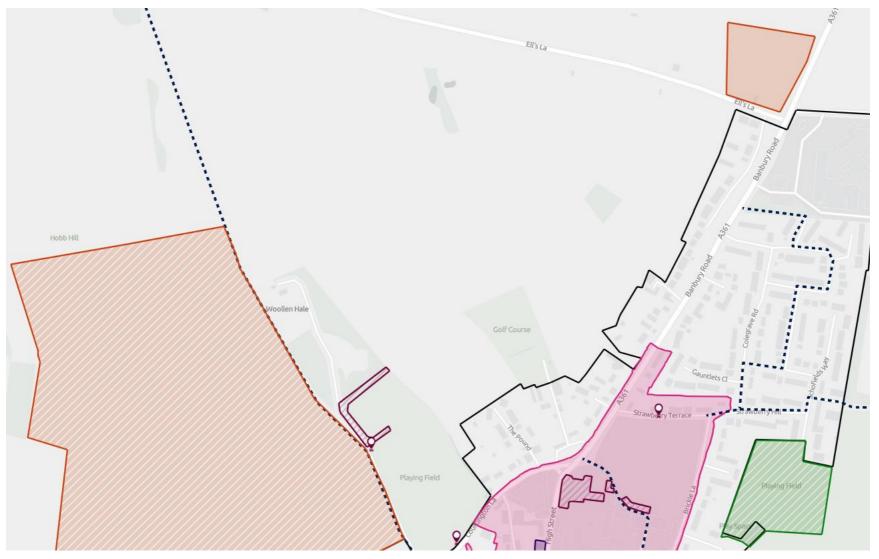
Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map

An interactive version of the map is available here:

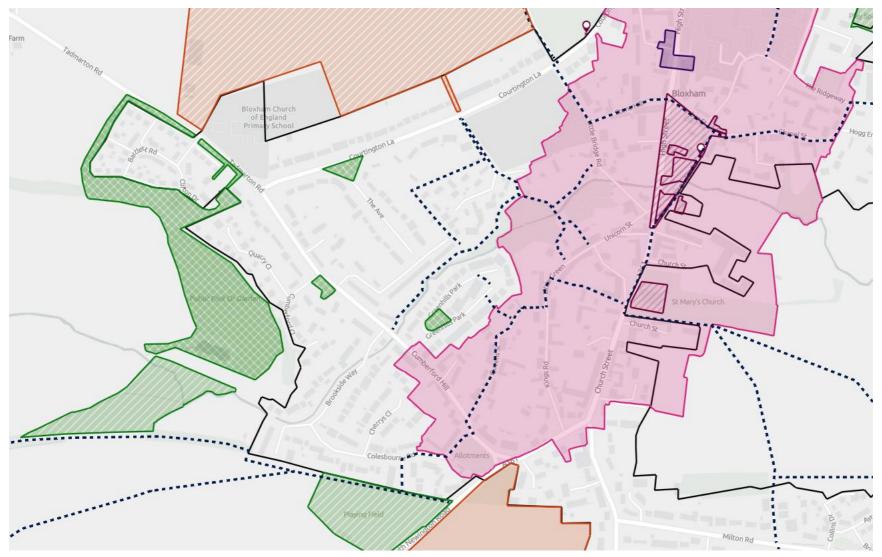
https://oneillhomer.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/interactivelegend/index.html?appid=e4b0d8d4dc1446e7a99b0484e8a435a5



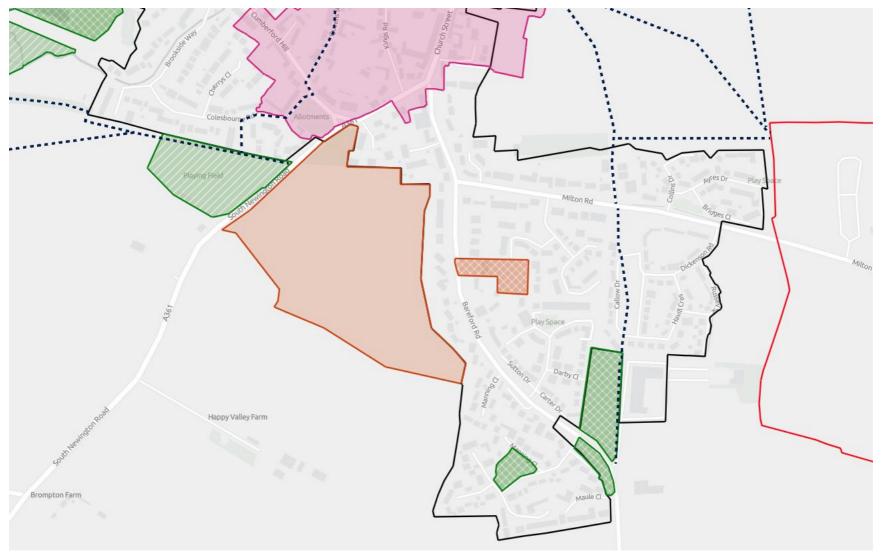
Inset One: North Bloxham



Inset Two: Mid Bloxham



Inset Three: South Bloxham



5. INFORMATION

Bloxham Parish Council has referred to the following documents as its evidence to support the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan:

- Community Engagement Report
- Strategic Environmental Site Assessment (SEA) Report
- Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) Report

The policies of the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan will be implemented by Cherwell District Council in its determination of planning applications in Bloxham and by Bloxham Parish Council.

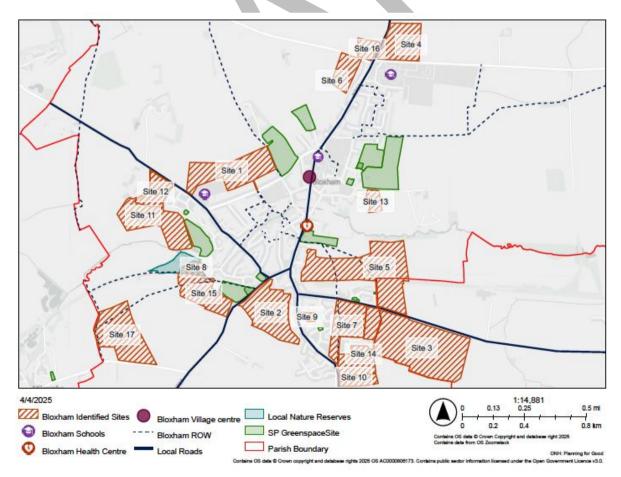
APPENDIX A: SITE ASSESSMENT & SELECTION

Introduction

1. This note summarises the process adopted by the Parish Council in assessing and selecting sites for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan (NP), and its integration with the parallel Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

Site Assessment

2. The assessment process began in February 2025 and comprised firstly using the 2024 HELAA output from CDC to generate a long list of 17 potential sites in the Parish, which included one site adjoining the village but in neighbouring Milton Parish (Site 3; HELAA096). The sites are shown on Plan A below with their NP site numbers. There was no need for a new 'call for sites' as the CDC data was considered sufficiently up to date and comprehensive in its coverage. Where some HELAA site boundaries overlapped they have been simplified into a single site.



Plan A: Long List of Sites for Assessment

No.	HELAA No.	Site Name
1	094	E of Tadmarton Road
2	467	E of South Newington Road
4	097	N of Bloxham
5	518	N/S of Milton Road
6	099	S of Ell's Lane
8	291	Brookside Way
9	357	Orchard House
10	464	E of Barford Road 1
11	474	W of Tadmarton Road 1
12	475	W of Tadmarton Road 2
13	503	Ridgeway House
14	504	E of Barford Road 2
15	534	W of South Newington Road
17	188	Oak View Milcombe

3. The long list was then filtering to delete sites that had secured planning permission since then (Sites 7 and 16) as they will be counted by the NP as existing commitments in the plan period and would not require an allocation.

4. The filtered list of 14 sites was sent to AECOM in April 2025 to carry out a 'site options assessment'. Site 3 was not included as it lies outside the plan boundary for this purpose, but the Parish Council remains mindful that its scale and location could have affected its site selection decision later in the process.

5. The site options assessment concluded that ten sites were potentially suitable for allocation. The four sites AECOM considered unsuitable were sites 8, 11, 13 and 17 and the Parish Council had no evidence to dispute that assessment. And of those 10 sites, one (Site 2) has since secured planning consent for 130 homes and so has also been discounted from further consideration.

6. The focus was then on understanding the basis of the AECOM assessment and recommendations by correcting any assumptions and by supplementing them with additional information. This information comprised the Parish Council's published 'Community Benefits List' of 2023, its initiative to anticipate the effect of new housing development on the village's social and transport infrastructure. Six of those benefits could be delivered as legitimate planning policy requirements (by allocating land and/or using S106 financial contributions):

- Expansion of Bloxham Primary School on Tadmarton Road
- Traffic management works along High Street
- Improvements to school parking at Grove Road
- Provision of a new library
- Additional burial ground and allotments land
- Additional public sports pitches land

7. At that time, it was not considered important to prioritise these benefits. But, with events in the last year meaning that the village has to accommodate another significant increase in new homes and population, the Parish Council has judged that increasing the capacity of the village primary school was its most important priority.

8. The Parish Council also invited the land interests of the nine sites to submit any further information on their site development ideas or proposals, so that it could also take that into consideration for delivering these benefits, as well as to deliver mitigation measures.

9. This additional information has qualified and supplemented the AECOM report in the following ways:

- Site 1 importantly, two adverse effects it identified can be corrected: the land interest has committed to providing land for the expansion of the school so there will be no prejudicing of that potential, and to connecting the site with the adjoining PRoW, which will mean all the developable land will lie within a safe and convenient 400m walking distance of the village centre. The land interest has also offered land for a burial ground and for a potential future community use of the existing barn (once its established agricultural use has ended), as well as the creation of a new public vantage point at Hobb Hill with significant woodland and other planting to manage the sensitive landscape transition and to re-route the overhead power cables.
- Site 4 the land interest has not proposed any additional benefits to the 100 homes proposed and the means of containing the harmful locational and landscape effects appear difficult to overcome. It has not indicated if it would be willing to provide a new public car park for the schools opposite.
- Site 5 the land interest has submitted additional information that addresses a number of the effects identified by AECOM and proposes a total of approx. 230 homes, perhaps with a first phase of 90 homes. Importantly, it also proposes the delivery of three listed benefits on site – land for a burial ground, allotments/orchard and a new community facility (e.g library).
- Site 6 there has been no additional information provided by the land interest to show if and how landscape and access mitigation measures will be delivered.
- Site 9 this is a small PDL site within the settlement boundary and so can come forward without an allocation in the plan
- Site 10 there has been no additional information provided and it is noted the site is not part of the planning application submitted for Site 14, on which the report considers it depends as a coherent extension to the village.
- Site 12 the planning application for 60 homes is being reconsidered. It includes a new public open space and play area on the site frontage and flood risk and landscape mitigation measures. No other community benefit.
- Site 14 the planning application for 100 homes has been submitted. It makes provision for attenuation land to address flood risk and some boundary landscaping but is neither large enough nor well located to deliver a community benefit.

• Site 15 – the land interest has proposed 100 homes for the site but no other community benefit. Whilst it may be possible to address the flood, landscape and access issues, the site has only the most tenuous visual connection to the village form (on the opposite side of the recreation ground) and is likely neither large enough nor well located to deliver a community benefit.

10. The AECOM report assumed that the capacity of the larger sites should be lowered in order to fall within the Local Plan 75 homes indicative figure. For the reasons outlined below, this assumption has been disregarded in the site selection process and the fact that some sites have been made available for a larger number has not put them at a disadvantage. However, the Parish Council has assessed the extent to which a proposal can deliver benefits directly on site as opposed to making financial contributions to the delivery of the benefit elsewhere.

Site Selection

11. The Parish Council has been placed in a difficult position by the number of major housing proposals that have been, and continue to be, made on land around the village over the last two years, prompted by CDC's struggle to maintain an up to date Local Plan and five year housing land supply position. It has also had to be mindful that the (NPPF §70) indicative housing figure proposed for the village in the emerging Local Plan (75 homes) is being overtaken by events and has yet to be examined.

12. It therefore needs to exert its planning judgement in a way that plans positively for future housing growth in the village over the next decade or more on the one hand, but on the other that reflects the village status in the settlement hierarchy; its location very close to the largest town in CDC – Banbury; its infrastructure capacity limitations; and its essential, special historic and rural character.

13. The Standard Method for calculating housing supply is now stock based and so it is possible to calculate a housing figure of 21.8 homes/annum for Bloxham, based on its Census 2021 housing stock of 1,400 homes and using the Cherwell affordability ratio and adjustment factor. Although only a starting point to determine a longer term indicative housing figure for the village, it seems a sensible figure to plan for without undermining strategic policy.

14. For the ten year plan period from April 2024 (from when CDC is calculating housing supply) to March 2034 the NP should provide for approx. 218 homes. With 160 homes already consented in that period (on sites 2 and 16) this requires land to be allocated for at least 58 homes for CDC to be confident in engaging NPPF §14 in determining future housing proposals.

15. From the assessment work summarised above the sites can be divided into three types: those that will directly deliver one or more community benefits; those that cannot by way of their size and/or location; and those that are relatively inconsequential and

only worthy of further consideration if their housing capacity is needed to achieve the indicative figure.

16. The first type comprises Site 1 and Site 5. Both would enable the village to grow and at the same time deliver the kind of step change in infrastructure capacity that this growth (and recent growth) will require to maintain a sustainable village that is not exporting students, patients and those seeking community facilities to access local services.

17. Site 1 would enable an important social infrastructure issue to be addressed – the expansion of the school, for which S106 funds are already being collected from approved schemes. Delivering a new primary school in Bloxham would only be necessary if the village were to double in size, which is neither appropriate nor planned for the foreseeable future. Land has been made available for a new burial ground and for another community use once the barn is no longer needed for its agricultural use. A well-designed scheme at the foot of Hobb Hill that assimilates the scheme into the village fabric and connects to the PRoW network and village centre nearby will deliver these benefits and 125 homes. The additional homes will allow the Parish Council to extend the plan period to 13 years, i.e. to 2037.

18. Site 5 would also deliver some benefits on the list – a new community facility, allotments and burial space – and would continue the eastern expansion of the village along Milton Road. However, it will ultimately need to supply 230 homes in return for those benefits, using some development parcels well beyond a 400m walk from the village centre. And again, the scheme could help fund primary school expansion but could not deliver it and would place greater pressure on catchment area places. Its homes would enable the plan period to be extended to 2042.

19. The second type of site comprises Sites 4, 12 and 14. It is possible that each could deliver new homes and some mitigation to meet the immediate needs of the schemes themselves and provide financial contributions to other infrastructure improvements. Were the Parish Council looking only to plan for the lowest housing number from among the 'least worst' sites (in terms of constraints) then selecting one or more may be appropriate. The problem, however, is that none of the sites offer a solution to improving the capacity of the village infrastructure to accommodate growth; they will simply add to those problems and require CDC to resolve that using their financial contributions.

20. The third type of site comprises Sites 6, 9, 10 and 15. Their location and their size means that they have the least to contribute to a sustainable vision of Bloxham. None would be required to meet the indicative figure if one or two of any of the first or second type of sites are selected.

21. It was therefore concluded that only Sites 1 and 5 could be considered reasonable alternatives and they were assessed as such by the separate SEA, also carried out by AECOM as part of the wider assessment of the draft policies. The SEA indicated both sites have the potential for positive and adverse effects that could be mitigated through allocation policy requirements.

22. The Parish Council chose to allocate Site 1 as it would directly deliver the most important benefit in the only plausible location and deliver other community benefits.

APPENDIX B: KEY STREETSCENES AND VIEWS

Key views 1: The area fronting the Bloxham School main buildings

The CPRE Consultation comment states, 'Few other villages have such a statement of arrival.' It has dominated the northern approach for around 150 years and regularly appears on school marketing materials. It is an area significant for its beauty and holds an important place in the history of the village. With the possible exception of the parish church, its visual impact is unsurpassed. We would expect any future development would show great sensitivity to preserving the overall visual impact.



Key views 2: Hobb Hill

From Courtington Lane, within the very heart of the village, are views across Bloxham School rugby grounds to open countryside up onto Hobb Hill. Again, we would expect any future development to show great sensitivity to preserving the overall visual impact.

From the public footpath a public right of way runs along the far side of the hedge shown in the left of the previous panoramic view. It is regularly used because of its convenient central location and because the footpath is the only place offering such stunning panoramic views of the village in its verdant setting. We seek to preserve these views for present and future residents.



Key views and street scenes 3: The Red Lion Garden

The construction of the A361 in 1815 led to loss of the village green. The area remaining consisted of a piece of land hosting the war memorial and what became the

current Red Lion garden which has long been used for open-air community activities such as outdoor plays, village fetes and festivals.

The pub is already registered as a community asset and the pub garden is the subject of a current heritage status bid. This whole compact triangle between the Red Lion pub, the 17C Elephant and Castle coaching inn and the 16th century Joiners Arms is an area of highly distinctive character. We do not seek to inhibit appropriate improvements to the Pub or its outbuildings but will not support development on the Red Lion garden.



APPENDIX C: DRAFT MODIFICATION STATEMENT

The Parish Council considers that its proposed modifications change the nature of the made Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan. Those modifications can be summarised as:

Made Policy	Draft Modified Policy	Subject	Modification Type & Outcome
BL1	BL2	Painters Farm	Type: Deleted and replaced with new housing site allocation. Outcome: changes the nature of the plan.
BL2	BL1	Sustainable Development	Type: Deleted and content moved to new BL1 and modified. Outcome: changes the nature of the plan.
BL3	BL3	Connectivity	Type: Modified and with inclusion of BL17 text on public rights of way. Outcome: does not change the nature of the plan.
BL4	BL4	Parking	Type: Modified and with inclusion of BL5 text. Outcome: does not change the nature of the plan.
BL5	BL4	Parking	Type: Deleted and moved to new BL4. Outcome: does not change the nature of the plan.
BL6	-	Adaptation to Climate Change	Type: Deleted. Covered by Local Plan/NPPF. Outcome: does not change the nature of the plan.
BL7	-	Adaptation to Climate Change	Type: Deleted. Covered by Local Plan/NPPF. Outcome: does not change the nature of the plan.
BL8	BL6	Adaptable Housing	Type: Modified to improve clarity. Outcome: does not change the nature of the plan.
BL9	BL7	Residential Amenity	Type: Modified and part moved to new BL8 on local infrastructure for clarity. Outcome: does not change the nature of the plan.
BL10	BL10	Conservation Area	Type: Modified to improve clarity. Outcome: does not change the nature of the plan.
BL11	BL9	Rural Character/General	Type: Retained but retitled. Outcome: does not change the nature of the

		Design Guidance	plan.
BL12	BL11	Streetscenes & Views	Type: Modified with text on open spaces moved to BL15. Outcome: does not change the nature of the plan.
BL13	BL12	Employment Land	Type: Modified to improve clarity and to include text on new businesses from former BL14. Outcome: does not change the nature of the plan.
BL14	BL12	New Businesses	Type: Deleted and text moved to BL12. Outcome: does not change the nature of the plan.
BL15	BL14	Digital Communication	Type: Retained. Outcome: does not change the nature of the plan.
BL16	BL13	Retail/Village Centre	Type: Modified to improve clarity and to define a Village Centre on High Street. Outcome: does not change the nature of the plan.
BL17	BL15	Recreation Spaces/Local Green Spaces	Type: Modified with public rights of way provision moved to BL3 and text on open spaces added from former BL12. No new spaces. Outcome: does not change the nature of the plan.
BL18		Jubilee Village Hall	Type: Deleted. Completed. Outcome: does not change the nature of the plan.
-	BL1	Spatial Plan	Type: New. Defines settlement boundary and sets out how proposals inside and outside the boundary should be considered. Also establishes a housing supply position. Outcome: changes the nature of the plan.
-	BL5	Housing Mix	Type: New. Proposes default mix of housing type and affordable tenure. Outcome: changes the nature of the plan.
-	BL8	Local Infrastructure	Type: New but comprises modified text from former BL9 for clarity. Outcome: does not change the nature of the plan