

# Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan 2015 – 2031



Made (adopted)  
19 December 2016



Bloxham will appeal to people at all stages of their lives as a great place to live, work and visit.

It will be a village that strives to maintain and improve a high quality of social, economic and environmental wellbeing by meeting the challenges of the future whilst properly respecting our historic rural past.

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# A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOR BLOXHAM

## ***1. Foreword***

The Localism Act introduced Neighbourhood Planning into the hierarchy of spatial planning in England, giving communities the right to shape their future development at a local level.

Bloxham Parish Council made a decision to embrace this right and to produce a plan to reflect community wide consultations. We seek to support new sustainable development which respects our rural heritage.

Our Neighbourhood Plan provides residents of Bloxham with the opportunity to work alongside landowners and developers to shape a future that retains what is distinctive about our community and ensures that housing is matched to need, and that there is access to: local jobs, appropriate infrastructure, schools, recreational facilities and open spaces. It will enable residents to ensure that Bloxham retains its village feel and green surroundings offering an attractive, enjoyable, and healthy place to live, work and play.

### **1.1 How Bloxham's Neighbourhood Plan fits into the Planning Process**

1. Bloxham Parish Council produced a Parish Plan in 2010.
2. Only a year later the Localism Act of 2011 empowered Parish Councils to produce a land-use plan dealing with matters such as the location, number and type of dwellings to be built.
3. Cherwell District Council acknowledged receiving the Parish Council application to undertake a Neighbourhood Plan on 10th Jan 2013. The Council District Executive agreed, at a meeting on 3 June 2013, to approve the designation of the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan area.
4. Bloxham Parish Council, assisted by the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and Working Groups, produced a draft of the Neighbourhood Plan that was subject to pre-submission consultation over a six-week period from January 10th to February 22nd 2015 under Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
5. The responses were considered and several significant amendments made both to the structure and content of the plan before submission to Cherwell D.C. for its statutory six-week consultation period. Thereafter, the Plan was subject to independent examination and an edition produced that incorporates the modifications required by the Examiner.
6. It was then put to a referendum of village residents before it is 'made (i.e. adopted) by Cherwell D.C.

Once past this stage the plan is a Neighbourhood Development Plan and it will have legal status being part of the development plan in determining planning applications. Once it is adopted, Cherwell D.C. will determine planning applications in the neighbourhood plan area against the Plan's policies, in consultation with Bloxham Parish Council. The Development Plan for Cherwell District includes the adopted Cherwell Local Plan (2015) and the saved retained policies of the 1996 adopted Local Plan which are contained in appendix 7 of the Local Plan 2015.

## **1.2 Meeting Basic Conditions**

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For the Bloxham Neighbourhood Development Plan to be brought into force by the local planning authority it must meet the basic conditions set out in Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). These can be summarised as follows:

- having regard to national planning policy and guidance
- is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area
- being compatible with EU obligations
- contributing to achieving sustainable development

## **1.3 The Sustainability Report**

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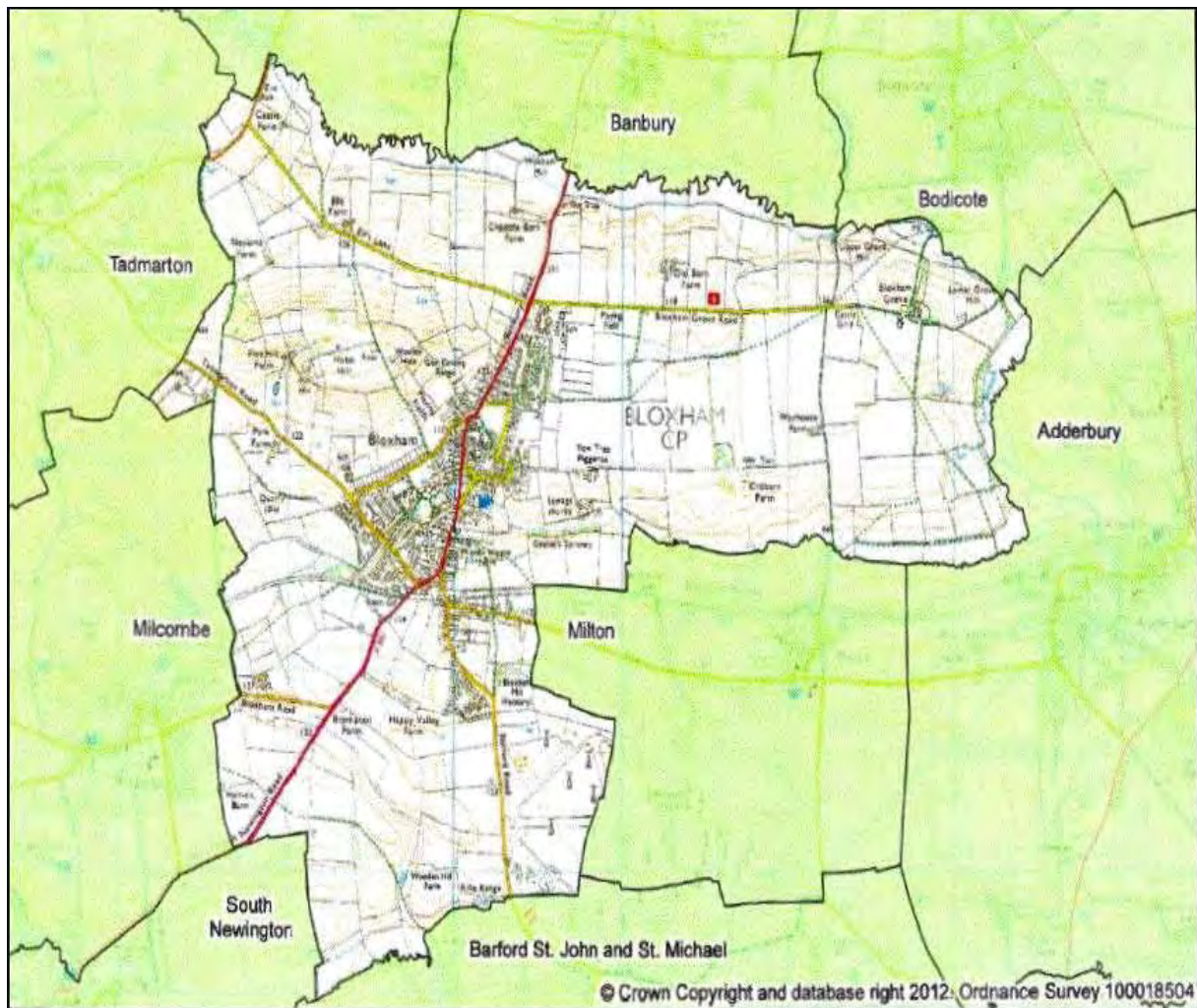
We have produced a Sustainability Report which sets out further contextual information about the policies in the Plan and forms part of the evidence base for it. The report is available at <http://bloxhamneighbourhoodplan.co.uk/submission-of-publication-version-of-the-plan/>

## **2. Our Bloxham**

On 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2013, Cherwell District Council (CDC) Executive formally confirmed that Bloxham Parish Council will be preparing a neighbourhood plan and is a relevant body under the Localism Act 2011.

- No negative representations were received during consultation.
- The proposed plan area (see map) covers all of the land within the parish boundary and meets the required criteria to be considered acceptable in planning terms.
- The Parish Council has followed due process in line with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations.

## 2.1 The Parish and Plan area



## 2.2 Locality and Connections

The map reference is 52.0184982 -1.3755647. The map makes clear Bloxham's rural setting which the 2007 Dept. of Transport 'Manual for Streets'<sup>1</sup> categorises as 'low density rural.' Policy ESD13 of the Adopted Plan (2015) seeks to protect and enhance local landscape. The nearest urban centre is Banbury 4 miles (7km) to the north along the busy A361. Ten miles (16km) to the south along this same road lies Chipping Norton. Pedestrian and cycle connectivity both within and beyond Bloxham are poor.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Manual for Streets – Evidence and Research

<sup>2</sup> Sustrans Report – Walking and cycling in Bloxham (2015)

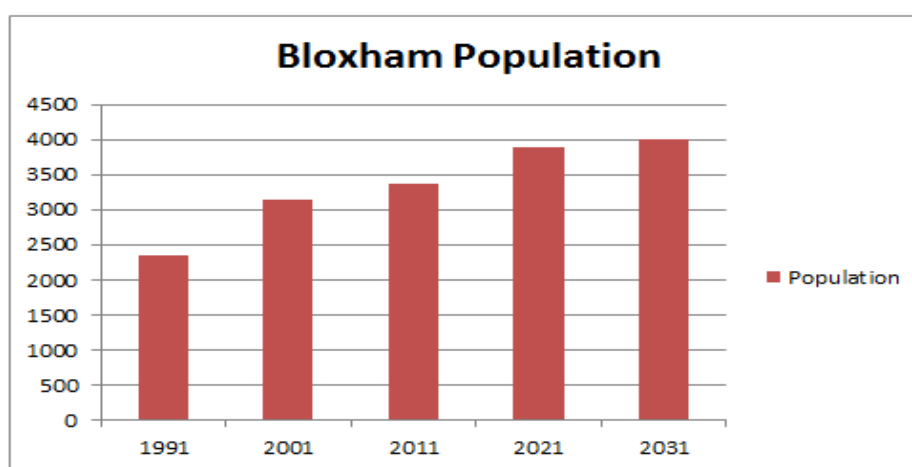
The local Banbury to Chipping Norton bus service provides the public transport link between these two urban centres and stops at Bloxham en route. Work destinations beyond Banbury include Oxford, Stratford, Coventry, Birmingham and London. There is a generally good rail service from Banbury to these destinations.

### 2.3 The Demographic Context

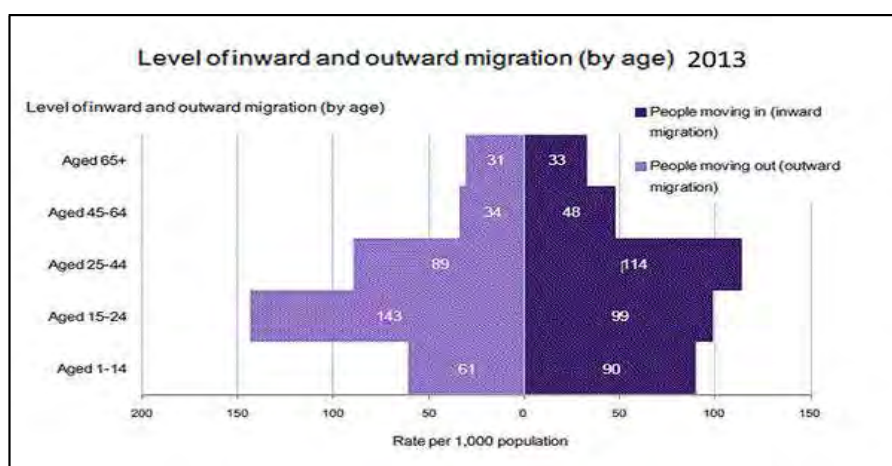
**Population:** Bloxham is a village where the population<sup>3</sup> remained broadly unchanged between 1801 and 1961 since when it has grown at a significant rate.

Year	1931	1961	1991	2001	2011	2015	2031
Population	1,080	1,359	2,356	3,132	3,374	3,530*	4,002*

\*estimated by the BNDP Steering Group = ONS existing population + (estimated number of additional houses x average household size (2.45)).



**Migration:** There is a net outward migration of people in the 15 to 24 age group who head to metropolitan areas to study and build careers. There is a net inflow of the 25 to 44 age group, often people moving to Bloxham to raise families.



Rural community profile for Bloxham (Parish) Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) Rural evidence project November 2013

<sup>3</sup> A vision of Britain through time - Bloxham



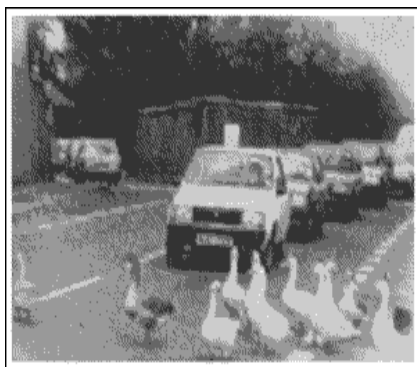
Relative to Oxfordshire and UK averages the population is slightly skewed towards the older age groups though less so than in many rural villages. Over 96% of Bloxham residents are British<sup>4</sup> and in terms of religion, 68% describe themselves as Christian, 23% of no religion and 8% have not declared a religious belief. Bloxham ranks very low on the deprivation index.

## 2.4 Historical Context

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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 Pevsner and by Jenkins<sup>5</sup> 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 12<sup>th</sup> century. In addition to its 198 feet (60m) steeple, it contains important and unique art, carvings and windows all by renowned craftsmen including a 15<sup>th</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> ONS Neighbourhood Statistic – National Identity - Bloxham

<sup>5</sup> Greatest English Churches

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 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries when the wool trade was at its peak. Weaving became, quite literally, a cottage industry in Bloxham in houses that still exist.

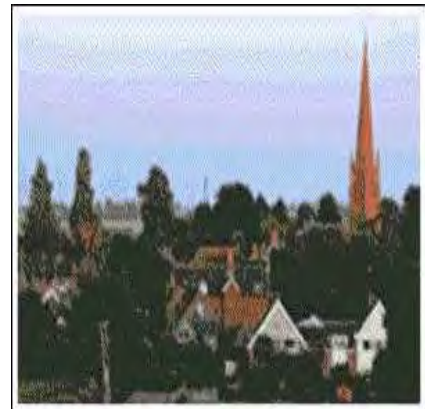


The mid-19<sup>th</sup> century saw the foundation of Bloxham School: a public school, which became a major landowner and significant employer within the village. The main school buildings still impart a striking visual impact that plays a significant role in defining the 'sense of place' of Bloxham.

Creation of the A361 around 1820 led to loss of the village green and the protection of the few remaining larger green areas in the heart of the village, such as the Red Lion garden, forms a part of this plan. The growth of industry in Banbury in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century saw the opening of the now defunct railway. This, along with improvements to the roads, increasingly allowed people to work away from the village.



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.



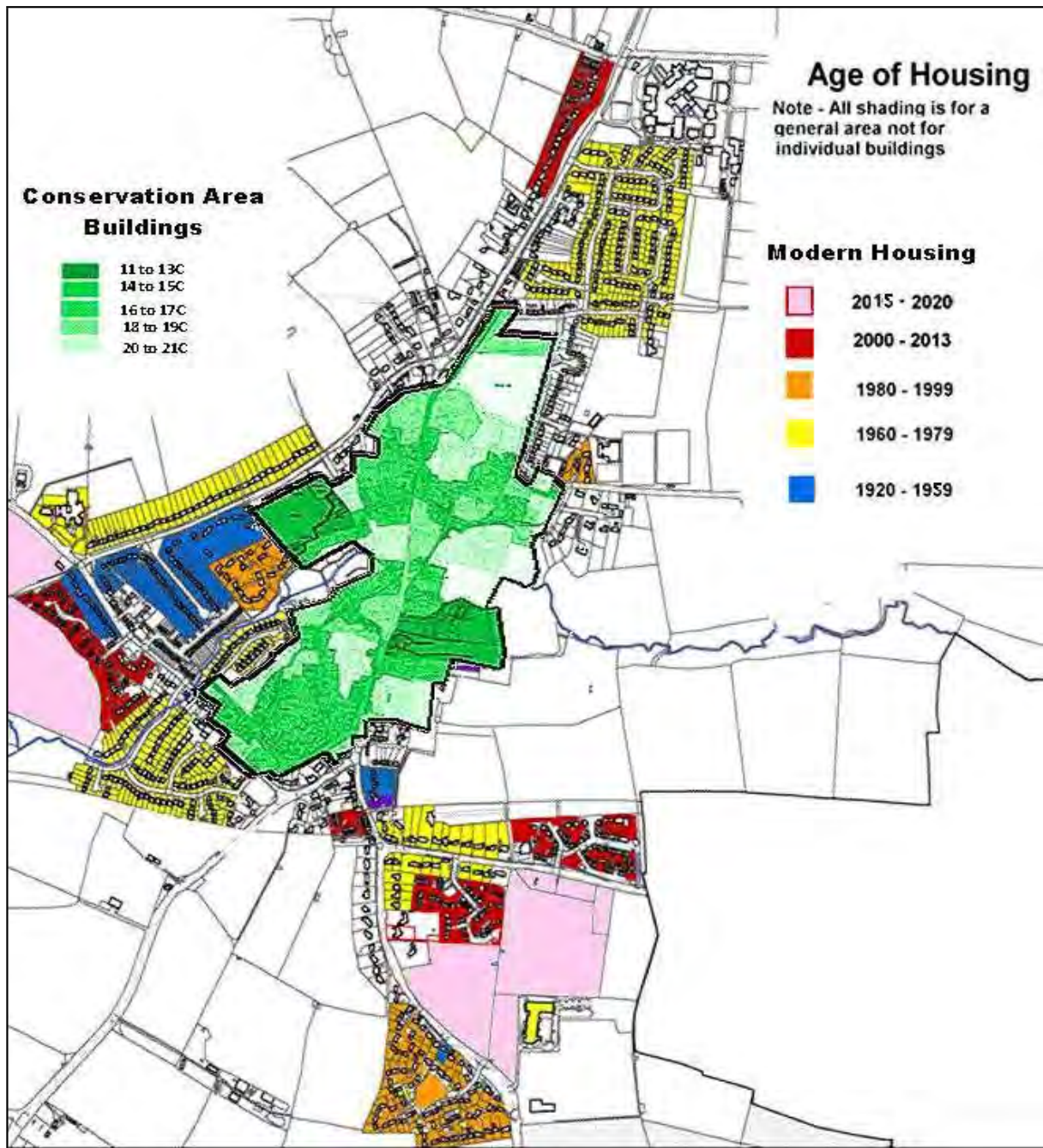
Despite on-going expansion, it remains a largely cohesive community with a 'rural sense of place' the preservation of which features highly in this plan.





Bloxham had little growth until the late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> 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.

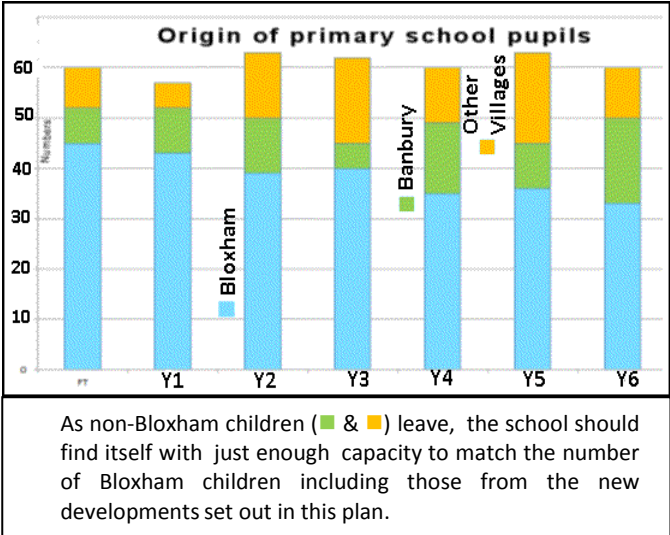


Since 2000, Bloxham has seen extensive development mainly at its southern end with house builders gaining permissions for more than 450 homes. These developments exhibit a variety of styles and a recurrent theme of this Plan is the avoidance of cumulative urbanisation that fails properly to respect our rural ironstone heritage. The preceding 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.

**2.5 The Education Context**

**2.5.1 Bloxham C of E Primary School**

Oxfordshire C.C. has deemed the two-form entry Primary School full and unsuitable for expansion in terms of both the available land and the efficient delivery of education. This will pose future capacity issues.



Oxfordshire County Council state that there are no current proposals to revise catchments, although this may be considered in the future. OCC explain that usual operation of admissions criteria mean that children from outside the village would be progressively replaced by the children living closer to the school.

In the interests both of sustainability and village cohesion, the community is of the strong opinion that development should not run ahead of the provision of **in-village** primary school places. This is consistent both with the NPPF (para 72 ) and also with the adopted Local Plan (INF1 D11) that infrastructure should be provided as an integral part of development and more explicitly (para A9 and C241) of ensuring convenient access to education.

**2.5.2 The Warriner School**

The Warriner School is an 11 to 18 comprehensive school of 1,172 pupils and most village students of secondary age attend here. It has only recently acquired a sixth form which it may need to expand. It seems likely that the school will generally continue to be able to accommodate all Bloxham children but there may also be increased demand because of extensive development both in Banbury and in other local villages. A Feasibility assessment is underway into expanding the school.

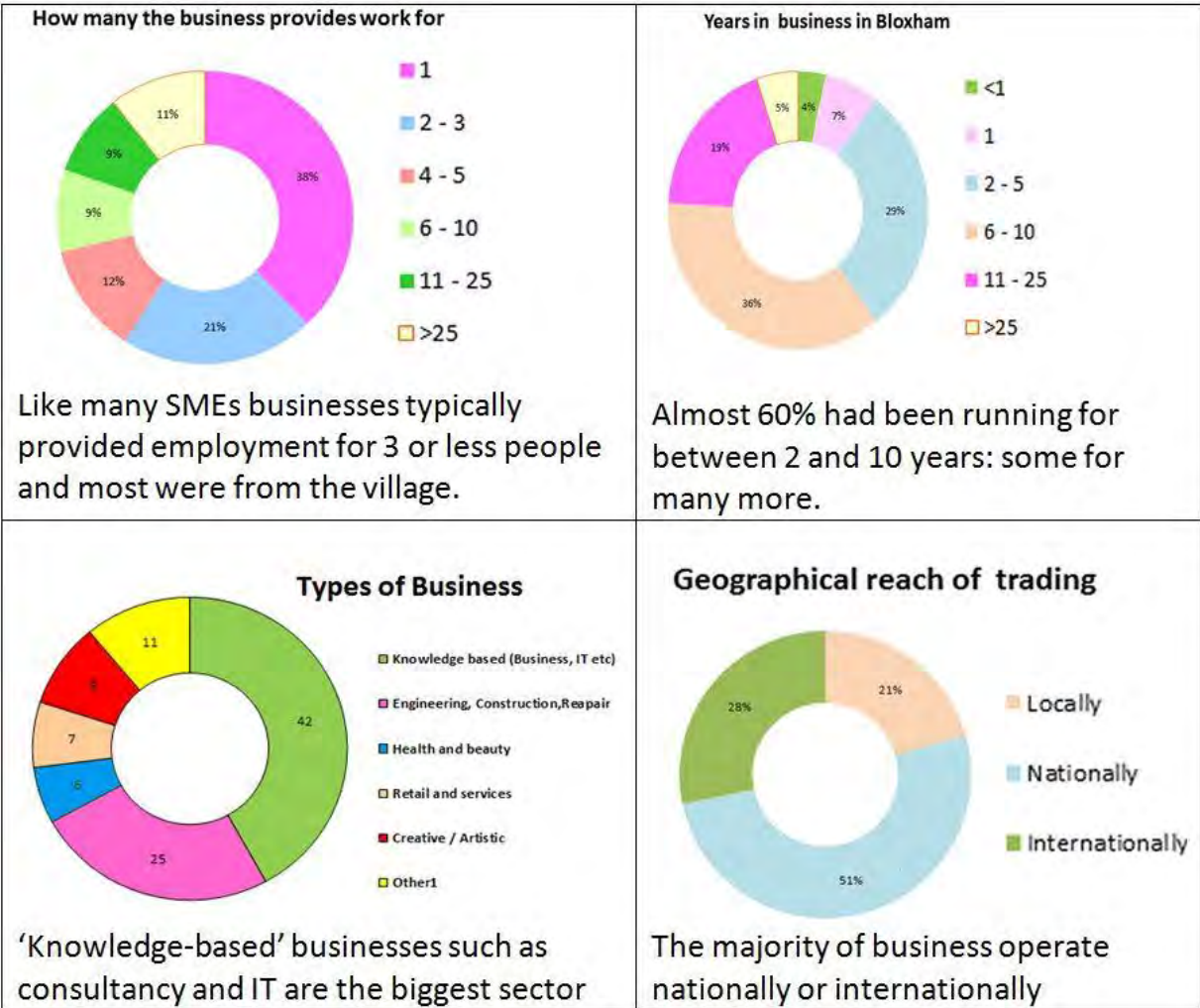
### 2.5.3 Bloxham School

Bloxham School is an independent co-educational day and boarding school of 420 pupils aged 11 to 18. Annual Day Fees for senior students from September 2015 are £24,150 and for boarding £31,815. Most pupils are not permanent residents of Bloxham.

## 2.6 The Village Economy

### 2.6.1 The Range of Businesses

Bloxham has a well-qualified and entrepreneurial population with residents more likely than average to be self-employed or running a PAYE registered business. An estimated 250+ businesses operate in or from the village many from individual homes or from Bloxham Mill Business Centre. Of the 70 that replied to the business questionnaire 65% were companies and 24% sole traders. They offered the profile in the charts shown below.



## 2.6.2. Workplaces

There are few relatively large workplaces in the village.

- Between them The Warriner School, Bloxham School and the Primary School provide full-time, part time or seasonal work for around 500 people and have combined turn-overs of around £18 million / annum.<sup>6</sup>
- Bloxham Mill Business Centre provides office facilities used by around 230 people, many self-employed and often highly skilled in areas such as IT or business consultancy.
- Additionally, there are a small number of retail premises, two pubs and a small nursery. These offer some further employment.
- At the 2011 census only 1.2% of residents were unemployed.



Despite the large number of Bloxham based businesses the majority of the economically active residents find work in the nearest commercial and industrial centre of Banbury with others travelling beyond to Oxford, Coventry, Birmingham or London. This Plan recognises the importance and appropriateness of encouraging and sustaining within the village the existing broad mix of businesses of all sizes.

## 3. Our voice

The Plan, which covers the period to 2031, builds upon the Parish Plan and has been prepared by the accountable body – Bloxham Parish Council, which has been assisted by the Neighbourhood Development Plan Groups comprised of parish resident volunteers with a good mix of genders and ages. It is based upon extensive research and robust engagement with the local community.

### 3.1 The consultation process

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This plan has been the subject of extensive consultation. Broadly this was done via four methods:

1. Meetings open to all stakeholders
2. Meetings of working groups and steering group
3. Questionnaires
4. Local media, especially the village magazine and website

<sup>6</sup> See Businesses in Bloxham section of the BNDP Infrastructure & Business Report

These are outlined in a little more detail below and in much greater detail in the BNDP consultation document. See also appendices 3 and 4.

### 3.1.1 Meetings open to all

These events are set out in the N.P. Consultation document and range from formal meetings through to an informal presence at events such as BloxFest or regular Parish Council ‘drop-ins’.

Stakeholders’ views were gathered with varying degrees of formality according to the event. Meetings elicited very consistent comments about the issues set out in section 3.2 many of which are covered more fully in the Sustainability Report.

### 3.1.2 Working groups and steering group

All groups consisted of volunteers and overall had a good balance of age and gender. The steering group set the agenda for working groups and monitored the progress of the plan.



There were three working groups:

1. Housing and landscape
2. Infrastructure and business
3. Recreation and leisure

These groups contributed to creating documents that constitute our main evidence base. These inform rather than define policies and although these working groups have now ceased to exist the reports will remain living documents up to the point of submission, i.e. information in them is updated as and when additional evidence becomes available or when pertinent omissions are pointed out. (They can be downloaded from the documents section of the BNDP website.) They total around 450 pages and reference around 400 further documents that have been considered during the creation of this plan.

### 3.1.3 Questionnaires

We draw upon the findings of four separate questionnaires:

Questionnaire	Date	Respondents
1. NP Main Questionnaire & ORCC Housing Needs Survey	Mar 2014	605 (45%) <sup>7</sup>
2. NP Business Questionnaire	Jan 2014	76 (31%) <sup>8</sup>



3. NP Young Person's Questionnaire	Jan 2014	57 (Unknown)
4. Parish Plan Questionnaire	July 2010	909 (76%)

Statistical analysis of the NP Main Questionnaire indicates we can have a very high degree of confidence in its findings. This constitutes our main evidence of extensive resident engagement. A number of additional small-scale questionnaires were used at 'drop-in' events. These invariably showed a high degree of consistency with the main questionnaire.

<sup>7</sup> Main Questionnaire based on delivery to 1340 houses in 2014. Parish Plan based on 1196 houses in 2009.

<sup>8</sup>Based on estimate of 250 Bloxham businesses



### 3.1.4 Media

#### Web based

- A special website, Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan, was set up (<http://bloxhamneighbourhoodplan.co.uk/>) to provide access to shared documents. Total site usage exceeds 19,000 page-loads.
- Updates were also regularly posted on the Bloxham Broadsheet website (<http://bloxham.info/broadsheet/>) which gets 3000 page-loads per month.



#### Paper based

- Updates were posted in the paper edition of the Bloxham Broadsheet, which is read, by 95% of all Bloxham households.
- Additionally public notices of the consultation and a number of articles were carried in the Banbury Guardian. Information was also included in the village section of this local newspaper.

### 3.2 Issues Raised by Residents

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Some key issues emerging from the above voices include the need to:

- a. Deliver the homes needed whilst avoiding further major developments and retaining village character, cohesiveness and sustainability.
- b. Preserve green buffers between Bloxham and neighbouring communities to prevent coalescence and creeping urbanisation and remain a distinct and vibrant community.
- c. Protect open spaces and key landscapes and views from both within the village and from key viewpoints along public rights of way.
- d. Provide attractive dwellings adaptable to the needs of empty nesters.
- e. Provide dwellings for local young people who want to buy (shared equity) as well as those who want to rent.
- f. Consider the needs of all residents in the light of the recent Sustrans report on low-carbon connectivity.
- g. Avoid exacerbating traffic congestion by more effective off-street parking and safe cycle and walking routes.
- h. Create low-carbon developments that are minimally impacted by climate change especially flood risk.
- i. Protect existing employment land and encourage home-working, micro and small businesses that avoid additional traffic problems and do not require large industrial style buildings.
- j. Consider sites away from existing traffic hot spots should a need for additional retail provision arise during the course of this Plan.
- k. Protect valued green areas and recreation spaces to give confidence regarding the cost implications of an emerging village recreation upgrade policy.
- l. Strive to ensure additional development is matched by necessary improvements to our infrastructure where it is already near or above capacity.
- m. Phase development to minimise the need for primary aged pupils to travel outside the village to gain a school place. This is a high priority for this Plan.
- n. Recognise that further development in Bloxham will see an inevitable reduction in the number of school places available to children from what are currently regarded as satellite villages.
- o. Seek improvements to digital networks, especially mobile coverage but also broadband.

## ***4. A vision for Bloxham***

Bloxham will appeal to people at all stages of their lives as a great place to live, work and visit. It will be a village that strives to maintain and improve a high quality of social, economic and environmental wellbeing by meeting the challenges of the future whilst properly respecting our historic rural past.

In conformity with the NPPF, the NPPG, and the adopted Local Plan (2015) this neighbourhood plan seeks better to match the speed and nature of development to the objectively assessed infrastructure requirements. How we enact this vision is made clear through this Plan's themes, objectives and our policies that follow.

## ***5. Themes and Objectives***

### **5.1 Themes**

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Four broad themes emerge from issues and challenges:

1. Deliver the houses the village needs
2. Protect and enhance our rural heritage
3. Promote economic vitality
4. Ensure a safe, healthy, cohesive community

### **5.2 Objectives**

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Theme	Objective
1. Deliver the houses the village needs	A. Meet the housing needs in a sustainable way.
	B. Build homes that improve general connectivity, minimise additional traffic congestion and cater for the projected increase in the number of residents with mobility issues.
	C. Build homes that adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change.
	D. Build homes that better meet the needs of residents seeking to downsize.
	E. Build homes that show regard for the amenity of pre-existing properties.
2. Protect and enhance our rural heritage	A. All developments in the Conservation Area should protect or enhance its character or appearance and take account of the latest Conservation Area Appraisal.
	B. Development outside of the conservation area should protect, enhance and contribute to the rural character of the village as a whole.

	<p>C. Developments should recognise that lower density and the role played by public and private open space are significant components of rural character.</p> <p>Such space, along with key views both from within the village and from significant viewpoints on public rights of way around the village should be protected. Views of the parish church and of certain elements of Bloxham School are of particular significance.</p>
3. Promote economic vitality	A. Safeguard land currently associated with generating employment.
	B. Encourage buildings and services that cater for the start-up and expansion of micro and small businesses
	C. Encourage provision and take-up of superfast broadband and improved mobile networks
	D. Address any emerging need for additional retail provision in High Street and Church St in a manner that will minimise additional parking and traffic congestion problems and not detract from the historic and rural nature of our village
4. Ensure a safe, healthy, cohesive community	A. Protect important recreation spaces and green infrastructure.
	B. Provide a better range of recreational facilities and activities
	C. Secure primary school capacity that provides a place within the village for all children from Bloxham and ideally its satellite neighbours.
	D. Encourage walking and cycling.

## ***6. Policies***

### **Theme 1 Deliver the houses the Village needs**

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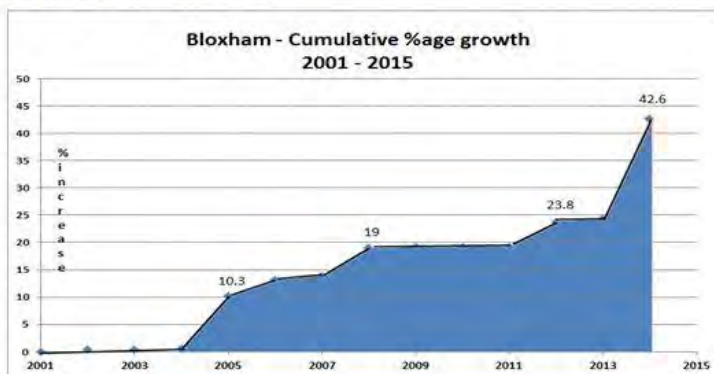
There are five elements to policies in this area:

- A. Housing Need and sustainability
- B. Developments that enhance village connectivity and have minimal impact upon village traffic congestion
- C. Homes that adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change
- D. Homes that adapt to demographic change
- E. Homes that show regard for the amenity of pre-existing properties

## A. Housing Need and Sustainability

- Whilst recognising the rural villages have a contribution to make, the Adopted Local Plan (2015) seeks to allocate most development to the larger urban centres<sup>9</sup>.
- Policy Villages 1 (C254) offers a broad-brush categorisation (Categories A to C) of rural villages based on their sustainability and indicates the types of development that may be suitable for each category. Bloxham falls within Category A
- The inspector of the adopted Local Plan (2015) notes (para 215) Many of the matters raised by representors relating to policies Villages 1 – 5 concern specific issues in individual settlements and/or sites of a non-strategic scale, i.e. with potential for less than 100 new homes, all of which are for consideration in the LP Part 2 process and consequently are not addressed in this report. Other representations, including from some Parish Councils, point to apparent inconsistencies and alleged inaccuracies remaining in the updated survey results, such that certain villages may have been mis-categorised. (para 216. ) However, even if so in one or two instances, the hierarchy is not “set in stone” for the full plan period and will, no doubt, be reviewed from time to time and as and when new services and facilities are provided or others may be lost. In particular, the relevant survey data will need to be thoroughly checked and comprehensively reviewed during the LP Part 2 process and before any new development sites are allocated therein for settlements in category A.
- The Sustainability Report accompanying this neighbourhood Plan seeks to provide additional evidence pertinent to the categorisation of Bloxham.

The map and graph offer contextual information regarding Bloxham housing permissions) during the last ten years (highlighted blue.)



<sup>9</sup> Adopted Local Plan (2015) Foreword

During the creation of this plan three major developments have been approved the last of which will contribute towards the Adopted Local Plan (2015) Housing Numbers:

Permissions granted before March 2014 are not included in the Local Plan numbers of 750 dwellings on new sites of ten or more units allocated in the rural areas or in the additional allowance of 754 homes in the rural areas for sites of less than ten units.

Location	Application No.	Number of Dwellings	Decision
Tadmarton Rd	13/00496/OUT	60	Approved at appeal
Barford Rd	12/00926/OUT	75	Approved at appeal by S.o.S.

Decisions after March 2014 do count towards Adopted Local Plan (2015) housing allocations and projections.

Milton Rd	14/01017/OUT	85	Approved by CDC
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The Plan will be implemented within a context of significant recent and ongoing development which, whilst continuing to make a noteworthy contribution both to the general and affordable housing stock, is also imposing demonstrable stresses upon existing infrastructure<sup>10</sup>.



One important infrastructure issue is primary school capacity. Since the granting of the Approval for 220 additional dwellings in 2013/14 Oxfordshire County Council have submitted the following to Cherwell District Council. 'Bloxham Primary School has been expanded to the full extent of its site capacity. Further population growth in the village is likely to mean that not all children who live within the catchment will be able to secure a place at the school.'

NPPF para 72 notes: The Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. Assuming the number of new dwellings projected in this plan, our research indicates some short-term problems that should gradually resolve. In the event that the number of dwellings projected in this plan is greatly exceeded without simultaneous and significant attention to **in-village** primary school capacity then there is no doubt this will pose longer-term challenges for sustainability and village cohesion.

<sup>10</sup> See BNDP Sustainability Report

Another issue that is becoming increasingly important, as the village grows and the population ages, is access to services. This is made increasingly challenging by high traffic levels, lack of parking and poor pedestrian connectivity. A recent Sustrans report (April 2015) totally contradicts the oft-quoted low-carbon connectivity of the village. It also describes the cycle route to Banbury as, “unsuitable for cycling at present.”



Further recent evidence comes from a Road Safety Foundation report (Sept 2015) which places the stretch of the A361 between Chipping Norton and Banbury – the road that bisects Bloxham - as the 8th most dangerous road in the country<sup>11</sup> with the report identifying 46% of the accidents being cyclists or pedestrians.

There are also significant traffic issues with no obvious or acceptable solutions. For example, at a recent appeal hearing it was recognised that the mini-roundabout at the junction of Church Street and Barford Road was of a design and capacity unable to cope with the traffic flows. Solutions were assumed to be available but because of the constraints of surrounding buildings, none has been forthcoming.

The foregoing is intended as factual information about Bloxham’s infrastructure that inform the creation of the Plan policies that follow. (There is a much fuller coverage of the detail in the BNDP Sustainability Report and The Infrastructure and Business Report.)

During the creation of this Plan three major developments highlighted in the table on page 18 have been granted permission and amount to 220 new homes. However, permissions granted before March 2014 are not included in the Local Plan numbers of 750 dwellings on new sites of ten or more units allocated in the rural areas. Therefore 85 dwellings count towards the housing requirements that Bloxham will contribute in the current Local Plan period in respect of Local Plan Policy Villages 2. In addition small site windfalls within the built up limits of the village will also make a contribution to the additional allowance of 754 homes in the rural areas for sites of less than ten units.

<sup>11</sup> Road Safety Foundation Report

Given the emphasis the NPPF, the NPPG and the adopted Local Plan place upon infrastructure and sustainability, residents are confident that a policy to include a major development of 85 recently approved dwellings (Policy BL1 – Map 1) plus additional sustainable development by infill, conversion and minor development (Policy BL2) will be seen as making a significant contribution to boosting housing supply and the dwellings numbers outlined in the Local Plan. A significant aim of this NDP is to ensure that in future years Bloxham can truly be said to be a sustainable village.

We consider policies BL1 and BL2 are consistent with each of the following:

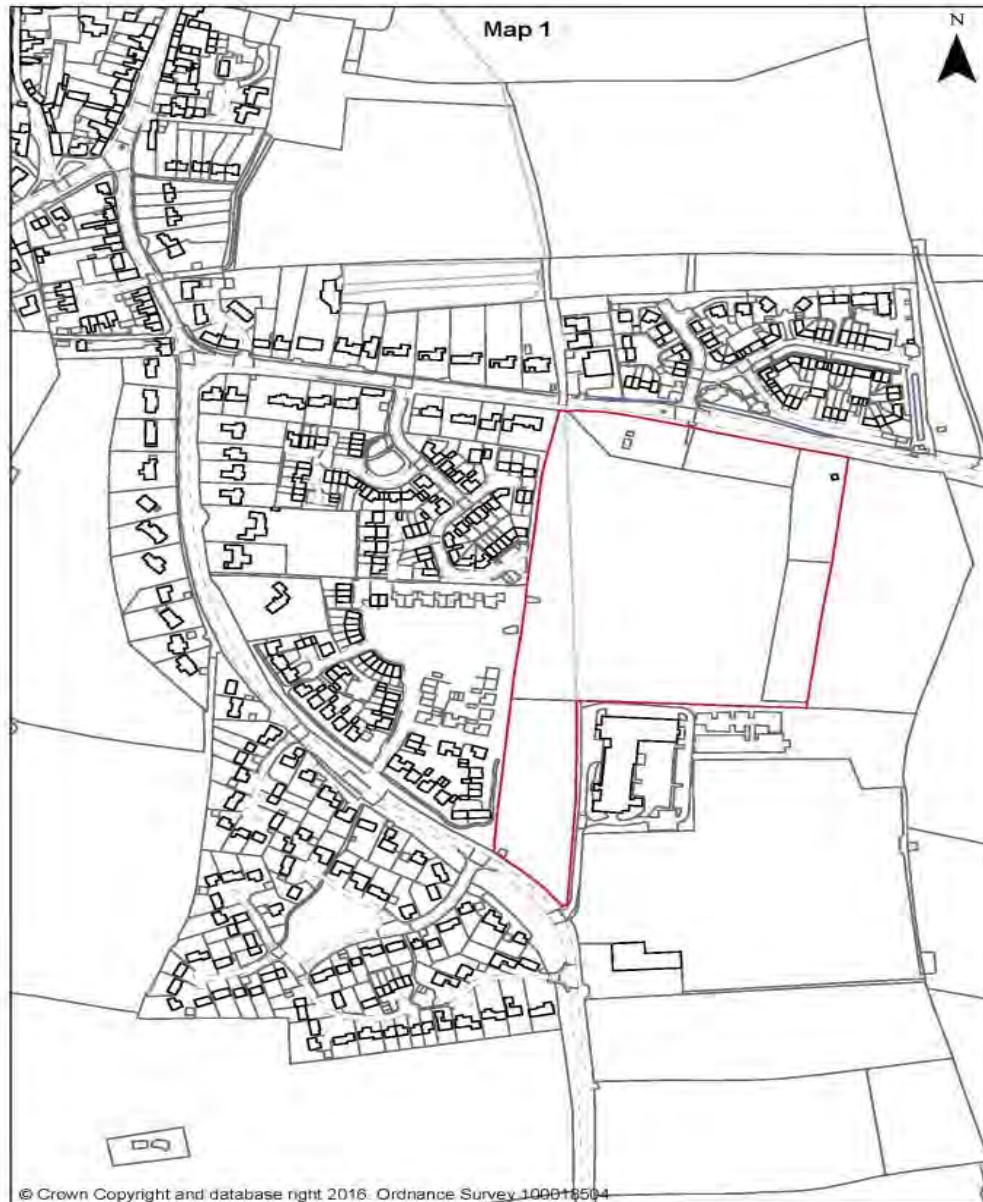
<p>✓ NPPF</p>	<p>Para 7 ...by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure.</p> <p>Para 72 - The Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs...</p>
<p>✓ Adopted Local Plan (2015)</p>	<p>Policy Villages 1 (C261 -&gt;) sets out the types of development that may be accommodated in rural villages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Minor development: less than 10 dwellings;</li> <li>ii. Infill: development of a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage;</li> <li>iii. Conversions: the conversion of either residential or non-residential buildings.</li> </ul> <p>It offers a categorisation (A-C) of villages according to measures of sustainability. Bloxham is one of 35 category A and B villages considered potentially suitable not only for infill and conversions but also for minor development within the built-up limits.</p> <p>Policy Villages 2 (C272 -&gt;) seeks to allocate sites for 10 or more dwellings to create a further 750 dwellings in the more sustainable (category A) rural areas including</p>



	<p>Kidlington.</p> <p>Policy INF 1 (D11) states infrastructure should be provided as an integral part of development.</p> <p>Para A9 states - We will ensure people have convenient access to health, education &amp; open space.</p> <p>In response to consultations and recent housing applications, OCC make clear more dwellings pose potential issues regarding the availability of in-village primary school places.</p>
✓ Oxfordshire County Council	In response to consultations and recent housing applications, OCC make clear more dwellings pose potential issues regarding the availability of in-village primary school places.
✓ BNDP Steering Group	We are clear that payment of planning obligation contributions alone does not constitute a solution to the sustainability and community cohesion issues that may arise from any failure to match <b>in-village</b> primary school capacity to development proposals.
✓ Community Support	The questionnaire records 87% of residents support minor but not further major developments and 96% think development should not outpace primary-school capacity

## **POLICIES ON SUSTAINABLE HOUSING AND SIZE OF DEVELOPMENTS**

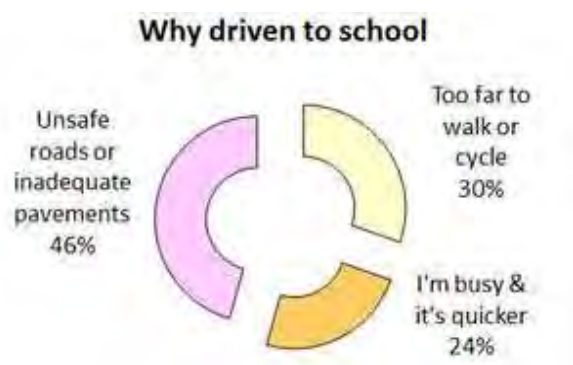
**BL1** Development of approximately 85 dwellings is supported to the south of Milton Road as shown on Map 1 subject to compliance with the other policies of this Plan.



**BL2** In addition to the major development set out in Policy BL1 the following sustainable development will also be permitted: conversion, infilling and minor development within the existing built up limits provided that such additional developments are small in scale typically, but not exclusively, five dwellings or fewer.

## B. Village connectivity and parking

Residents have repeatedly highlighted<sup>12</sup> 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.



They also express concern about an inadequacy of public transport to Banbury: something that will not be helped by the recent (Nov 10 2015) decision by Oxfordshire County Council cabinet members to scrap all subsidised bus routes.<sup>13</sup>

The recent Sustrans report 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.

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.<sup>14</sup>

Unsurprisingly on street (or all too often on-pavement), parking presents a further major impediment to the flow of both traffic and pedestrians. The March 2015 Planning Update notes local planning authorities should rarely impose local maximum parking standards for developments.<sup>15</sup> This plan seeks that new developments offer on-plot parking that is commensurate with the evidenced levels of car ownership<sup>16</sup> rather than the more general Oxon. C.C. parking standards which are, according to the OCC consultation response, only advisory<sup>17</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> See BNDP Main Questionnaire results

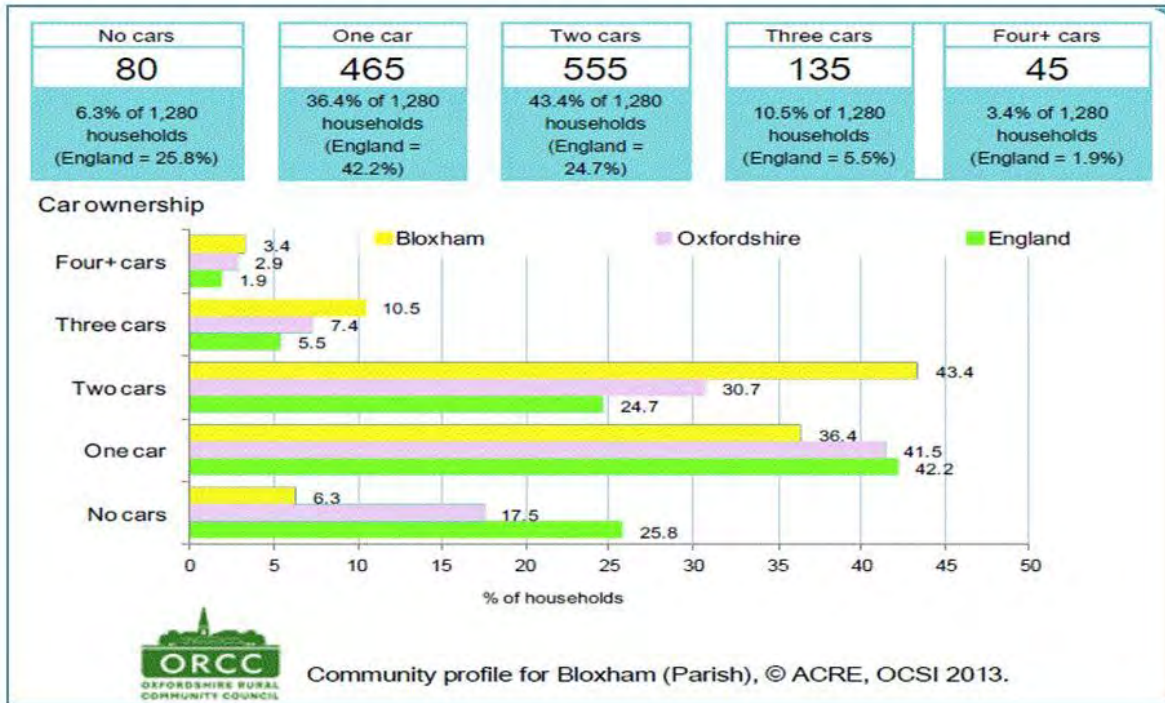
<sup>13</sup> Oxon CC cuts to transport funding – Banbury Guardian 15<sup>th</sup> May 2015

<sup>14</sup> See BNDP Main questionnaire or BNDP infrastructure and business report for detailed evidence

<sup>15</sup> Planning update – March 2015: parking

<sup>16</sup> ORCC Rural community profile for Bloxham

17 Ben Smith (OCC) "It is important to note that the Parking Standards are not a binding document"



We consider policies BL3 to BL5 consistent with the following:

✓ NPPF	General: Promoting sustainable transport especially para 29 and 30 Using a proportionate evidence base: meet household and population projections, taking account of migration and demographic change
✓ DCLG Planning Update March 2015	Local planning authorities should only impose local parking standards for residential and non-residential development where there is clear and compelling justification that it is necessary.
✓ Adopted Local Plan(2015)	Policy ESD15 creates high quality and multi- functional streets and places that promotes pedestrian movement and integrates different modes of transport, parking and servicing
✓ Community Support:	In the questionnaire 90% favour on-site parking. 84% think preference should be given to developments offering safer pedestrian routes to village services.

**POLICY ON CONNECTIVITY**

**BL3 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.**

### **POLICIES ON PARKING**

**BL4** In the case of new residential development, a minimum of one parking space will be required for dwellings with one or two bedrooms and a minimum of two spaces will be required for dwellings with three or more bedrooms to be provided on the plot.

In addition to this on-site provision, shared and visitor parking is expected to be provided in a location convenient to the dwellings it serves. It is expected that this will usually be provided at a rate of at least 0.5 space per dwelling served.

Where garages are provided they should be physically well related to the properties they serve and be of an appropriate size to accommodate modern cars.

Parking courts will not be generally considered to be an acceptable alternative to on-site provision.

**BL5** Insofar as planning permission is required any proposal to alter or extend an existing dwelling that would reduce the existing level of off-street parking provision will be resisted unless it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that the amount of overall parking provision retained is satisfactory.

### **C. Development that adapts to Climate Change**

Bloxham is in an area of water stress. It is also a flood hotspot within the county. The geology is mostly ironstone or impermeable clay and there have been a number of serious flood events in recent years emanating from both fluvial and surface-water run-off<sup>18</sup>. The medieval nature of the central village means there is no separation of foul water and surface water and this compounds both the risk and unpleasantness of flooding incidents!

There is a history of poor resilience of the electricity supply<sup>19</sup> and considerable concern as to the consequences of electrical failure for new developments that rely on

electrically pumped drainage.

Government Policy on moving towards zero-carbon homes is currently actively evolving.<sup>20</sup> Whilst we are keen to encourage low on-site CO2 emissions even on small developments, we will defer to the prevailing National and Local Plan requirements with regard to this.

<sup>18</sup> BNDP Infrastructure and Business Report – Flooding

<sup>19</sup> See infrastructure and business report also see both residents and business questionnaires.

<sup>20</sup> Next steps to zero carbon homes

We consider policies BL6 and BL7 to be consistent with the following:

✓ NPPF	Para 102-3 Sequential Test and avoid flooding elsewhere. General: Core Planning Principles Support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate. See also Meeting Climate Change especially para 94 and para 100: development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided and apply a sequential, risk-based approach and manage any residual risk.
✓ NPPG	Housing: Optional Technical Standards para 014: Where there is a clear local need, local planning authorities can require new dwellings meet the tighter Building Regs optional requirement of 110 litres/person/day.
✓ Adopted Local Plan (2015)	Policy ESD3 seeks higher than average water efficiency Policy ESD 2 Energy Hierarchy See also Oxon CC support for SuDS in pre-publication consultation feedback.
✓ Community Support	94% of residents think homes should meet higher than normal standards of water efficiency. 95 % want high energy efficiency.

**POLICIES ON ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE**

**BL6 All new housing development shall be designed for a maximum of 110 litres/person/day water usage in line with proposed optional building regulations on water efficiency standards or its successor.**

**BL7 Development should not increase flood risk. Planning applications for development within the Plan area must be accompanied by a site-specific flood risk assessment in line with the requirements of national policy and advice, but may also be required on a site by site basis based on locally available evidence. All proposals must demonstrate that flood risk will not be increased elsewhere and that the proposed development is appropriately flood resilient and resistant.**

**Information accompanying the application should demonstrate how any mitigation measures will be satisfactorily integrated into the design and layout of the development.**

**Where pumped drainage is employed, design features which help to ensure that property flooding will not occur in the event of a temporary failure of the mains electricity supply must be incorporated.**

**The use of sustainable urban drainage systems will be encouraged where appropriate.**

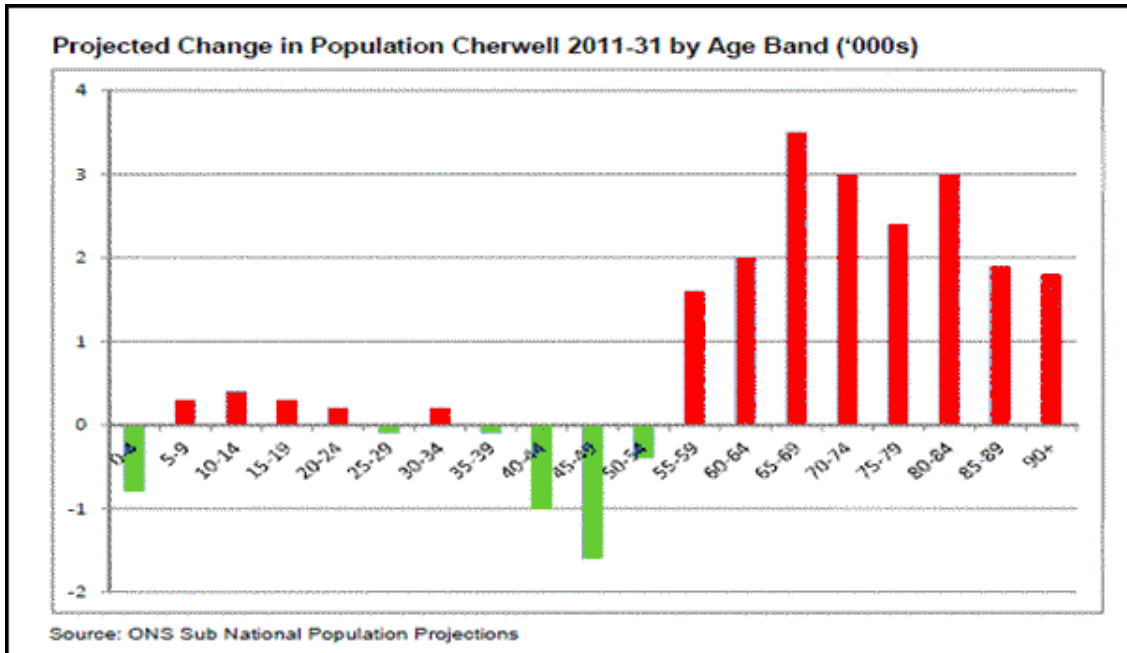
#### **D. Housing that adapts to demographic change**

In common with the rest of the UK Bloxham has an ageing population where mobility issues will become increasingly common.<sup>21</sup> Sustainable communities enable older members of the community 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.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>21</sup> See BNDP Housing & Landscape Report: The Ageing Population

<sup>22</sup> Sustainable planning for housing in an ageing population





From the many consultations and questionnaires, the following emerge as important issues:

- I. Open market, downsize housing would encourage the elderly to free up family homes;
- II. Downsize housing has to prove attractive.<sup>23</sup> In Bloxham, important issues include: on-site parking, privacy, attractive but manageable garden space and rural housing densities;
- III. Around 80% of Bloxham residents think all new homes should be readily adaptable to the mobility impaired;

We consider these policies consistent with the following:

<p>✓ NPPF</p>	<p>Para 50 Plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic Trends.</p> <p>Para 159 Meet household and population projections, taking account of migration and demographic change</p>
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<sup>23</sup> Page 35 Strategic Housing Market Assessment review and update 2012

<p>✓ Adopted Local Plan(2015)</p>	<p>Policy BSC4 (B126) Recognise a ageing population and higher levels of disability and health problems amongst older people See also pre-publication consultation feedback from Oxon CC</p>
<p>✓ SHMA 2014</p>	<p>Para 8.33 There may be some merit in considering providing bungalows in locations with a specific demand from households to downsize. The growing older population (particularly in the oldest age groups) will result in growth in households with specialist housing needs</p>
<p>✓ Community Support</p>	<p>Around 32% state that they might consider downsizing during the period of this plan. At least 70% of residents regard the factors set out in these policies to be important downsize criteria. 80.3% thought new homes should be readily adaptable to older people and those with limited mobility. Less than 10% thought otherwise.</p>
<p>✓ Building Regs</p>	

## **POLICY ON HOUSING THAT ADAPTS TO DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE**

**BL8** Wherever practicable all new housing developments should include at least 20% open-market homes that:

- a. Are clearly designed for the needs of residents at or beyond the state pension age
- b. Take especial care to ensure landscaping and layouts that confer a sense of space and privacy
- c. Are bungalows or dwellings of a maximum of two stories including any roof accommodation

### **E. Housing that shows regard for the amenity of existing properties**

Regard for the amenity of existing residents must be an important consideration when deciding the location, design, spatial arrangement and additional infrastructure for any new development.

As well as issues in the immediate vicinity, such as noise, light pollution, privacy, access to daylight and traffic flows, there is an urgent need properly to demonstrate the development will not adopt a dismissive approach to overloading already stretched elements of infrastructure such as water, drainage or primary school places within the village. We consider these policies consistent with the following:

✓ NPPF	Core planning principles: para 17 - always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants
✓ Adopted Local Plan (2015)	B2 Theme 2 (B86) Ensure that new development fully integrates with existing settlements to forge one community,  A9: We will ensure people have convenient access to health, education & open space.
✓ Community Support	98.3% of residents consider the height and positioning of new buildings should ensure minimal invasion of privacy for existing dwellings.  Only 10% consider 3-storey town-house style buildings acceptable.  Many residents record problems with water utilities over the last 5 years: supply cuts (53%), pressure (44%) and drainage (30%).  96% of residents think development should not be allowed to outstrip primary school capacity for village families

**Policy on Regard for the Amenity of Existing Residents**

**BL9 All development shall where appropriate:**

- a. Ensure that the living conditions of neighbouring residents are not materially harmed
- b. Ensure that there is adequate wastewater and water supply capacity to serve the new development and to avoid the exacerbation of any existing problems
- c. Ensure that the impact of any additional traffic likely to be generated by the development has been satisfactorily mitigated and will not adversely affect the highway network.
- d. For new housing developments, ensure that a sufficient supply of local primary school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new residents

In order to meet the requirements of Policy BL9 b. it may be necessary for developers to fund studies to ascertain whether the proposed development will lead to overloading of existing wastewater and water infrastructure.

**Theme 2 Protect and enhance our rural heritage**

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There are three elements to policies in this area:

- A. Protect and enhance the conservation area;
- B. Contribute to the rural character of the village as a whole;
- C. Recognise the importance of open space and key street-scenes and views.

**A. Protect and enhance the conservation area**

Bloxham Conservation Area was the fourth Conservation Area to be designated in Cherwell District reflecting the importance placed on Bloxham’s historical, aesthetic and architectural character and the quality and undisturbed nature of large areas of its vernacular 16-17th century architecture.

The CDC Bloxham Conservation Area Appraisal (2007)<sup>24</sup> describes a mix of informal terraces creating a sense of enclosure, low-density detached properties with large gardens, detached statement buildings, and semi-detached cottages. Buildings throughout the Conservation Area are predominantly 2-storey and they generally face the street. Many have small front gardens or on-street greenery which soften the view and there are grass verges, some green open spaces and significant numbers of mature trees, many with Tree Preservation Orders, in public and private spaces. There are important and attractive views into and out of the Conservation Area to the countryside beyond. Interestingly, there is more off-street parking and garages than might be expected in the Conservation Area mainly due to the number of properties on good-sized plots.

The BNDP document Archaeological and Heritage Data<sup>25</sup> offers more detail of listed assets.

We consider these policies consistent with the following:

<p>✓ NPPF</p>	<p>Foreword: Our historic environment – buildings, landscapes, towns and villages –can better be cherished if their spirit of place thrives, rather than withers</p> <p>Para 7 Contributing to, protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.</p> <p>Para 17 Take account of the different roles and character of different areas</p>
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<sup>24</sup> Policy statement on the conservation area

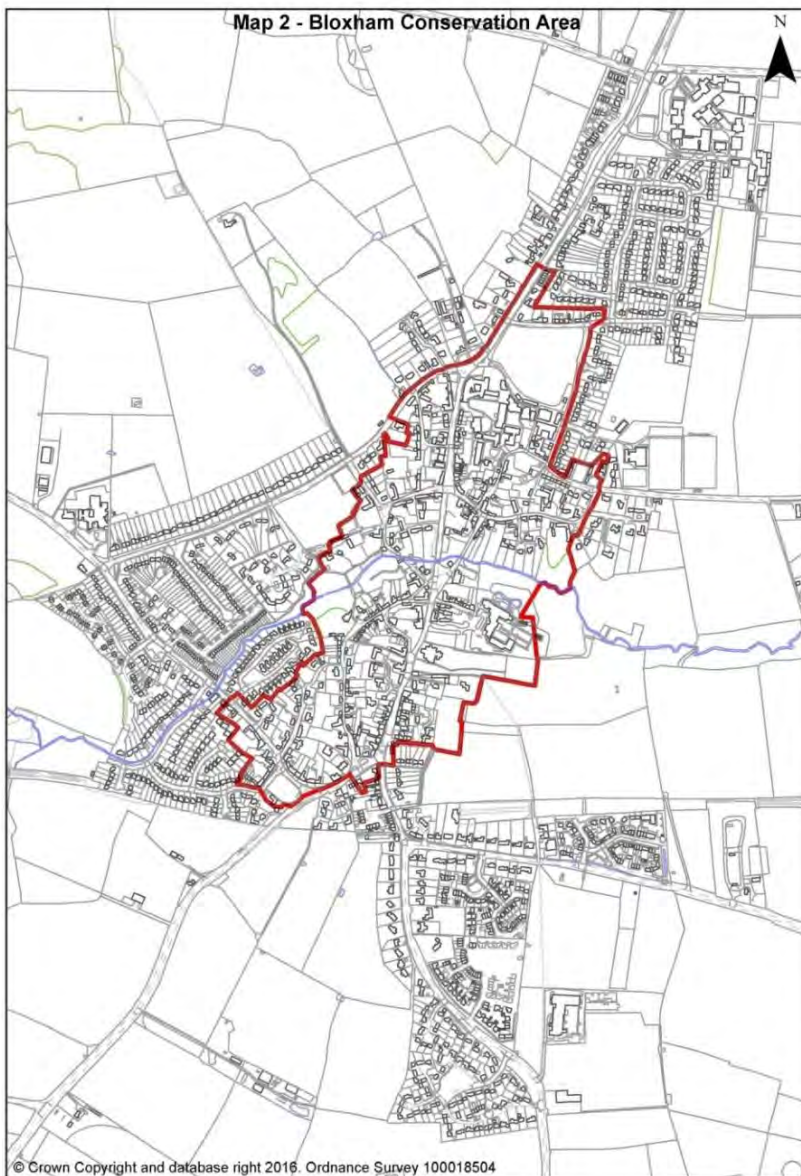
<sup>25</sup> BNDP Archaeological and Heritage Data

✓ Adopted Local Plan(2015)	Foreword Seeks to preserve and enhance what makes Cherwell District special; our dynamic market towns, the 60 Conservation Areas, our beautiful villages and wonderful landscape
✓ Community Support	97% of residents think protecting the feel and heritage of Bloxham is important

**POLICY ON THE CONSERVATION AREA**

**BL10 Development shall be permitted within the Conservation Area (shown on Map 2) where it can demonstrate that it:**

- a. Preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the area;**
- b. Takes account of the Conservation Area Appraisal (2007) or any successor documents**



## **B. Contribute to the rural character of the village as a whole**

Many of the comments presented to recent planning applications and enquiries demonstrate the obligation felt by Bloxham residents to preserve, enhance and retain the rural character of their village. Frequent reference to 'rural character' in our own consultations further demonstrates the strength of this feeling. It was suggested in the Countryside Design Summary<sup>26</sup> produced by CDC in 1998 that villages might commission their own Village Design Statements. Whilst not going quite this far, we have sought to identify characteristics of Bloxham outside of the Conservation Area that contribute positively to the 'sense of place' that is Bloxham. We acknowledge Bloxham's 20th and 21st century developments are to some extent products of their time not all of which are wholly reflective of, or sympathetic to our rural heritage.

<sup>26</sup> Countryside design summary

We are keen that less appropriate examples from this era should not be used as a precedent for a lowest-common-denominator approach that progressively erodes the historic character of our village.

Better examples of recent developments have contributed positively to Bloxham’s rural character by:

- The use of green space to the front of properties, usually a front garden
- Green verges and green open space
- The retention of significant trees and hedgerows and new tree planting
- Lower (rural) density, well-spaced dwellings on good sized plots
- Dwellings that are almost exclusively 2-storey
- Parking in proximity to individual dwellings;
- Unobtrusive lighting

We will expect future developments to be suitably mindful of these features.

We consider these policies consistent with the following:

✓ NPPF	<p>Para 17 Planning must be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives.</p> <p>Para 57 Inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces.</p> <p>Para 59 Guiding new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally.</p>
✓ Local Plan (1996)	<p>Control will be exercised over all new development, including conversions and extensions, to ensure that the standards of layout, design and external appearance, including the choice of external-finish materials, are sympathetic to the character of the urban or rural context of that development.</p>
✓ Adopted Local Plan(2015)	<p>A9 We will cherish protect and enhance our distinctive natural and built environment and our rich historic heritage.</p>
✓ Community Support	<p>98.3% think developments should preserve the rural feel of Bloxham.</p> <p>Less than 10% think modern 3-storey</p>



townhouse designs are appropriate for use in Bloxham.  
92% thought where a new development is in an area that already has houses with a mix of styles and materials, new dwellings should 'lean towards' rural not urban.

#### **POLICY ON CONTRIBUTING TO THE RURAL CHARACTER OF THE VILLAGE**

**BL11 All development shall be encouraged to respect the local character and the historic and natural assets of the area. The design and materials chosen should preserve or enhance our rural heritage, landscape and sense of place.**

**It should:**

- a. 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.**
- b. Be in keeping with local distinctiveness and characteristics of the historic form of the village;**
- c. Make a positive contribution to the character of Bloxham and its rural feel;**
- d. Use materials in keeping with the distinctive character of our local brick or ironstone;**
- e. Make good use of trees, garden space, hedgerows and green space to soften the street scene;**
- f. Preserve existing areas of open space and take every available opportunity to create new open space to help retain rural character;**
- g. 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;**
- h. Take account of the scale of any harm or loss that it might impose upon any non-designated historic assets and;**
- i. Take opportunities to protect and wherever possible enhance biodiversity and habitats.**

### **C. Recognise the importance of space and key street-scenes and views**

This section is about character, visual impact, heritage and landscape. These are pivotal aspects of retaining the rural character of Bloxham that are central to this plan.

#### **Open Space**

Important considerations include:

1. Use of rural not urban housing densities;
2. The protection of existing green-areas;
3. The importance of garden space.

Cherwell D.C note at paragraph B.102 of the adopted Local Plan (2015) that the density of housing development will be expected to reflect the character and appearance of individual localities. It follows that cumulative loss of open space in Bloxham would have an urbanising impact and this will not in general be supported.

The Cherwell D.C. Open Space Assessment 2006 (as updated by the Open Space Update 2011)<sup>27</sup> identifies amenity green spaces of importance to Bloxham. Development of these spaces will not in general be supported. 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.

#### **Key Views and tranquility**

There will be particular concern to protect:

1. Views identified in the Cherwell Bloxham Conservation Area Appraisal
2. Views of the church
3. Certain other key views and street scenes (see below)
4. Views from, and tranquility of, Public Rights of Way
5. Certain areas earmarked for recreational / amenity use as part of recent planning approvals

<sup>27</sup> Cherwell Open Space Assessment (2011)

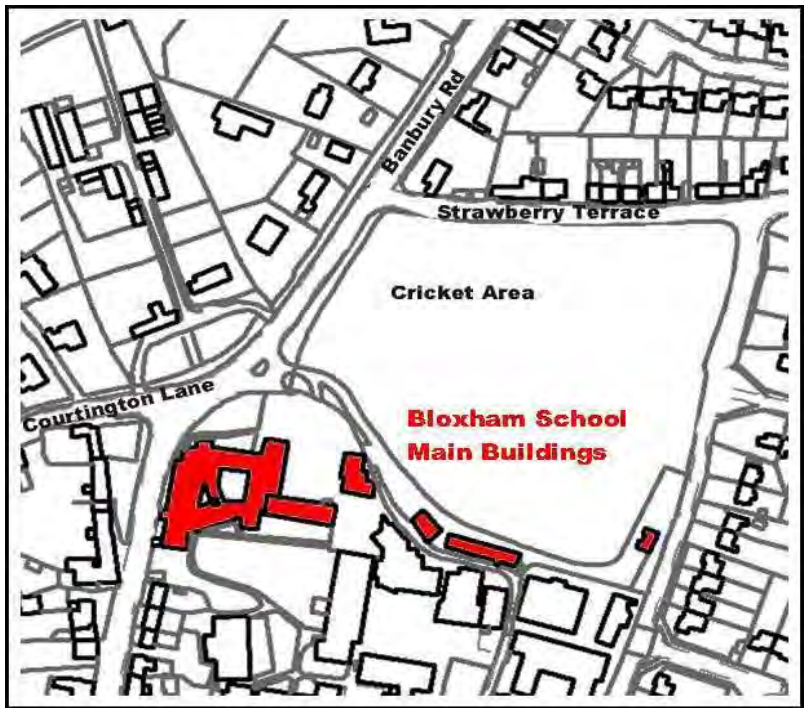
The Cherwell Bloxham Conservation Area Appraisal (2007) identifies important listed and non-listed assets but also identifies key views that should be protected. Until recently, the 60m (198ft) church steeple could be seen from most areas of the village. Further development should employ designs that minimise further loss of such views.

Public Rights of Way within the Parish generally are well used and highly valued partly for their contribution towards connectivity but also for the close-to-hand peace, relative tranquility and views that they offer. We are keen that the importance of these green corridors should not be understated.

Three key views or street scenes of particular importance to residents are set out in the text that follows.

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



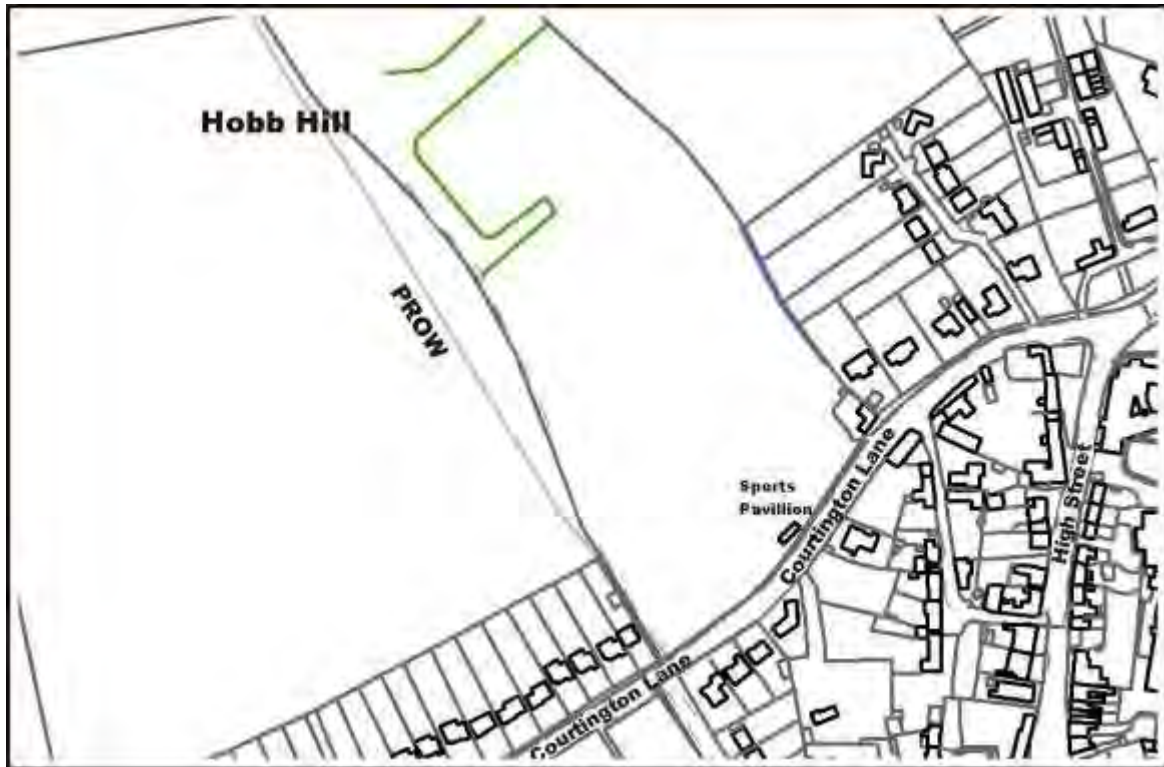
The CPRE Consultation comment states, 'Few other villages have such a statement of arrival.'  
It has dominated the northern approach for around 150 years and regularly appears on school marketing materials. It is an area significant for its beauty and holds an important place in the history of the village.



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.



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### **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<sup>28</sup>

This whole compact triangle between the Red Lion pub, the 17C Elephant and Castle coaching inn and the 16<sup>th</sup> 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.

<sup>28</sup> Red Lion Garden – A Heritage Asset?



- Triangle of pubs character zone**
- Red Lion Garden**
- Red Lion Pub and out-buildings**
- Elephant & Castle Pub**
- Joiners Arms pub**
- War Memorial Green**

**Red Lion Garden**



**The Joiners**



**War Memorial**



**Elephant & Castle**

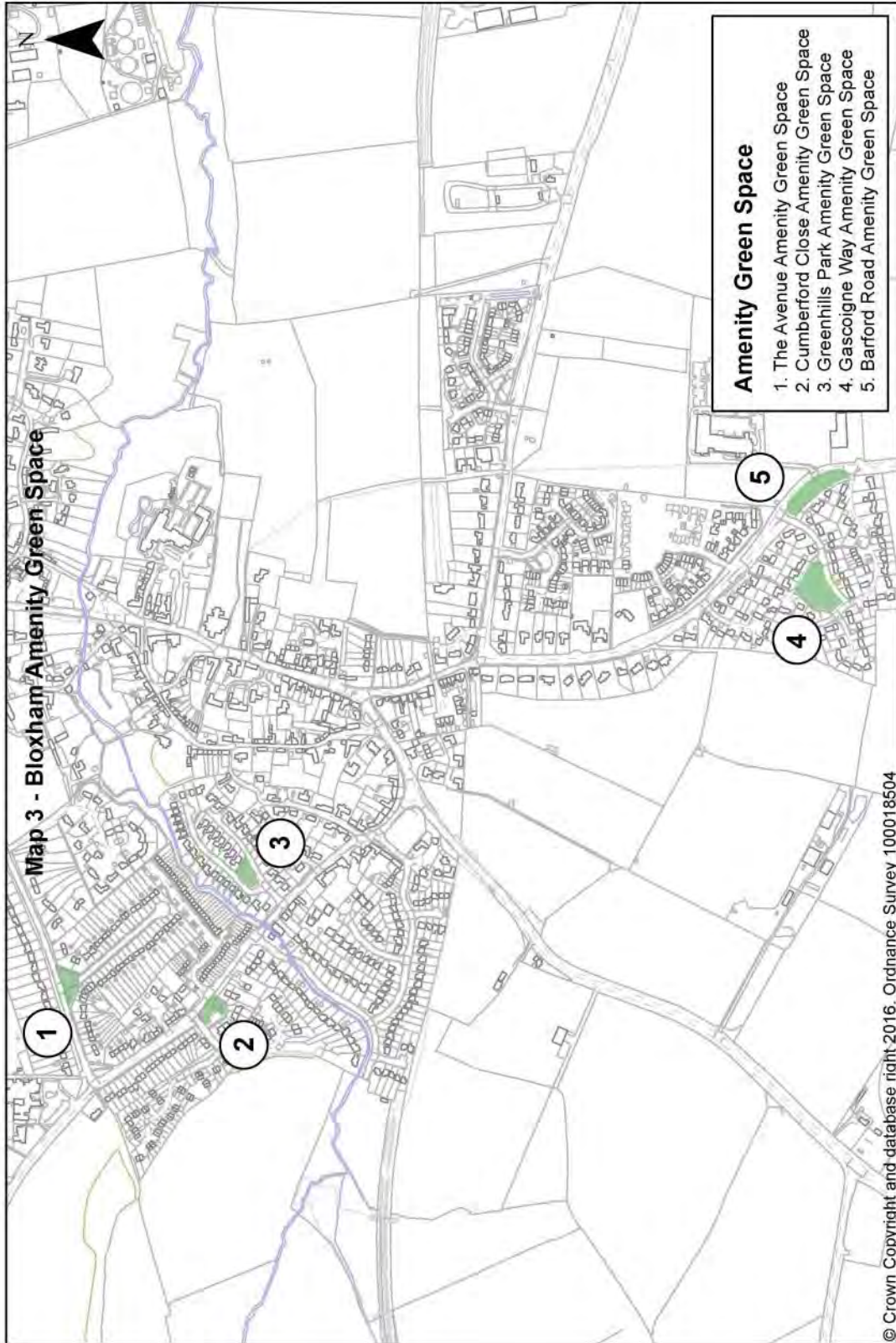
We consider these policies consistent with the following:

NPPF	<p>Para 58 Respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials.</p> <p>Para 75 Planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access.</p> <p>Para 109 Should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment protecting and enhancing valued landscapes.</p> <p>Para 156 Conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape.</p>
Local Plan (1996)	<p>C33 The Council will seek to retain any undeveloped gap of land which is important in preserving the character of a loose-knit settlement structure or in maintaining the proper setting for a listed building or in preserving a view or feature of recognised amenity or historical value.</p> <p>Para 6.38 Preserve as far as possible the visual character of the countryside and the indigenous wildlife of the site.</p>
Adopted Local Plan(2015)	<p>SO15 Protect and enhance historic and natural environment and Cherwell's core assets, including protecting and enhancing cultural heritage assets</p> <p>A27 Protect and enhance wildlife habitats as priority.</p>
Oxfordshire C C	<p>Communities are able to be actively involved in promoting responsible walking and riding in their area. (Oxon PROW Management Plan 2015-25)</p>
Community Support	<p>98.3% want to preserve the rural feel.</p> <p>96% support soft-edge boundaries, trees, hedgerows.</p> <p>93% Minimise light pollution, especially towards the village boundaries.</p> <p>98% want to preserve PROW around Bloxham.</p> <p>Over 90% of residents want the Red Lion gardens protected.</p>



**POLICY ON THE IMPORTANCE OF SPACE AND KEY STREET SCENES AND VIEWS**

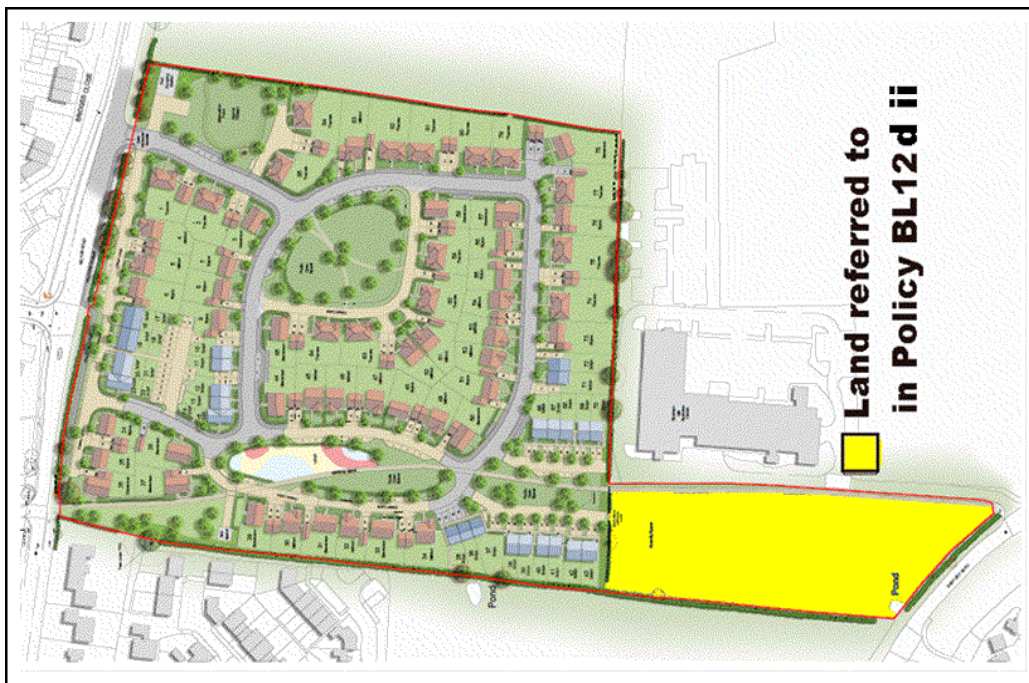
- BL12**
- a. Any development proposed within or near the key views identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal 2007 or any successor document must ensure that key features of the view can continue to be enjoyed and that any development has an acceptable impact in relation to the visual qualities of those views.**
  - b. All development shall demonstrate that it does not result in harm to the rural or heritage character of the village. This will include consideration of the impact of the development on:
    - i. The key features of the views of the Church, the area fronting Bloxham School main buildings, towers or arches and views from Courtington Lane to Hobb Hill.**
    - ii. The open character of the five amenity green spaces named and identified on Map 3.**
    - iii. The key features of the views from, and the tranquility of, public rights of way within the Parish shown on Map 6.**
    - iv. The historic and open character of the Red Lion garden.****
  - c. Development on residential gardens will not usually be permitted.**
  - d. Development on open spaces and sports and recreational land including those areas designated for amenity use through planning permissions, will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated the loss would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in a suitable location. This also applies to the country park at Tadmarton Road shown on Map 4 and the amenity space at the Bloxham Mill Business Park shown on Map 5.**



Map 4



Map 5



Note – Where we refer to open spaces and sports and recreational land in the policies above this will include spaces listed in Cherwell D.C. Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Needs Assessment Audit and Strategy 2006 (as updated by the Open Space Update 2011) and all open spaces specifically identified as part of the planning process.

### Theme 3 Promote Economic Vitality

- A. Safeguard land currently associated with generating employment
- B. Encourage buildings and services that cater for the start-up and expansion of micro and small businesses
- C. Encourage provision and take-up of superfast broadband and improved mobile networks
- D. Address any emerging need for additional retail provision in High Street and Church St in a manner that will minimise additional parking and traffic congestion problems and not detract from the historic and rural nature of our village

#### A. Policy – Protecting Employment Land

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.

We consider these policies consistent with the following:

✓ NPPF	Planning policies should aim for a balance of land uses within their area so that people can be encouraged to minimise journey lengths for employment, shopping
✓ Local Plan (1996)	
✓ Adopted Local Plan(2015)	Policy SLE1 & para B36 The Council will, as a general principle, continue to protect existing employment land.
✓ Community Support	From various consultations, we know the community appreciates the value of having employment available within the village

#### **POLICY TO PROTECT EMPLOYMENT LAND**

**BL13 Land that currently contributes to employment shall be retained for employment use unless it can be convincingly demonstrated the use of the site solely for employment is no longer viable.**

## B. Policy Encouraging start-up and small business expansion

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.

We consider these policies consistent with the following:

✓ NPPF	Para 21 Facilitate flexible working practices such as the integration of residential and commercial uses within the same unit and plan positively for the location, promotion and expansion of clusters or networks of knowledge driven, creative or high tech industries;
✓ Local Plan (1996)	
✓ Adopted Local Plan(2015)	Policy SLE1 New employment proposals within rural areas on non-allocated sites will be supported if they meet the following criteria
✓ Community Support	There is general support for additional knowledge based and creative/aesthetic businesses amongst residents. 56% of residents consider that all new houses should have at least one room pre-adapted to be a home office.

### POLICY TO ENCOURAGE START-UP AND SMALL BUSINESS EXPANSION

- BL14**
- a. Proposals for new live-work development combining living and small-scale employment space will be viewed favourably within the built up area provided it:**
- i. does not result in the loss of Class A1 units or community facilities;**
  - ii. does not adversely affect the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers;**
  - iii. does not unacceptably affect the local road network through the amount or type of vehicles associated with the proposed use and has sufficient parking provision;**
  - iv. does not exacerbate flood risk.**
- b. Proposals to develop B1 business uses of less than 150 square metres through new build, conversion or splitting up existing employment space shall be viewed favourably, provided that the living conditions of neighbouring residents are not**

**materially harmed and the impact of any additional traffic likely to be generated by the development has been satisfactorily mitigated and will not adversely affect the highway network.**

**C. Policy to Encourage better quality digital communication**

The quality of mobile networks coverage and the speed and variability of broadband is currently an impediment to business.

- I. Installation and take-up of superfast broadband within the village has already commenced.
- II. Improvement to mobile coverage will be encouraged.

We consider these policies consistent with the following:

✓ NPPF	Para 43 Plans should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including telecommunications and high-speed broadband.
✓ Local Plan (1996)	
✓ Adopted Local Plan(2015)	BSC 9 All new developments will be expected to include provision for connection to Superfast Broadband
✓ Community Support	65% suffer problems with mobile reception in the village. Broadband, mobile coverage and the electricity supply rank as the top three services residents seek improvements to. Businesses put mobile coverage slightly above broadband with electrical resilience third.

**POLICY TO ENCOURAGE IMPROVED DIGITAL COMMUNICATION**

- BL15**
- a. New live-work or business accommodation shall be provided with a superfast fibre connection, or ducting to facilitate such connection when it becomes available.
  - b. Proposals from mobile phone network operators to improve mobile coverage will be supported where:
    - i. the applicant has fully explored the opportunities to erect apparatus on existing buildings, masts or other structures;
    - ii. the numbers of radio and telecommunications masts are kept to a minimum consistent with the efficient operation of the network and have been sited and designed to minimise the impacts on local character.

Where proposals are in particularly sensitive areas, applicants will be required to provide additional information to support their application through means including photomontages, accurate visual imagery to industry standards or maps demonstrating sightlines.

**D. Policy – Address any emerging need for additional retail provision**

Village expansion has placed the High Street shops 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.

We consider these policies consistent with the following

✓ DCLG Planning update March 2015	This government is keen to ensure adequate parking provision both in new residential developments and around our town centres and high streets
✓ Local Plan (1996)	
✓ Adopted Local Plan(2015)	
✓ Community Support	87% of residents think plans for additional shops in Bloxham have to identify suitable off street parking for staff and customers Around 65% of village businesses identify parking and congestion as a problem for them.

## **POLICY TO ADDRESS EMERGING NEED FOR ADDITIONAL RETAIL**

**BL16** New retail units or the expansion of existing retail units in the High Street and Church Street will be supported provided that the impact of any additional traffic likely to be generated by the development has been satisfactorily mitigated and will not adversely affect the highway network and pedestrian safety.

### **Theme 4 Ensure a safe, healthy, cohesive community**

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Bloxham continues to grow rapidly and securing a safe, healthy cohesive community will include:

- A. Protect important recreation spaces and green infrastructure
- B. Provide a better range of recreational facilities and activities
- C. Secure primary school capacity that provides a place within the village for all children from Bloxham and ideally its satellite neighbours
- D. Encourage walking and cycling

#### **A. Protect important recreation spaces and green infrastructure**

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 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 publically accessible village sports pitches. The Recreation Ground also confers a welcome soft-edge to the southern village gateway.

The BNDP Recreation working group investigated areas for additional or alternative provision of recreation areas but, given the potential value of land for housing development, none was forthcoming.

Residents are 98% in favour of protecting the Jubilee Park (other than an area to allow



the upgrade and expansion of the community Hall that is based there).

Residents are 95% in favour of protecting the Recreation Ground.

We propose Local Green Space status for both whilst excluding some space to allow for expansion and development of the Jubilee Hall.

### ***The recreation areas***

#### ***The Slade***

This is a longstanding nature conservation area that the Parish Council acquired in July 2015. It is used by naturalists<sup>29</sup>, 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.

#### ***Public Rights of Way (PROW)***

The importance of PROW 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.

In the BNDP questionnaires, 97.8% thought it important to protect local PROW. When we asked younger residents the best thing about the village it elicited numerous comments such as, 'Good places to dog walk.' 'Lots of walking paths.' 'Beautiful fields.' 'Nice walks.' When asked the worst thing about the village the overriding response was the constraints imposed on them by the traffic. Adults and young people alike value hugely the green tranquility of traffic-free PROW in close proximity to the village.

Protecting PROW is totally consistent with the vision expressed in the Oxfordshire Rights of Way management Plan 2015-25<sup>30</sup>

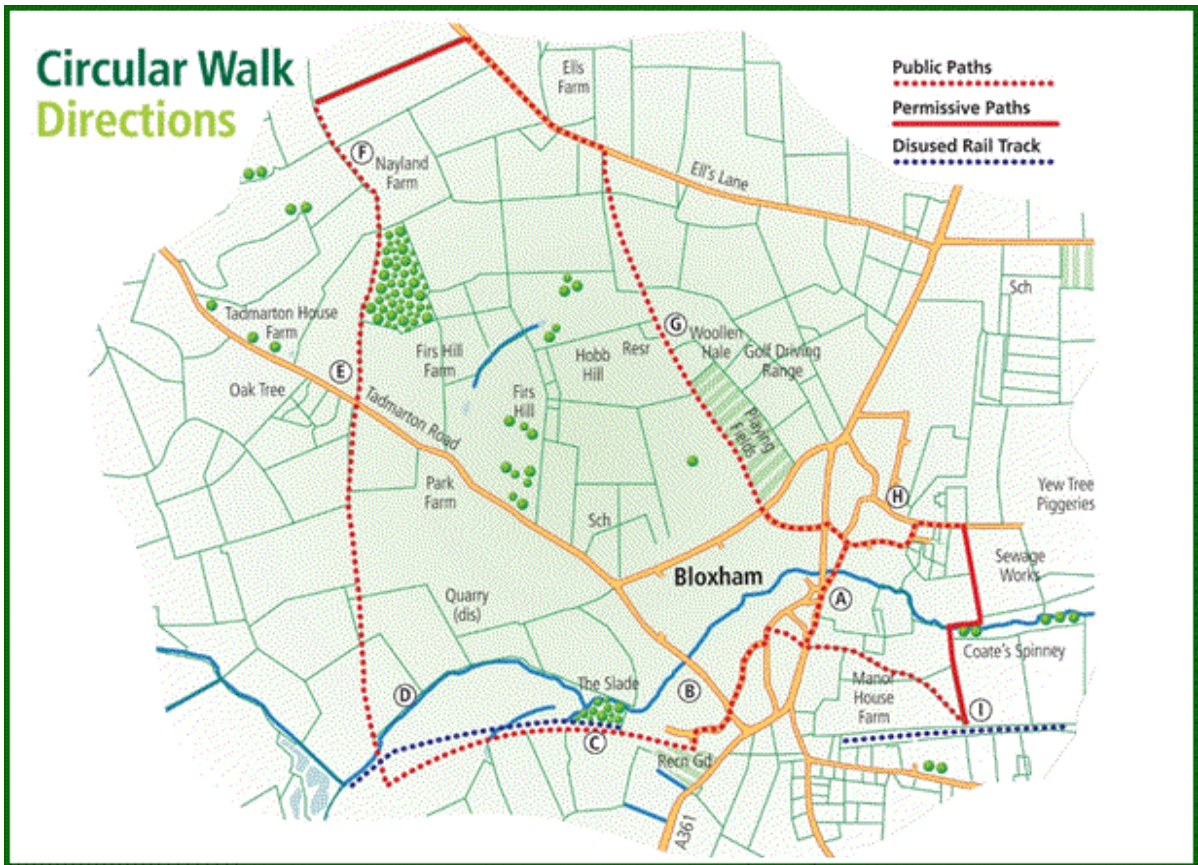
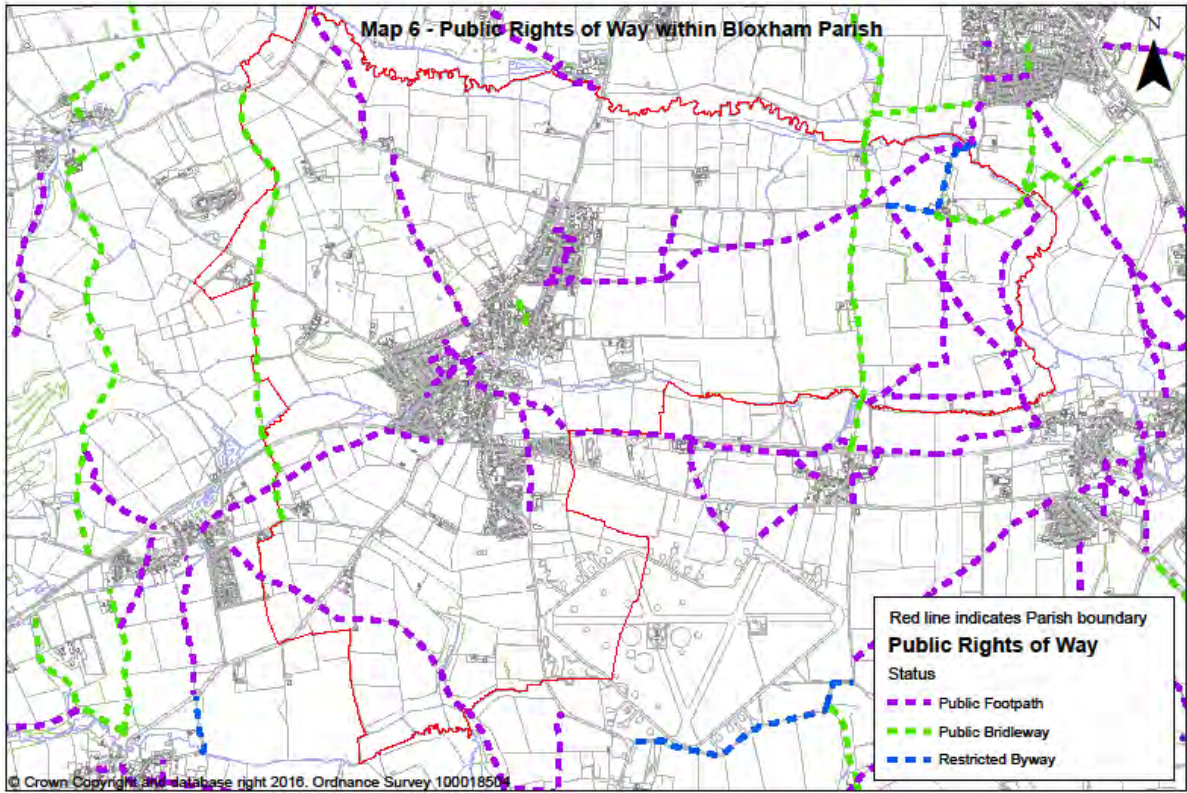
The map of Oxfordshire PROW can be found on the Oxon C.C. site<sup>31</sup>

The current public rights of way are shown on Map 6. There is a particular desire to protect the new Bloxham Circular walk by keeping it as green and traffic free as possible. Again a map is provided on the next page.

<sup>29</sup> See The Birds of the Slade Nature Reserve Bloxham by Anthony Brownnett (1992)

<sup>30</sup> Oxfordshire Rights of Way Management Plan 2015-25

<sup>31</sup> Oxfordshire definitive P.R.O.W. map



We consider these policies consistent with the following:

✓ NPPF	Para 76-77 Where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife;
✓ Adopted Local Plan(2015)	Para B159 The Green Spaces and Playing Pitch Strategies 2008 (Local Plan evidence base) highlighted the need to protect all sites identified in the audit to ensure an adequate supply of open space provision. Policy Villages 4 (C280) Indoor Sport, Recreation and Community Facilities' will be used to help address existing deficiencies in provision.
✓ Community Support	In consultations residents embraced the NPPF concept of Local Green Space supporting its application to the areas designated below.

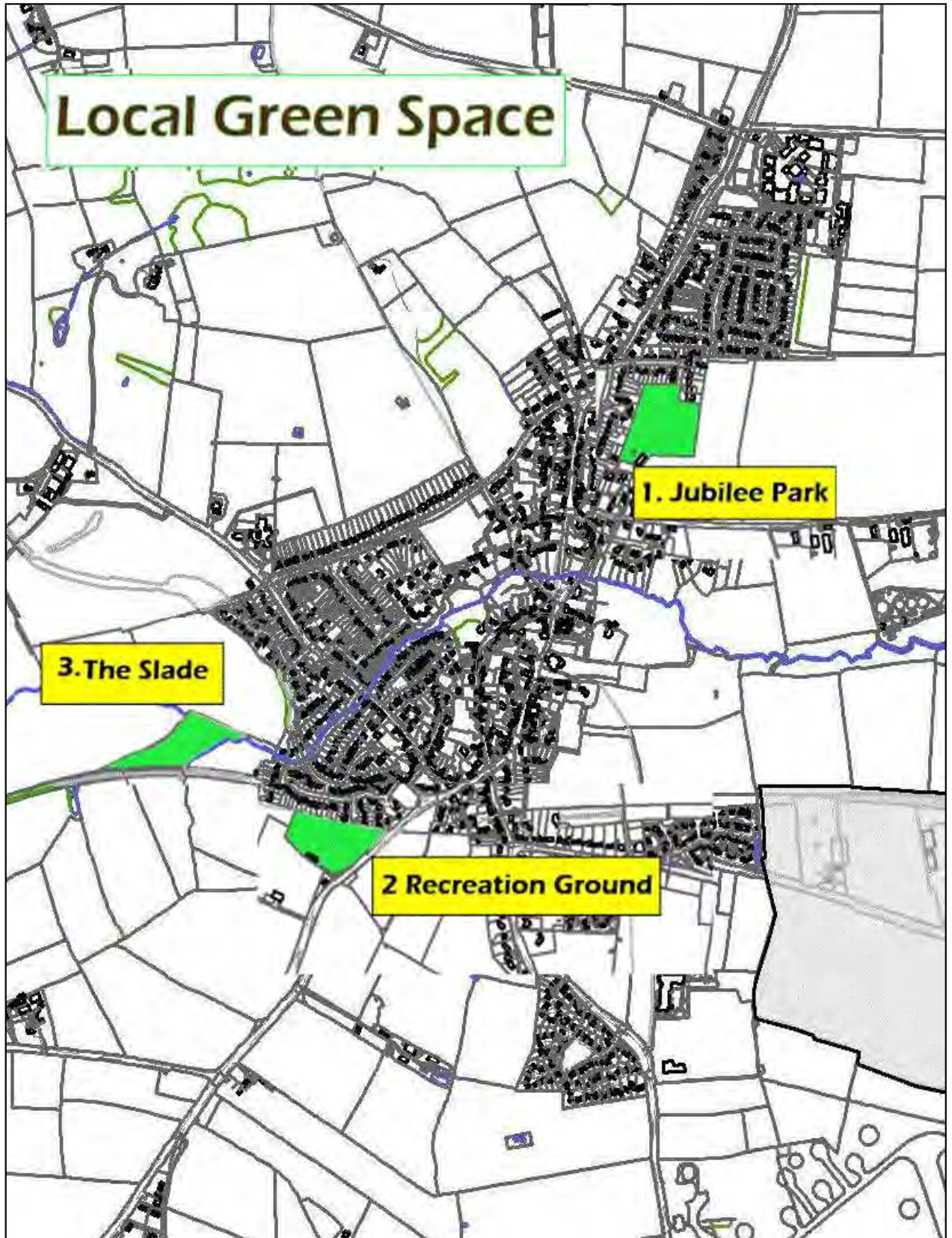
**POLICY TO PROTECT IMPORTANT RECREATION SPACES**

**BL17 a. The three areas identified below and shown on the Map below (titled Map 7) are designated as Local Green Spaces. Proposals for development other than those ancillary or necessary to the use of the sites for recreational and sport purposes which preserve the purposes of designating the areas will be resisted.**

- 1. The Jubilee Park**
- 2. The Recreation Ground**
- 3. The Slade Nature Reserve**

**b. Public rights of way will be protected and routes through green landscaped or open space areas will be kept free from nearby vehicular traffic as far as practicable.**

Map 7



**B. Provide a better range of recreational opportunities.**

The village has a ‘hotchpotch’ of small community halls that are not wholly appropriate to the needs of a growing village with a population heading for 4000. As a result of recent rapid growth, a shortage of pitches is also emerging with no recreation land having been earmarked to mitigate this situation.

The village already benefits significantly from shared use of the facilities of all three schools. The Warriner School and Bloxham School in particular are able and willing to make a wide range of facilities available for public use.

The Warriner is exploring plans for the creation of an outdoor multi-use facility which this plan would support if care is taken not to affect the amenity of residents. We have identified this, including a formal shared use agreement as a community aspiration (see section 7). We will also seek existing pooled S106 monies held by Cherwell D.C. to identify and purchase land to provide additional sport playing pitches.

We consider these policies consistent with the following:

✓ NPPF	Para 70 To deliver the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities (such as local meeting places, sports venues...)
✓ Emerging Local Plan	Policy Villages 4 (C280) Indoor Sport, Recreation and Community Facilities’ will be used to help address existing deficiencies in provision.
✓ Community Support	Only around 1 in 5 residents think we have enough sports pitches.

**POLICY ON PROVIDING A BETTER RANGE OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**

**BL18 Upgrading and expansion of the Jubilee Village Hall whilst retaining the play area and pitches shall be supported.**

### C. Securing primary school capacity for all village children

This is discussed in Theme 1 (Policy BL9d) where this issue is an important consideration for this Plan. We will not repeat the arguments here other than to emphasize the need established in Policy BL9d which is; for new housing developments, to ensure that a sufficient supply of local primary school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new residents. This is a hugely important policy for families, for village cohesiveness and for reducing high- carbon travel.

### D. Encourage safe walking and cycling

Theme 1 Policies BL3-5 focuses upon the need for improved low-carbon connectivity to improve access to services and facilities. This is strongly evidenced by the Sustrans report on Bloxham.

There are of course, good health and community cohesion reasons to encourage walking and cycling irrespective of access to services.

We do not rehearse the arguments again but do note

- 91% of residents think pupils *should be* able to safely cycle to school yet 50% arrive at school by private vehicle and only 2.5% by cycle.
- Only 13% of secondary pupils consider it definitely safe to cycle to school.
- Only 8% of pupils gave a definite “yes” that pavements were wide enough
- Many young people rated the impact of traffic as the greatest of their dislikes.

Recent large developments have been located in areas with demonstrably poor connectivity yet have attracted negligible obligations from developers to fund improvements. We need to break out of a prevailing negative feedback loop (see diagram) by permitting developments only where good connectivity is either already present or can be provided via developer obligations and this should include safe pedestrian, cycle or wheelchair/ mobility scooter access to key village services.



### 7. Bloxham projects

These are proposals that arose during the creation of the plan that residents or businesses felt very strongly about but which cannot easily be part of the planning process or are subject to decision-making either by private organisations or at district

or county council rather than parish level. We have noted these in the consultation document as they were an outcome of that consultation process but they do not appear in any policies and are not intended to form part of the examinable content of the plan.

### ***Community Aspiration***

Development of an all-weather pitch at Warriner School along Bloxham Grove Road is supported. A Joint Use Agreement between the school and the community should be sought and proposals must be consistent with Policy BL9.

## ***8. Monitoring and delivery***

1. This plan will be owned by Bloxham Parish Council
2. Members of the P.C. Planning Committee will receive training upon the need for all planning applications to be consistent with the policies contained in this plan
3. A report upon the progress and impact of the plan will be a required item upon the agenda of the Parish Council Annual Meeting for the Parish
4. The exact nature of the reporting and monitoring will be agreed with Cherwell D.C.



## ***9. The Evidence Base***

### ***The BNDP Sustainability Report***

Sustainability was an intrinsic part of the process of creating this plan. The Sustainability Report distils some of the more important data from the three key BNDP Reports into a single, more concise document. It is considered as an essential Appendix to this plan.

### **BNDP Reports**

These documents form our main factual evidence base upon which this report is based. They may contain recommendations but they inform rather than define policies.

They were initially prepared by working groups. Although these have now ceased to exist, the documents remain living documents and may be updated with pertinent information right up to the time of submission of this plan. They total around 450 pages and reference around 400 further documents that have been considered in the creation of this plan.<sup>32</sup>

### **The Consultation documents**

The Consultation statement summarises the opportunities for engagement and our responses to that engagement. There are accompanying appendices which provide further detail.

### **Sustrans Bloxham walking and cycling report**

Sustrans have carried out a detailed analysis of Bloxham from the perspective of pedestrians, cyclists and the mobility impaired. Copies are available from the BNDP website.

### **National Planning Policy Framework**

The plan has been created within the NPPF which is readily available.<sup>33</sup>

### **Cherwell Local Plan documentation**

The plan draws heavily upon the evidence base for the Cherwell Local Plan. Both the Plan itself and the evidence base upon which it is based can be found on the Cherwell District Council website.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Bloxham Working Group Reports and consultation report

<sup>33</sup> NPPF

<sup>34</sup> CDC Evidence Base

## **Oxfordshire County Council documents**

Policies pertaining to education, highways and flooding draw heavily upon documents from Oxfordshire County Council.<sup>35</sup>

## **The Census 2011**

Much of the demographic data emanates from the 2011 census which is readily available online.<sup>36</sup>

## **Oxfordshire Rural Community Council documents**

Some statistical information about the village derives from the ORCC (now Community First Oxfordshire) Rural community profile for Bloxham.<sup>37</sup> ORCC also carried out the production, analysis and reporting of the main questionnaire and housing needs survey.

<sup>35</sup> [OCC Website](#)

<sup>36</sup> [Census 2011](#)

<sup>37</sup> [ORCC Community Place profile - Bloxham](#)

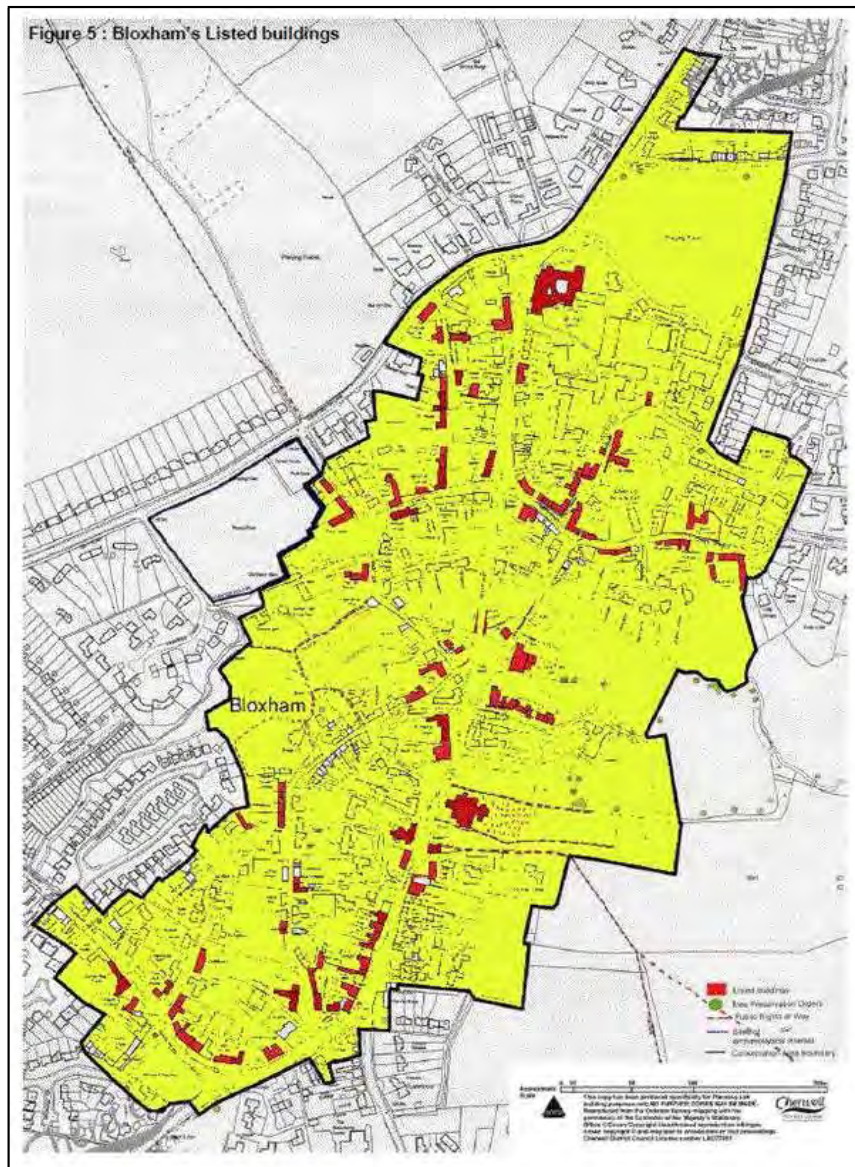
# Appendices

## ***Appendix 1 The BNDP Sustainability Report***

This is available as a separate document. It contains summarised evidence that impinges upon every policy in this Plan.

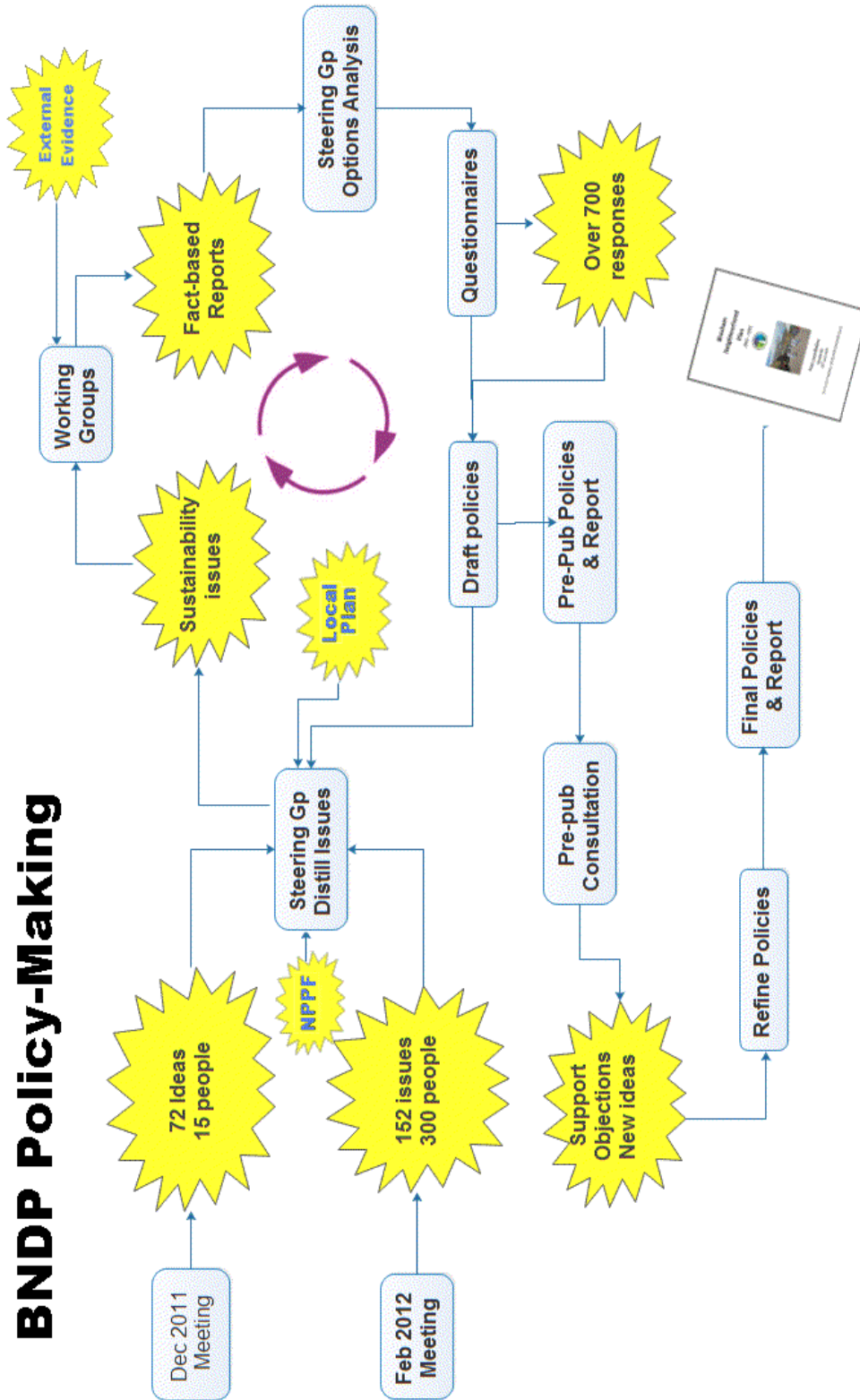
## ***Appendix 2 The Conservation Area***

For detailed maps please see the Cherwell D.C. 2007 Conservation Area Appraisal which also notes several important but non-listed assets within this area. It is available from the BNDP or Cherwell D.C. websites.



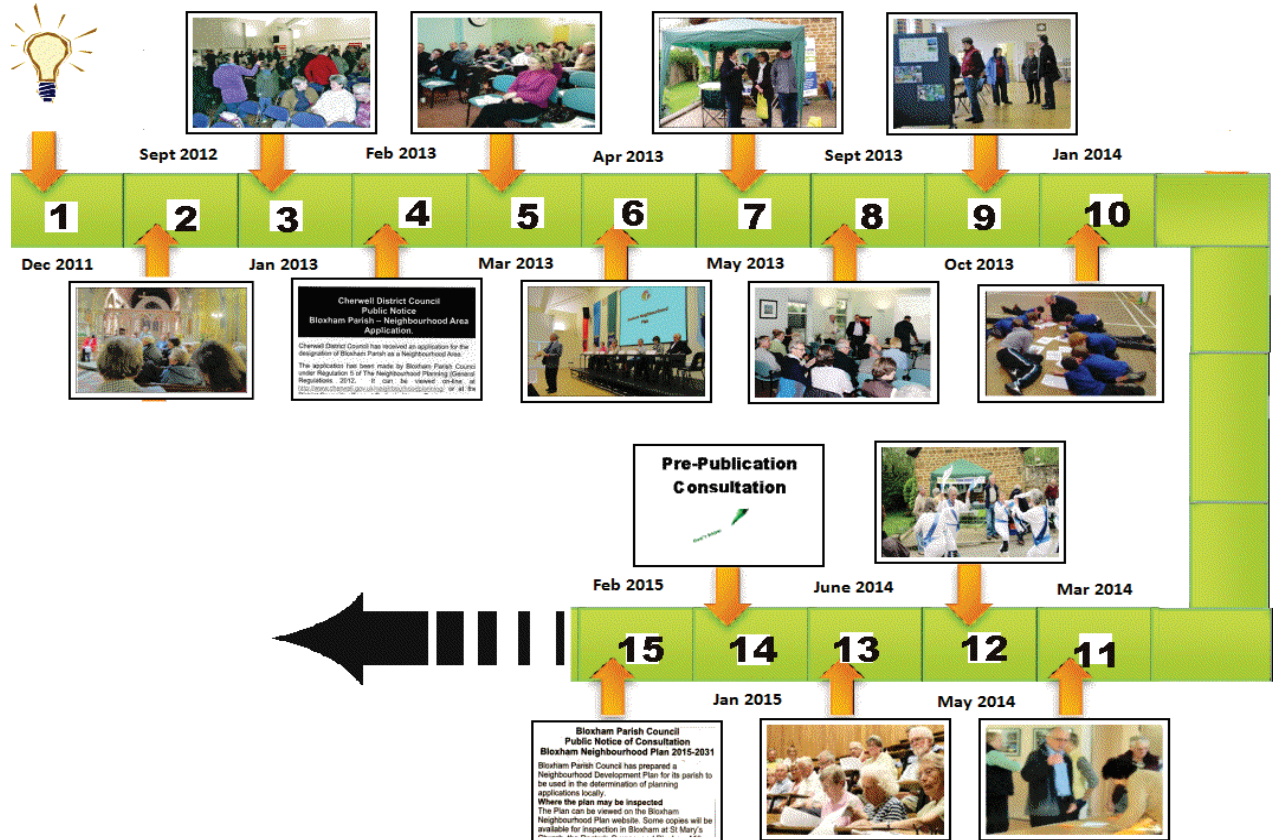
Appendix 3 The Plan-making Process

# BNDP Policy-Making



## Appendix 4 Public Engagement

# Resident Engagement Timeline



Date	Event	Activity	Number
Dec 2011	First thoughts	Introduction & Ideas Boards	15
Sept 2012	Bloxham Developments	NP launch suggested	400
Jan 2013	Area Designation	Formal Consultation	-
Feb 2013	Official Launch Meeting	Presentations & Ideas Boards	300
Mar 2013	Establish Working Groups	Logistics meeting	45
Apr 2013	Public update	Presentation / Q & A	110
May 2013	BloxFest Stall	Drop-in Q&A	50
Sept 2013	Meeting for volunteers	Woodcote NP + Q & A	42
Oct 2013	Drop-in Displays	Displays, Q&A, Survey	50
Jan 2014	Questionnaires	Business, Young people	75, 48
Mar 2014	Main Questionnaire	Every village house	605
May 2014	BloxFest Stall	Drop-in Q&A	60
Jun 2014	BNDP Update	Presentation / Q & A	45
Jan 2015	Pre-pub Consultation	Online, paper or email	145
Aug 2015	Submission of plan		-

\* At the 2011 Census there were 1279 houses in Bloxham