

Public Document Pack



Committee: Executive
Date: Monday 5 September 2016
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA

Membership

Councillor Barry Wood (Chairman)	Councillor G A Reynolds (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Ken Atack	Councillor Colin Clarke
Councillor John Donaldson	Councillor Tony Ilott
Councillor Kieron Mallon	Councillor D M Pickford
Councillor Lynn Pratt	Councillor Nicholas Turner

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare any interest and the nature of that interest that they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting.

3. Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting

The Chairman to report on any requests to submit petitions or to address the meeting.

4. Urgent Business

The Chairman to advise whether they have agreed to any item of urgent business being admitted to the agenda.

5. **Minutes** (Pages 1 - 20)

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2016 and the Special meeting of Executive held on 18 July 2016.

6. **Chairman's Announcements**

To receive communications from the Chairman.

7. **Corporate Biodiversity Action Plan 2016-18 Protecting and Enhancing Cherwell's Natural Environment** (Pages 21 - 60) **6.35pm**

Report of Community Services Manager

Purpose of report

To seek approval for the 2016-18 Corporate Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) (draft attached as Appendix 1 to this report)

Recommendation

The Executive is recommended:

1.1 To approve the proposed Corporate Biodiversity Action Plan 2016-18

8. **Neighbourhood Planning: Decision on whether to proceed to a Referendum for the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan** (Pages 61 - 660) **6.45pm**

Report of Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy

Purpose of Report

The Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan has been examined by an independent examiner. The examiner has produced an Examiner's report and the Council as the Local Planning Authority is required to consider the report recommendations and determine whether the draft Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan incorporating the modifications set out at Appendix 1 to this report should proceed to a referendum and confirm the area covered by the referendum.

Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

1.1 To approve all of the Examiner's recommendations and modifications to enable the Plan to proceed to a referendum;

1.2 To approve the modifications to the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with the Examiner's recommendations, to authorise the issue of a decision statement to that effect, and to approve the making of any minor presentational changes necessary to ready the Plan for referendum;

- 1.3 To approve the area for the referendum as recommended by the examiner to be the administrative boundary of Bloxham Parish (which is the approved designated neighbourhood area) and to note that there will be no extension to the area.

9. Air Quality Update (Pages 661 - 700) 6.55pm

Report of Public Protection Manager

Purpose of report

To update the Executive on progress with the draft Air Quality Action Plan for Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington prior to public and stakeholder consultation.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the current position on the review and assessment of air quality in Cherwell; and
- 1.2 To approve the draft Air Quality Action Plan for public and stakeholder consultation.

10. Award of Liquid Fuel Contract (Pages 701 - 704) 7.05pm

Report of Chief Finance Officer

Purpose of report

To consider the award of contracts to supply diesel to Cherwell District Council.

Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To approve the acceptance of the recommended tender for the supply of diesel for October 2016-September 2018.

11. Consultation and Engagement Strategy (2016-19) (Pages 705 - 720) 7.10pm

Report of Director – Strategy and Commissioning

Purpose of report

To set out the Strategy for Consultation and Engagement for Cherwell District Council, and the action plan for the consultations and engagements for 2016/17.

Recommendations

The meeting is recommended to:

- 1.1 Agree the three year Strategy for Consultation and Engagement.
- 1.2 Agree the consultation and engagement action plan for 2016/17 noting the areas of joint working with partner agencies and developing closer links with our communities.

12. Quarter 1 2016/17 Performance Update (Pages 721 - 756) 7.15pm

Report of Director – Strategy & Commissioning

Purpose of report

To provide an update on the Cherwell District Business Plan progress to the end of Quarter One 2016/17.

Recommendations

The meeting is recommended to:

- 1.1 Note the exceptions highlighted and proposed actions.
- 1.2 Note that any feedback on performance issues from Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 1 September 2016 will be provided directly to the Leader of the Council.
- 1.3 Note the new reporting style which has been designed to improve the presentation of performance reporting.
- 1.4 Agree that, where appropriate, judgement measures used in the current business plan reporting are augmented or replaced by more specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely (SMART) measures.

13. Quarter 1 2016/1 - Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report (Pages 757 - 770) 7.20pm

Report of the Chief Finance Officer

Purpose of Report

This report summarises the Council's Revenue and Capital position as at the end of the first three months of the financial year 2016-17 and projections for the full year.

1.0 Recommendations

Executive Committee is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the projected revenue and capital position at June 2016.

14. **Update on the development of a devolution deal with Government and the associated independent study into options for local government reform in Oxfordshire.** (Pages 771 - 918) **7.25pm**

Report of Head of Transformation

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update the Executive on progress in relation to the development of a devolution deal between the Oxfordshire councils, the former Government ministers and the new Government ministers, and the associated study into options for the potential reform of local government within Oxfordshire, conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC).

Recommendations

The meeting is recommended to:

- 1.1. receive the independent study of PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) into options for local government reform in Oxfordshire, including the proposition of the district and city council leaders' in respect of their preferred model arising from that study.
- 1.2 note that following discussions with the Department of Communities and Local Government, the leaders of the district, city and county councils have agreed to focus on identifying areas for collaborative working and the reshaping of a devolution deal that does not incorporate proposals for the reform of local government within Oxfordshire.

15. **Notification of Urgent Action(s) - In relation to the Contract Award for the demolition of the Bolton Road Car Park** (Pages 919 - 924) **7.30pm**

Report of Chief Executive and Commercial Director

Purpose of report

To notify Members of urgent action taken by the Chief Executive and Commercial Director as set out below

Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the urgent action taken by the Chief Executive in relation to the budget and to refer this to full council for noting.
- 1.2 To note the urgent action taken by the Commercial Director in relation to the award of the contract.

16. Re-commissioning of Single Homeless Pathway (Pages 925 - 932) 7.35pm

Report of Head of Regeneration and Housing

Purpose of report

To advise Executive of the proposals recommended by the District Councils, the County Council, and the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (OCCG) as endorsed by the Health Improvement Board, to work jointly to provide housing related support services and accommodate single homeless from across the county for the next 3 years commencing from 1 April 2017.

Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To support the new proposals which provide a plan and include a financial contribution from Cherwell for a period of 3 years as calculated and recommended by the Oxfordshire Districts, Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (OCCG) and Oxfordshire County Council.
- 1.2 To note and support the proposal for a new joint governance structure to procure and manage services through senior officer representation with delegated authority.
- 1.3 To approve a financial contribution of £62,700pa (as calculated on Cherwell's current use of hostels with 24 hour care) and required to be paid from Cherwell for 3 financial years commencing from 1 April 2017.
- 1.4 That Executive note that a further report on the longer term sustainability of single homeless pathway arrangements across the county be submitted within the 3 year period covered by this report.

17. Exclusion of the Press and Public

The following items contain exempt information as defined in the following paragraphs of Part 1, Schedule 12A of Local Government Act 1972.

3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Members are reminded that whilst the following items have been marked as exempt, it is for the meeting to decide whether or not to consider them in private or in public. In making the decision, Members should balance the interests of individuals or the Council itself in having access to the information. In considering their discretion members should also be mindful of the advice of Council Officers.

No representations have been received from the public requesting that this item be considered in public.

Should Members decide not to make a decision in public, they are recommended to pass the following recommendation:

“That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the ground that, if the public and press were present, it would be likely that exempt information falling under the provisions of Schedule 12A, Part 1, Paragraph 3 would be disclosed to them, and that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.”

18. Re-commissioning of Single Homeless Pathway - Exempt Appendices (Pages 933 - 950)

19. Car Parking (Pages 951 - 1038) **7.45pm**

Exempt Report of Director of Operational Delivery

(Meeting scheduled to close at 7.55pm)

Information about this Agenda

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence should be notified to

democracy@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk or 01295 221589 prior to the start of the meeting.

Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare interests at item 2 on the agenda or if arriving after the start of the meeting, at the start of the relevant agenda item.

Local Government and Finance Act 1992 – Budget Setting, Contracts & Supplementary Estimates

Members are reminded that any member who is two months in arrears with Council Tax must declare the fact and may speak but not vote on any decision which involves budget setting, extending or agreeing contracts or incurring expenditure not provided for in the agreed budget for a given year and could affect calculations on the level of Council Tax.

Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

This agenda constitutes the 5 day notice required by Regulation 5 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 in terms of the intention to consider an item of business in private.

Evacuation Procedure

When the continuous alarm sounds you must evacuate the building by the nearest available fire exit. Members and visitors should proceed to the car park as directed by Democratic Services staff and await further instructions.

Access to Meetings

If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named below, giving as much notice as possible before the meeting.

Mobile Phones

Please ensure that any device is switched to silent operation or switched off.

Queries Regarding this Agenda

Please contact Natasha Clark, Democratic and Elections
natasha.clark@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk, 01295 221589

Sue Smith
Chief Executive

Published on Thursday 25 August 2016

Agenda Item 5

Cherwell District Council

Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 4 July 2016 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Barry Wood (Chairman), Leader of the Council
Councillor G A Reynolds (Vice-Chairman), Deputy Leader of the Council

Councillor Ken Atack, Lead Member for Financial Management
Councillor Colin Clarke, Lead Member for Planning
Councillor John Donaldson, Lead Member for Housing
Councillor Tony Ilott, Lead Member for Public Protection
Councillor Kieron Mallon, Lead Member for Banbury Futures
Councillor D M Pickford, Lead Member for Clean and Green
Councillor Lynn Pratt, Lead Member for Estates and the Economy
Councillor Nicholas Turner, Lead Member for Change Management, Joint Working and ICT

Also Present: Councillor Sean Woodcock, Leader of the Labour Group

Officers: Sue Smith, Chief Executive
Scott Barnes, Director of Strategy and Commissioning
Karen Curtin, Commercial Director
Kevin Lane, Head of Law and Governance / Monitoring Officer
Paul Sutton, Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer
Ed Potter, Head of Environmental Services, for agenda item 7
Adrian Colwell, Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy, for agenda items 8 and 9
Jackie Fitzsimons, Shared Public Protection Manager, for agenda item 10
Nicola Riley, Shared Community Services Manager, for agenda item 13
Mike Grant, Safer Communities Manager, for agenda item 10
Natasha Clark, Team Leader, Democratic and Elections

17 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

18 **Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting**

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

19 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

20 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2016 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

21 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

22 **Waste Policies**

The Head of Environmental Services submitted a report to update the Executive on the pressures on the Waste & Recycling service arising from the large housing growth and to review the waste policies with the view of bringing the policies of Cherwell District Council (CDC) and South Northamptonshire Council (SNC) closer together.

Resolved

- (1) That the pressures on the waste service resulting from the rapid housing growth and the actions being taken to deal with these demands be noted.
- (2) That the increased revenue pressures from operating additional crews in future years be noted.
- (3) That the revised waste policies (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.

Reasons

The district is rapidly growing from a growth rate of less than 1%/year in recent years to more than 3%/year this year and 4%/year next year. This rapid growth has meant the collection rounds are now full. The productivity of the collection rounds is very good and there are few opportunities to increase this further. Consequently, additional rounds will be required in future years. The next round will be required in April 2017 with further rounds needed by April 2019 and April 2021. Each additional round will increase revenue costs by around £150k/year.

One of the major constraints to additional rounds is capacity at Bicester depot. The depot is full and unable to accommodate a growth in vehicle numbers and staff. A project is underway to locate a new depot in the Bicester area.

The waste policies of this Council and SNC have been reviewed with a view to bringing them closer together wherever possible. This should make it easier for a shared Customer Service Centre and for Environmental Services to manage the shared Waste & Recycling service.

Alternative options

Option 1: To reject the proposed changes

Option 2: To ask officers to consider alternative improvements

23

Statement Community Involvement (SCI) 2016

The Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy submitted a report to present the results of public consultation on the draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) 2016 and to seek approval for the completed SCI to be presented to Council for adoption.

Resolved

- (1) That the completed Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) 2016 (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be endorsed and Full Council be recommended to approve the SCI 2016, subject to any minor typographical or presentational corrections being made by the Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy.
- (2) That it be noted that upon adoption the SCI 2016 would replace the current adopted SCI 2006.

Reasons

A new Statement of Community Involvement is required. Following consultation on a draft document earlier this year, changes have been made and a completed SCI 2016 is presented at Appendix 1 to the report. The completed SCI is considered to be an appropriate basis for community engagement and stakeholder consultation on planning policy documents and in the consideration of planning applications. It is recommended that the Executive approve the SCI for presentation to Council for formal adoption. Upon adoption it will replace the existing SCI 2006 with immediate effect.

Alternative options

Option 1: Continue to use the SCI that was adopted in July 2006. This is not recommended as although the SCI 2006 is comprehensive, it is dated. It does not reflect changes to plan-making and development management processes.

Option 2: To reconsider the content of the proposed SCI 2016. The completed SCI 2016 has been produced having regard to statutory and policy requirements for plan-making and development management. Examples of recently approved SCIs have been considered. Public

consultation has been undertaken. It is considered by officers to be appropriate for presentation to Council for formal adoption.

24 **High Speed Rail - HS2 Qualifying Authority Status**

The Head of Development Management submitted a report to consider whether the Council should become a “qualifying authority” (‘Qualified Authority’) or a “non-qualifying authority” for the purposes of the High Speed Rail 2 Hybrid Bill.

Resolved

- (1) That authorisation be given to Cherwell District Council becoming a Qualifying Authority in relation to the High Speed Rail (London to West Midlands) Hybrid Bill and the signing of the HS2 Planning Memorandum and the Service Level Agreement between the Council and HS2 that will provide the costs of implementing the consequent planning regime.
- (2) That Full Council be recommended to agree that constitutional and scheme of delegation changes will be necessary to ensure the satisfactory implementation of the Planning Memorandum.

Reasons

Becoming a Qualifying Authority involves a commitment by the Council to deal with applications appropriately and within specified timescales, in return for greater control over a wider range of matters than would otherwise be the case.

It is considered important that the Council retains as much control as it can over the detailed matters relating to the HS2 proposals, and to do so it is recommended that it would be in the Council’s interests to become a Qualifying Authority.

Alternative options

The alternative option is to not become a qualifying authority. This has been rejected in our assessment and is not recommended as the Council would not be able to exercise the maximum control over elements of this contentious scheme.

25 **Banbury Town Centre Public Spaces Protection Order**

The Public Protection Manager submitted a report to propose the making of a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) in Banbury Town centre to prevent the detrimental effect of begging, drinking and sleeping rough on those who reside, work and visit the town centre.

Resolved

- (1) That the outline proposal for a Public Space Protection Order (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (2) That the commencement of a five week consultation process be approved.

Reasons

The evidence required to satisfy section 59 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (the "Act") as far as begging, drinking and rough sleeping are concerned, is sufficient to approve a consultation process for a PSPO.

If the Executive is minded to approve the outline proposals, the next step is to approve the commencement of the consultation within the parameters of section 72 of the same Act.

Alternative options

Option 1: Without a PSPO the local authority will continue to work with the police, within current legislation. The current legislation dates to the 1824 Vagrancy Act, to enforce the police officer has to witness the act of begging and hear the words of request. This naturally is something the offenders are aware of and resist from doing when being observed.

The Council does not have any authority to prosecute begging, or enforce drink related disorderly behaviour. With regard to drinking this report has previously alluded to the fact that a drink banning order is limited to irresponsible drinking only, it is not a ban therefore the police will only react to problematic or disorderly drinkers. In choosing to continue within current legislation, this will be a missed opportunity to address what appears to be an escalating activity

26

Annual Equalities Report for 2015/2016

The Director – Strategy and Commissioning submitted a report to review the performance of the Equalities Annual Work Programme and to agree the planned work programme following the Achieving Standard under the Equality Framework for Local Government.

Resolved

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That the equalities action plan for 2016/17 (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be agreed and the areas of good practice upon which it builds and the areas for development that it addresses be noted.
- (3) That the 3 year rolling plan of Equality Impact Assessments be agreed.

Reasons

Cherwell District Council has made significant progress delivering against the equalities agenda in recent years and has continued to maintain this during 2015/2016 whilst continuing to adopt a proportionate approach to equality performance with meaningful and relevant Corporate Action Plans to support this work.

The updated action plan demonstrates how the Council will continue to deliver its equalities objectives over the coming year. Progress will be reported via the performance management framework on a quarterly basis.

The three year impact assessment rolling plan also provides assurance that the Council is mindful of policy change and seeks to understand and address the impacts of service and policy change where appropriate.

Alternative options

Option 1: To note the report

Option 2: To request additional information on items within this report

27

The Growth of Bicester: Progress Update 2015/16

The Commercial Director submitted a report to advise Members of the work that was being undertaken in Bicester including highlighting key achievements; of the expenditure from the Eco Town grant; received in 2010; and, of forward planned expenditure 2016/17.

Resolved

- (1) That the progress on work in Bicester be noted.
- (2) That the expenditure that has taken place and the committed funding from the Eco Town grant be noted.
- (3) That the 2016/17 forward plan be noted.

Reasons

Much is happening in Bicester and this is demonstrated by the delivery of new development such as Franklins House with the new library and CDC link point, the continued housing delivery. Work to provide an appropriate policy basis for the improvement and growth of the town has progressed with the adoption of the NW Bicester SPD and the consultation work to refresh the vision for the town. Never the less there remain challenges in delivering the strategic development sites in the adopted local plan and ensuring sufficient infrastructure is in place to serve the growth of the town and work continues with partners to deliver necessary infrastructure and seek to speed up housing delivery.

The work continues to have a whole town approach, seeking opportunities to improve the existing town as well as deliver new development. A number of projects have been delivered in the town, particularly focussing on energy efficiency and sustainable travel. In the last year this has been focussed on the replacement boiler scheme the energy mapping project LEMUR and securing grants to support other works such as the café and playground at Garth Park. Pursuing a whole town approach remains an important commitment with considerable work going into bids for funding to enable projects to be delivered.

Over £19.5m worth of grant funding is outlined above and this together with previous grants comes to over £50m that has been attracted to Bicester, including the DCLG Eco Town funding and Garden Town funding. This has been instrumental in the range of projects that it has been possible to deliver in the town. This approach of seeking external funding is continuing with further work being done to enable projects to continue to be delivered in the town.

Grant funding is a small proportion of the overall investment that has taken place in the town. A draft study by Montague Evans estimated that 2014/15 that over £150m of private sector funding has been invested in the town in the construction of housing and commercial premises. Furthermore the report concluded in terms of future development as part of the growth of Bicester, the estimated value of the housing sites identified in Bicester by 2031 is £1.2bn which is expected to be supported £750 million of infrastructure investment.

Bicester continues to attract national attention for its growth plans and the delivery of projects in the town. The work to date has attracted considerable investment through grants but also through the private sector investment in the town. Never the less there remains an ambitious programme of work to deliver improvements in the town during 2016/17.

Alternative options

Option 1: Identify alternative approaches to the use of Eco Town Grant or continue to hold the funding.

This option has been rejected as the projects identified have been identified based on the needs identified and arising within the town.

Option 2: To commit to future spend of recycled Eco Town Grant funding
The timing of the receipt of recycled funding is uncertain and over time priorities and pressures can change. It therefore is difficult to commit to funding specific projects at the current time. Some flexibility is therefore sought to review priorities as funding becomes available.

Annual Report and Review of the Brighter Futures in Banbury Programme

The Director of Operational Delivery submitted a report to consider the activity and achievements of the Brighter Futures in Banbury Programme in 2015/16; the partnership activity and areas of focus for 2016/17.

Resolved

- (1) That both the progress made in 2015/16 in the Brighter Futures in Banbury Programme and the areas requiring continuous improvement be noted.
- (2) That the priorities for focus in 2016/17 be supported.

Reasons

The Brighter Futures partnership has for several years continued to work effectively in focussing the best use of resources on those most in need. Harnessing work related to the six themes is proving valuable but continuous improvement eludes in some areas; specific areas of concern, which are well below comparative averages, remain

The context in which the partnership is operating is changing in relation to population, funding, and organisational change. Organisational and service change in a partnership context is particularly challenging.

The relatively recent 2011 census information has identified changes in the make-up of the ward population in relation to a big increase in private rented households, an increase in single adults, lone parents and HMOs, increasing ethnic diversity, and specific issues such as a lack of qualifications of lone parents. Of particular concern is the comparatively high level of child poverty in our wards.

It is important to periodically review the Programme and in light of the challenges described above, now is an appropriate time. There is a need to take account of current strengths and to consider what other partnership opportunities there are, along with specific issues which are relevant to the people of the wards being supported. This is why the continued focus proposed for partnership activity concentrating on child poverty, educational attainment, supporting the most vulnerable and health inequalities are all inter related, relevant to the Brighter Future's Programme's objectives and capture other partnership opportunities which are in place.

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Alternative options

Given the very wide ranging nature of the Brighter Futures Programme, there can be many different options and permutations of key priorities, areas of focus and mechanisms to progress. Therefore, no specific alternative options are identified.

29

Proposal for a Joint Property and Investment Service with South Northamptonshire Council

The Head of Regeneration and Housing submitted a report which presented the final business case for a Joint Property and Investment Service across Cherwell District and South Northamptonshire Councils and sought agreement for the non-staffing elements of the business case.

The proposal was part of the wider transformation programme across the two Councils.

Resolved

- (1) That the business case for a Joint Property and Investment Service with South Northamptonshire Council and the consultation responses in relation to non-staffing matters be noted.
- (2) That it be noted that the business case would be considered by the Joint Commissioning Committee with regard to staffing matters on 21 July 2016. This will include consideration of the consultation responses from affected staff and trade union representatives.
- (3) That the proposed final business case to share a joint Property and Investment Service between CDC and SNC be approved for implementation, subject to similar consideration and approval by SNC Cabinet on 11 July 2016 and approval of the staffing implications by the Joint Commissioning Committee.
- (4) That authority be delegated to the Head of Regeneration and Housing, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, any non-significant amendment that may be required to the business case following the decision by SNC Cabinet and/or the Joint Commissioning Committee.

- (5) That the allocation of £90,000 from general fund balances to cover 50% of the potential implementation costs be approved.

Reasons

The recommendation is to establish a Joint Property and Investment Service between CDC and SNC. The business case sets out the rationale for establishing the joint service and investing in the service to transform the way both Councils manage their existing assets and to provide the expertise to identify new investment opportunities for Members to consider in order to address the medium term revenue gap.

Alternative options

Status quo (no change)

Retaining the status quo is not considered a viable option for either council. Both councils are under resourced to deliver change required to ensure that the councils make the most out their assets.

Alternative structure options

There is certainly scope to deliver the proposed joint property and investment service through an alternative delivery vehicle and this option would be explored further should the proposed service be established. However, it is recommended that the corporate property management model be implemented effectively prior to the consideration of an alternative delivery vehicle for the service. Opportunities for wider collaboration through an alternative delivery vehicle potentially aligned to the one public estate programme will also be considered in the future.

Three-way collaboration and shared service (with other partners)

Three-way collaboration with other partners is certainly an option to consider in the future. However, there are no other existing relationships at a sufficient stage to consider as part of a three-way shared service at this point. The process of developing such a relationship is likely to be lengthy and while this option should be considered again in the future, it should not be pursued at this time to the detriment of this project.

The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward. The proposal is to establish a joint property and investment service between CDC and SNC which will deliver significant improvements in existing asset performance.

30

Exclusion of the Press and Public

There being no questions on the exempt appendix to the Proposal for a Joint Property and Investment Service with South Northamptonshire Council, it was not necessary to exclude the press and public.

31 **Proposal for a Joint Property and Investment Service with South Northamptonshire Council - Exempt Appendix**

Resolved

- (1) That the exempt appendix be noted.

The meeting ended at 7.25 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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Cherwell District Council

Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 18 July 2016 at 4.30 pm

Present: Councillor Barry Wood (Chairman), Leader of the Council
Councillor G A Reynolds (Vice-Chairman), Deputy Leader of the Council

Councillor Ken Atack, Lead Member for Financial Management
Councillor Colin Clarke, Lead Member for Planning
Councillor John Donaldson, Lead Member for Housing
Councillor Tony Ilott, Lead Member for Public Protection
Councillor Kieron Mallon, Lead Member for Banbury Futures
Councillor D M Pickford, Lead Member for Clean and Green
Councillor Lynn Pratt, Lead Member for Estates and the Economy
Councillor Nicholas Turner, Lead Member for Change Management, Joint Working and IT

Also Present: Councillor Barry Richards, representing Councillor Sean Woodcock, Leader of the Labour Group

Officers: Sue Smith, Chief Executive
Ian Davies, Director of Operational Delivery
Kevin Lane, Head of Law and Governance / Monitoring Officer
Paul Sutton, Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer
Chris Stratford, Head of Regeneration and Housing
James Doble, Interim Assistant Director Transformational Governance
Natasha Clark, Interim Democratic and Elections Manager

32 **Declarations of Interest**

8. Cherwell's Approach to Working with Council Controlled/Influenced Companies.

Sue Smith, Declaration, as a Director of a Graven Hill company and would leave the meeting for the duration of the item.

Chris Stratford, Declaration, as a Director of a Graven Hill company and would leave the meeting for the duration of the item.

33 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

34 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

Resolved

That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the ground that, if the public and press were present, it would be likely that exempt information falling under the provisions of Schedule 12A, Part 1, Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 would be disclosed to them, and that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

35 **SW Bicester Sports Village - Contract Award and Funding Requirements**

The Director of Operational Delivery submitted an exempt report to consider the results of the procurement process for a main contractor to construct Phase 2 of the sports village project, the pavilion and car park and to recommend to full council the approval of a supplementary capital estimate.

Resolved

- (1) That Full Council be recommended to approve a supplementary capital estimate for £891,861 to enable the completion of the SW Bicester Sports Village project.
- (2) Subject to Full Council funding approval the Phase 2 construction contract be awarded to J Tomlinson Limited on the terms set out in the exempt report (exempt annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute book)

Reasons

The project has been through a second procurement process to secure the lowest cost of delivery which has resulted in a winning adjusted tender resulting in a total project cost that exceeds the approved budget by £891,861.

The Council has Section 106 planning obligations to deliver an outdoor sports facility with a pavilion on the SW Bicester Kingsmere site, hence the request for additional funding to complete the project.

Alternative options

The option to appoint the preferred contractor to deliver the Phase 2 works would require an additional capital input of £891,861. If this cannot be found, then the Council will need to review and change the nature of the project.

A reduced scheme could be designed that fits within the available budget but is unlikely to meet all of the operational requirements of the site, would incur further design costs, incur delay, require a new planning application and will reduce the key income generation areas (function room and bar) having a

major impact on the revenue implications for the site. A reduced sized facility would also be less attractive to a management contractor and therefore needs to be reconsidered.

36

A Review of the Self-Build Programme and Approval of Additional Funding for Coach House Mews and Lincoln Close

The Head of Regeneration and Housing submitted an exempt report to advise members of the need to amend the previously adopted delivery strategy relating to self-builder inputs completing specific building tasks for projects approved under the Build! programme but particularly in respect of Coach House Mews and Lincoln Close.

The report also confirmed the financial impacts of approving the revised delivery strategy and commitment from self-builders for those identified schemes under the Build! Programme and advised members of the opportunity to amend the tenure mix associated with the Coach House Mews site redefining 12 affordable rented flats as 12 share ownership properties.

Resolved

- (1) That the proposed changes in respect of the commitments required from self-builders for 2 of the schemes within the Build! Programme be noted and approved.
- (2) That the financial implications identified within the exempt report (exempt annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) associated with adopting the revised self-builder delivery strategy on these 2 schemes be noted and endorsed and Full Council be recommended to agree the necessary amendment to the approved Capital Programme.
- (3) That the opportunity to complete a tenure change in respect of 12 flats at Coach House Mews from affordable rent products to shared ownership products for the reasons indicated within the exempt report (exempt annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be noted and approved and it be further noted that the final decision of Executive in this respect would be confirmed to the Cherwell Community Build shadow board.

Reasons

It is clear that the original concept of involving self-builders to complete the construction of properties from shell stage has proved very challenging. Indeed even allowing for the training process adopted many self-builders have struggled to complete their originally envisaged commitment to the project.

Additional matters relating to liability especially (Health and Safety matters) as we now move into the construction of flats for self-builders, has meant that a review of how self-builder inputs are proposed, planned and managed needed to be undertaken. It is clear that the revised approach based on a time commitment rather than specific task based inputs from self-builders allows

for greater flexibility reduces liability and matches skills in the correct way to ensure less delay and challenge to the contractor in terms of delivering a completed site.

Whilst this will mean particularly in relation to Coach House Mews and Lincoln Close initial additional expenditure we will end up with completed units more quickly and when combined with tenure adjustment proposals would increase the overall return to the Build! Programme.

Going forward, the time based approach for self-builder inputs will significantly improve the overall output of units under the revised scheme.

Alternative options

Officers have looked carefully at continuing with the current status quo regarding self-builder inputs but have concluded that the liabilities (particularly in relation to Health and Safety), risks and challenges associated with this option are not acceptable for Coach House Mews and Lincoln Close.

Further discussions with contractors involved in promoting and indeed delivering self-build options have resulted in Officers concluding that the time commitment approach allows a better practical environment to match the core objectives of self-builder aspirations to be maintained but within an environment that better fits the skills of self-builders the Councils objectives of self-build and the delivery of projects on time and within budget. The principles of providing discount on properties based on the number of hours each self-builder has actually completed will still allow a maximum discount of £10,000.00.

The application of the tenure adjustments identified within the report to the Coach House Mews scheme involving some 12 flats improves the overall rate of return to the Build! Programme and represents an improved business plan proposition to the Cherwell Community Build.

37

Build! Phase 2

The Head of Regeneration and Housing submitted an exempt report to seek Members' approval to the necessary funding to allow essential pre-development activities on the sites identified within the report including the appointment of appropriate architectural design advice and the achieving of planning consents.

Resolved

- (1) That the essential pre-development funding associated with the identified sites contained within the exempt report (exempt annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) totalling the sum of £200,000 be endorsed and Full Council be recommended to approved the necessary amendment to the approved Capital Programme.
- (2) That officers be requested to submit a further detailed report once fully costed proposals for the sites identified have been completed to

determine whether these are funded and developed either by Cherwell District Council (Build!) or Cherwell Community Build.

- (3) That it be noted that Officers will ensure full engagement with the Cherwell Community Build Board around the pre-development work on the sites identified to assist the Board in determining later this year whether they wish to complete the development process on each site.

Reasons

Members have been presented an opportunity to make further progress in respect of sites that CDC currently own. The next stage of allowing progress towards development recognises that actual delivery may in fact come from Cherwell Community Build initiative and not directly from CDC. Accordingly, recognising this staged approach I am only seeking financial authority to proceed with the necessary pre development activities.

The further report later this year will enable a more considered review about developing finance for the delivery of the schemes either directly by CDC or more likely through the Cherwell Community Build activities. By providing consultation and input into design and pre-development work with Cherwell Community Build input there will be ample opportunity for those board members to influence the final scheme outputs. The purpose of providing indicative development costs at this stage is to indicate the overall likely level of investment required to deliver the homes on the sites required.

Alternative options

Consideration has been given to seek approval for the full development costs associated with the sites identified. This has been rejected at this stage given that a full cost appraisal based on a final design and planning submission is to be undertaken. Further, it is recognised that the development of the Cherwell Community Build initiative is now significantly underway and that Board should have input into the pre development and design options for these sites. Final costing's and a decision about funding arrangements and development delivery will be put before members and the Cherwell Community Build board later this year.

(The Chief Executive and Head of Regeneration and Housing left the meeting at the conclusion of this item)

38

Cherwell's Approach to Working with Council Controlled/Influenced Companies

The Chief Finance Officer submitted an exempt report to consider the way that the Council works with Council owned/influenced companies (currently Graven Hill) and to put in place efficient and effective means of communication, monitoring, evaluation and liaison to ensure the Council safeguards its investments and maximises the return to the Council and community. To consider and approve the principle of member and officer non-

executive directors of these and other Council owned/influenced companies being remunerated and to agree the approach to implementing this.

Resolved

- (1) That the Terms of Reference for the Shareholder Committee, a sub-committee of the Executive, (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) to replace the Graven Hill Partnering Board be agreed.
- (2) That the Leader, Lead Member for Financial Management and Lead Member for Housing be appointed to the Shareholder Committee.
- (3) That the functioning and effectiveness of Graven Hill Village Holding Company be further developed through the secondment of an officer from the council to act as Managing Director and that the Head of Paid Service (or their appointed deputy if they are a non-executive director of a Council controlled/influenced company) be given delegated authority to implement this.
- (4) That the Head of Law and Governance be requested to commission the preparation and completion of Shareholder agreements between the Council and the Graven Hill Village Holding Company and, jointly with this company, between it and the Graven Hill Village Development Company with the terms of such agreements being reported to the Shareholder Committee.
- (5) That the framework within which the Council will work with Council owned companies as set out in the exempt report (exempt Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be agreed and the Chief Finance Officer (as shareholder representative), in consultation with the Shareholder Committee, be given delegated authority to implement and negotiate this framework.
- (6) That the principle that non-executive directors and Chairmen of Council owned/influenced companies be remunerated be agreed and that in the case of Councillor and Council Officer nominated non-executive directors this should be set and paid by the Council, with the company reimbursing the Council for their time through a management recharge.
- (7) That it be agreed that the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) be requested to consider the level of special responsibility allowance that the Council should pay Councillors who are non-executive directors and/or Chairmen of councillor owned/influenced companies on a company by company basis commencing with the Graven Hill companies and that Council be requested to make a decision on their recommendations in due course.
- (8) That it be agreed that the Head of Paid Service (or their appointed deputy if they are a Director of a Council controlled/influenced company) be requested to arrange for the evaluation of the non-executive director and Chairman roles in order to set the level of remuneration that the Council should pay Officers who are non-executive directors or Chairmen of Council owned/influenced

companies and that the Head of Paid Service (or their appointed deputy if they are non-executive director) in consultation with members of the Shareholder Committee be requested to make a decision on this in due course and further that such appointments shall be made in addition, and not linked, to appointees' substantive posts.

- (9) That it be agreed that the level of remuneration for any Independent Non-Executive Directors who may be appointed to Council controlled/influenced companies is a matter for the Board of Directors of the relevant company to evaluate and propose to the shareholder for approval.
- (10) That the Joint Commissioning Committee be recommended to agree that a shared member and officer indemnity policy be developed and agreed to protect members and officers nominated as non-executive directors on council owned/influenced companies,

Reasons

The proposals in this report are designed to ensure that the council has in place an effective interface with council owned/influenced companies which aims to meet the needs of the companies and in turn maximise the return to the council and its communities.

Alternative options

Option 1: To note the report

Option 2: To request additional information on items within this report

The meeting ended at 5.07 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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Cherwell District Council

Executive

5 September 2016

<p>Corporate Biodiversity Action Plan 2016-18 Protecting and Enhancing Cherwell's Natural Environment</p>
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Report of Community Services Manager

This report is public

Purpose of report

To seek approval for the 2016-18 Corporate Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) (draft attached as Appendix 1 to this report)

1.0 Recommendation

The Executive is recommended:

- 1.1 To approve the proposed Corporate Biodiversity Action Plan 2016-18

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 Delivery of a Corporate BAP is a specific objective in the Council's Business Plan 2016/17: "Deliver the Council's Biodiversity Action Plan "Protecting and Enhancing Cherwell's Natural Environment"
- 2.2 The purpose of the Corporate BAP is to demonstrate that the Council complies with its obligations under European and national legislation, as well as the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), relating to important wildlife sites, habitats and species.
- 2.3 Protecting and improving biodiversity as well as good quality connected green spaces are essential elements of sustainable development.
- 2.4 The Corporate BAP includes aims, actions and targets relating to many of the Council's services, most importantly the Local Plan and the Development Management processes.
- 2.5 To date, the Corporate BAP has been reviewed and updated on an annual basis. However, due to the longer term nature of projects relating to the natural environment, it is more appropriate to be reviewed and updated every two years to reflect this.

3.0 Report Details

3.1 The Corporate BAP includes aims, actions and targets which are divided into a number of main themes. Achievement highlights for 2015/16 are listed below under 3.2. Key objectives for 2016-18 are listed below under 3.3. Both 3.2 and 3.3 are expanded upon in the full BAP document (Appendix 1).

3.2 2015-16 achievement highlights include;

- The adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) includes robust policies relating to biodiversity and the natural environment.
- At least 554 planning applications were assessed in 2015/16 by the Council's Ecology Officer with regard to relevant biodiversity legislation and planning policy (small increase from 2014/15).
- Updated digital datasets for protected and notable species, priority habitats, Local Wildlife Sites and swifts data were made available to Planning Officers for use as an evidence base – in partnership with Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre.
- The Cherwell Swift Conservation Project continued to gather information about nesting sites throughout the District in partnership with local people. This is used in the assessment of planning applications to help protect these sites and provide additional habitat.
- Cherwell Build continued to include swift and bat boxes in most of its projects. Swift bricks have been included in Bicester's new community facility (Franklins House) to complement adjacent properties which are already used by these birds.
- Several Council funding bids were approved as part of the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Environmental Investment Plan including the proposed Cherwell Country Park.
- A number of biodiversity sites received, or are being considered for, external funding as a result of Council action. For example, the Slade Nature Reserve in Bloxham was awarded a Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment grant; and Network Rail has prioritised Island Pond Wood in Launton and the Bicester Wetland Reserve for potential funding as part of its "East West Rail Net Biodiversity Positive" programme
- A third bat box project was established in the District (in addition to Kirtlington Quarry and Grimsbury Woodland, Banbury) at Daeda's Wood, Deddington – in partnership with the Friends of Daeda's Wood, the Woodland Trust and the Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT).
- Funding support towards encouraging and facilitating community engagement has been given to the Wild Banbury project based in Spiceball Park – in partnership with BBOWT and Banbury Town Council
- At least 12 primary school and youth group biodiversity visits have been made to Warriner School Farm, and Forest School sessions at 9 primary schools were supported

3.3 Key objectives for 2016-18 are;

- Include additional Development Management policies on the natural environment in Local Plan Part 2.
- Develop more detailed planning guidance on the natural environment as part of the Sustainable Buildings and Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document.
- Continue to assess and provide advice on planning applications that impact on important sites, habitats and species.

- Continue to consult with the Cherwell Swift Conservation Project and secure provision for wildlife within Cherwell Build projects
- Support BBOWT with 'healthy for wildlife, healthy for people' initiatives on District sites
- Promote Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment grant funding for local projects and provide support where possible
- Progress a potential water vole project based on the Oxford Canal through Kidlington in partnership with Kidlington Parish Council, the Canal & River Trust and BBOWT
- Continue to support the Conservation Target Areas mapping review in order to ensure the robustness of the Council's evidence base in partnership with Wild Oxfordshire
- Establish a bat box project in the Slade Nature Reserve in Bloxham in partnership with Bloxham Parish Council and BBOWT
- Support further primary school/youth group biodiversity visits to Warriner School Farm as well as Forest School sessions

3.4 The delivery of the Corporate BAP relies heavily on partnership work with a number of environmental organisations. The Council supports five main environmental organisations with annual funding in accordance with service level agreements. These organisations provide progress reports each year which are published on the Council's natural environment webpages.

3.4.1 **The Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC)** supplies high quality, up to date habitat, species and site data required as an evidence base for the Local Plan process and for the ecological assessment of planning applications. TVERC's service involves intensive mapping work using aerial photography and survey work to assess habitat condition. TVERC also reports on Local Plan indicators, information which is required for the Council's Annual Monitoring Report.
2016/17 service charge - £7,843

3.4.2 **Wild Oxfordshire** leads on partnership work to maintain and improve the District's Conservation Target Areas which are used as a planning focus for biodiversity enhancement.
2016/17 service charge - £2,000

3.4.3 **Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT)** provides land management advice to Local Wildlife Site (LWS) owners/managers. LWSs are sites of substantive nature conservation value or geological interest which are protected by planning policy. The advice helps to improve site value and maintain the robustness of the LWS designation. This is important as LWS designation is a constraint in the planning process.
2016/17 service charge - £5,000

3.4.4 **Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)** provides land management advice to landowners/managers within the Cherwell and Ray river valleys on wetland habitat creation, restoration and maintenance. Wetland is a national priority habitat which supports birds and other wildlife which are national priority species.
2016/17 service charge - £2,000

3.4.5 **Warriner School Farm** delivers a programme of primary school and youth group visits about the importance of the natural environment as a food source, for its health benefits and for its intrinsic value.
2016/17 service charge - £1,500

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The Corporate BAP provides a framework of aims, actions and targets, the delivery of which ensures that the Council complies with both legislative and planning policy requirements relating to important wildlife sites, habitats and species and good quality connected green spaces.

5.0 Consultation

None

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: To reject the Corporate BAP 2016-18. This is not proposed as the Council would not be able to clearly demonstrate that it is meeting biodiversity legislation and planning policy requirements.

Option 2: To amend the Corporate BAP 2016-18

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 Delivery of the Corporate BAP in 2016-17 is contained within approved revenue estimates. Continuing delivery in 2017-18 will be subject to the approved revenue estimates for that year.

Comments checked by Kelly Wheeler, Principal Accountant, 01327 322230, Kelly.wheeler@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Legal Implications

- 7.2 There are statutory requirements that the Council must meet and which are set out in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and related legislation, including a duty under Part 3 of the 2006 Act to have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of its functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. An annual Corporate Biodiversity Action Plan should enable the Council to demonstrate that these requirements are being met. Failure to do so will leave the Council open to challenge.

Comments checked by Richard Hawtin, Team Leader, Non-contentious Business, 01295 221695, richard.hawtin@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk,

8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision

Financial Threshold Met: No

Community Impact Threshold Met: No

Wards Affected

Most wards

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

The **Council's Business Plan 2016/17** includes the objective: "Deliver the Council's Biodiversity Action Plan "Protecting and Enhancing Cherwell's Natural Environment" under its strategic priority "Cherwell: safe, green, clean".

The **adopted Cherwell Local Plan (2011-2031) (Part 1)** includes policies specifically relating to Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity and the Natural Environment (ESD 10), Conservation Target Areas (ESD 11) and Green Infrastructure (ESD 18)

Lead Councillor

Councillor Tony Ilott, Lead Councillor for Public Protection

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Corporate Biodiversity Action Plan 2016-18
Background Papers	
(a) Guide to Biodiversity 2020 (b) Biodiversity and Planning in Oxfordshire 2014 (c) Adopted Local Plan Policies (d) National Planning Policy Framework, Section 11 (e) Biodiversity Assessment in Neighbourhood Planning (f) Natural Environment White Paper and Local Authorities (g) Oxfordshire BAP and CTAs (h) Biodiversity Partners progress reports – www.cherwell.gov.uk/biodiversitypartners	
Background papers have links and/or are available as downloads at www.cherwell.gov.uk/naturalenvironment	
Report Author	Sue Marchand, Countryside and Conservation Officer
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**Protecting and Enhancing
Cherwell's Natural Environment**
Corporate Biodiversity Action Plan 2016 – 2018

Photograph acknowledgements:

- Front cover
Minibeast House – credit Bev James, Warriner School Farm
- Page 3
Oxford Conservation Volunteer at Enslow Marsh Local Wildlife Site - credit BBOWT
Willow Pollarding, Bletchingdon Quarry Local Wildlife Site – credit Pim Young, BBOWT
Conservation work on River Cherwell, Spiceball Park – credit BBOWT
- Page 4
Reed Cutting at Dukes Lock Pond Local Wildlife Site – credit Pim Young, BBOWT
- Page 9
Swift Boxes, Coach House Mews, Bicester (Cherwell Build Project)
Swift – credit Margers Martinsons
- Page 12
Great Crested Newt Survey, Bure Park Local Nature Reserve (Bicester) – credit Bicester Green Gym/CDC Bicester Delivery Team

**PROTECTING AND ENHANCING CHERWELL'S NATURAL ENVIRONMENT
CORPORATE BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN
2016-2018**

Contents

1. BACKGROUND 5

1.1 INTRODUCTION 5

1.2 BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIES 5

1.3 BIODIVERSITY LEGISLATION AND POLICY 5

1.4 BIODIVERSITY AND THE PLANNING PROCESS 6

2. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT WHITE PAPER 7

Figure 1 – Conservation Target Areas (May 2015) 8

3. CHERWELL'S BIODIVERSITY RESOURCE 9

*Figure 2 – Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) Biodiversity
Theme Map (July 2015).....10*

*Figure 3 – Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) Green Infrastructure
Theme Map (July 2015).....11*

4. BIODIVERSITY PARTNERS12

5. CORPORATE BAP DELIVERY13

6. 2015-2016 REVIEW13

7. 2016-2018 AIMS, ACTIONS AND TARGETS15



Corporate Vision

To work with partners to protect and enhance Cherwell's natural environment for its intrinsic value; the services it provides; the wellbeing and enjoyment of people; and the economic prosperity that it brings.

Biodiversity

Biodiversity is a term used to describe the variety of life, including all plants, animals, their habitats and the natural systems that support them. A healthy and stable natural environment is vitally important to economic prosperity and the District's desirability as a place to live, work and visit.

Cherwell's biodiversity resource has value for agriculture and timber production and provides the basis for many tourism and recreational activities. Fertile soils, clean water, carbon storage and flood prevention are all crucial services provided by the natural environment. There is also substantial evidence that access to nature can make a major contribution to improving people's health and well-being.

Electronic Document

This document is designed to be read online. Clear links are made to the Natural Environment pages of the Council's website for further information. As much of this online information is subject to change, the most recent publication date will always be given – see www.cherwell.gov.uk/naturalenvironment

Hard copies of this document can be provided by contacting the Council's Countryside and Conservation Officer on 01295 221707



Reed Cutting
Dukes Lock Pond Local Wildlife Site

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Corporate Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) is to demonstrate how the Council complies with its obligations relating to important wildlife sites, habitats and species under European and national legislation as well as the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF),

It also sets out how the Council will fulfil its duty under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. Section 40 of this Act states that -
“Every public body must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as it is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity”

The **Council’s Business Plan 2016/17** includes the delivery of a Corporate BAP as a specific objective.

The Corporate BAP is reviewed and updated every two years.

1.2 BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIES

Biodiversity 2020 is the national strategy for England’s wildlife and ecosystem services which was published in August 2011. It sets out the Government’s ambition to halt overall loss of England’s biodiversity by 2020, support healthy well-functioning ecosystems and establish coherent ecological networks, with more and better places for nature for the benefit of wildlife and people. A summary of this document emphasises the importance of **local conservation projects** to the delivery of the national strategy’s outcomes - www.cherwell.gov.uk/naturalenvironment

The Oxfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan is based on **Conservation Target Areas** (CTAs) in the County. The CTAs include the most important areas for priority habitats and provide a focus for where conservation efforts can be most effective. The CTAs are currently being updated as part of a new Oxfordshire Biodiversity 2020 Strategy which is being led by Wild Oxfordshire.

The Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) has recently launched its new **‘Strategic Plan 2016-2021: Be part of nature’s recovery’** with ambitious targets for 8% of land across the three counties to be rich in wildlife by 2020 and restoring 10% of unprotected land to wildlife-rich habitats by 2030. The strategy aims to embed nature into people’s lives, giving them more natural green spaces to explore and discover their local wildlife.

1.3 BIODIVERSITY LEGISLATION, POLICY AND GUIDANCE

Protecting and enhancing biodiversity has become a cross cutting issue with strong links to all other sustainable development issues. Important wildlife and environmental **legislation** applies directly to local government, most notably the duties under the NERC Act 2006 and the Conservation Regulations 2010, particularly relating to European protected species.

There has also been rapid change in **policy drivers** for biodiversity action over the last few years with the publication of the Natural Environment White Paper, the National Planning Policy Framework, the implementation of the Water Framework Directive and guidance relating to biodiversity accounting and offsetting.

Also, guidance on conserving biodiversity in a changing climate has emphasised the need to manage land on a landscape scale to improve ecological networks, rather than just protecting special sites which are unlikely to sustain wildlife in the long term.

A comprehensive guidance document – “Biodiversity and Planning in Oxfordshire”- has been produced which details biodiversity legislation and planning policy and how these apply to important sites, habitats and species - www.cherwell.gov.uk/naturalenvironment

1.4 BIODIVERSITY AND THE PLANNING PROCESS

Biodiversity is an important consideration in the planning process and must be integrated from an early stage into the design of any development. Development can have negative impacts on biodiversity (net loss) which can be significant and lead to the decline of important habitats and species in the District. Development can also have positive impacts for biodiversity (net gain), especially for sites where there is little wildlife, by integrating new habitats into buildings and adjacent spaces.

The adopted **Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1)** sets the broad planning framework for meeting the future needs of the District. It includes strategic biodiversity, conservation target area and green infrastructure policies. Local Plan Part 2 will include additional policies and planning guidance to supplement Part 1. All policies in Local Plan Part 1 relating to the natural environment can be seen in downloads at www.cherwell.gov.uk/naturalenvironment

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) took full effect in March 2013. It replaced all the previous Planning Policy Statements as well as various other planning guidance. The NPPF sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how they should be applied. It is described as a key part of the Government’s reforms to make the planning system less complex and more accessible, to protect the environment and to promote sustainable growth. The NPPF includes three dimensions to sustainable development which the planning system needs to perform – economic, social and environmental. The environmental role is described as “contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy” (para 7).

Section 11 of the NPPF (paras 109-125) is entitled ‘Conserving and enhancing the natural environment’ and includes reference to providing net gains for biodiversity where possible, protection and enhancement of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure, promoting priority habitats and species and the importance of ecosystem services and soils. To view this full section, see downloads at www.cherwell.gov.uk/naturalenvironment.

There is an emphasis within the framework on local planning authorities creating local policy and guidance which both reflects the NPPF and, at the same time, the needs and priorities of their communities. Neighbourhood planning legislation came into effect in April 2012 which aims to give communities more control over the development of their local area. Local planning authorities must provide support to

help people produce their neighbourhood development plan. Some draft guidance has been produced to advise on biodiversity and neighbourhood planning (see downloads at www.cherwell.gov.uk/naturalenvironment)

British Standard 42020 is a code of practice for biodiversity in planning and development. It requires integration of biodiversity into all stages of the planning process from before application for permission to construction. This code is being used to achieve a more effective consideration of biodiversity as part of the Council's planning system.

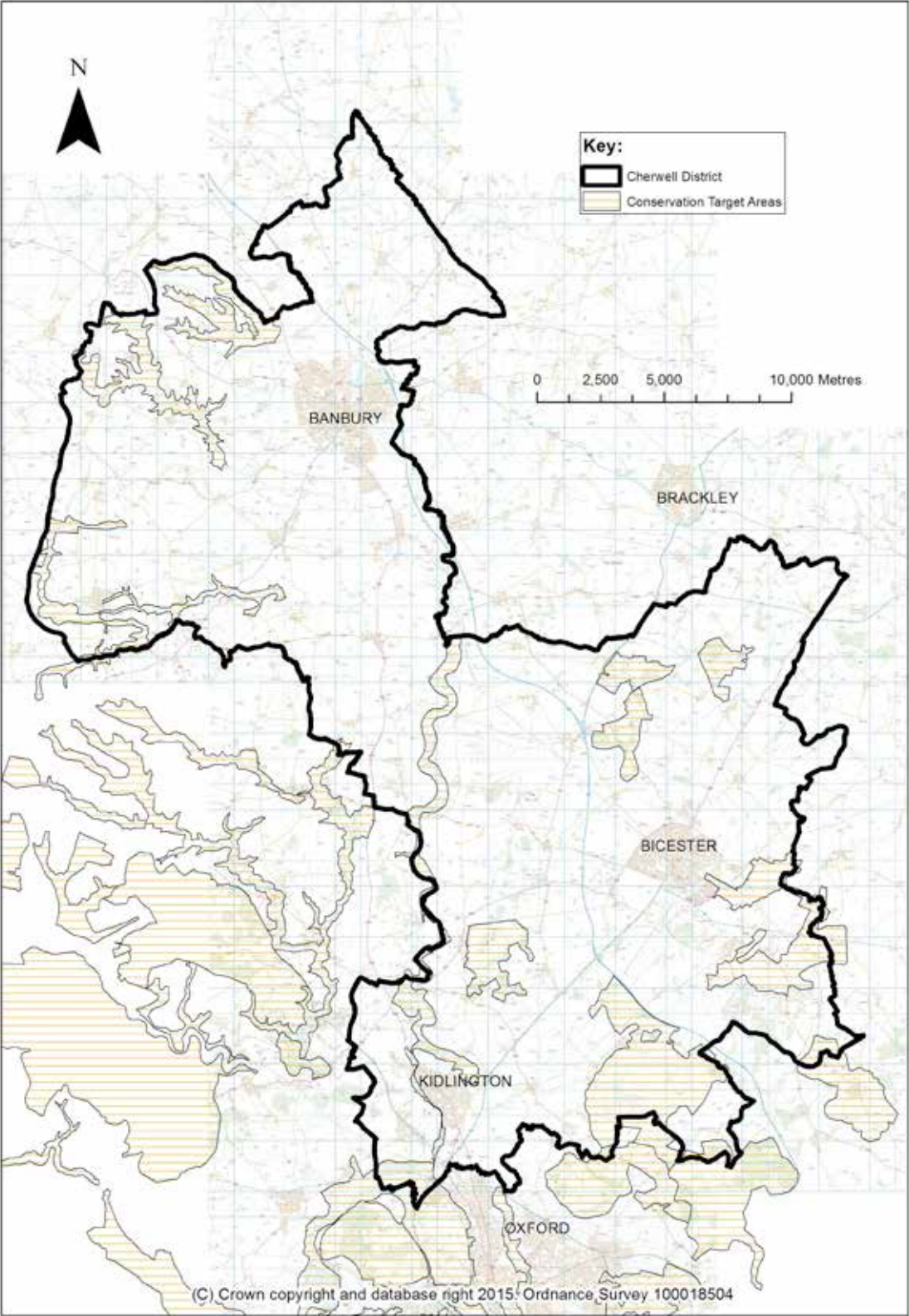
2 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT WHITE PAPER

2.1 The Biodiversity 2020 national strategy builds on important elements of the **Natural Environment White Paper (NEWP)** (the first White Paper on the natural environment in 20 years). Published in June 2011, the NEWP aims to improve the quality of the natural environment across England, halt the decline in habitats and species, and strengthen the connection between people and nature. The proposals are directly linked to comprehensive research that shows the strong economic arguments for safeguarding and enhancing the natural environment. The Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has published a briefing note explaining the implications of the White Paper for local authorities – (see downloads at www.cherwell.gov.uk/naturalenvironment)

2.2 **Key issues** within the Natural Environment White Paper (and Biodiversity 2020) include –

- **Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs)** – encouraging new and existing local partnerships to integrate action, and work with local authorities to identify opportunities to protect and improve nature at a local level. There is a duty for local authorities to co-operate with all recognized LNPs
Oxfordshire's Local Nature Partnership was originally hosted by Wild Oxfordshire but it is no longer able to provide this function. There is a need for an alternative co-ordinating mechanism for the LNP which is currently being investigated.
- **Nature Improvement Areas (NIAs)** – encouraging local partnerships to set up Nature Improvement Areas where there are significant opportunities to enhance and reconnect nature
Conservation Target Areas (CTAs) are effectively NIAs and these have been identified in the County (see Figure 1). Wild Oxfordshire co-ordinates the CTA project and most of the environmental organisations that CDC supports contribute to the maintenance, restoration and creation of priority habitats within CTAs. See Section 4 of this document for more information about the Council's biodiversity partners.
- **Biodiversity Offsetting** – defined as a proposed approach to compensate for habitats and species lost to development in one area, with the creation, enhancement or restoration of habitat in another. Under this system, any negative impacts on the natural environment would then be compensated for, or 'offset', by developers. DEFRA published the summary of responses to the consultation on biodiversity offsetting in 2016. The responses vary widely on how or whether this approach could or should be taken forward.
The potential use of a biodiversity accounting metric is being considered as part of Local Plan Part 2.

Figure 1 – Conservation Target Areas (May 2015)



3. CHERWELL'S BIODIVERSITY RESOURCE

3.1 The Cherwell District contains many areas of high ecological value including sites of international and national importance. The District is also home to many legally protected species as well as priority species and habitats. Much of this biodiversity resource is mapped by the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre so that it can be used as an information source by local authorities and conservation organisations. This biodiversity resource mapping within the District is generally illustrated in Figure 2.

3.2 Conservation Target Areas (CTAs) have been identified which include some of the most important areas for biodiversity in the District and provide a focus for coordinated action (see Figure 1). This focus is now being integrated with a river catchment based approach, led by the Environment Agency and aimed at improving water quality to meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive. More information about the 'Oxfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan and CTAs' can be found in downloads at www.cherwell.gov.uk/naturaleenvironment

3.3 Cherwell's biodiversity resource is also part of its Green Infrastructure (see Figure 3). Green Infrastructure (GI) consists of the network of accessible multifunctional green space in both urban and rural settings and delivers both environmental and social benefits. Such benefits include conserving and enhancing biodiversity as well as improving the health and wellbeing of people and the economy. Conservation Target Areas form an important component of the green infrastructure network of the District. Securing adequate green infrastructure is crucial to achieving sustainable communities.

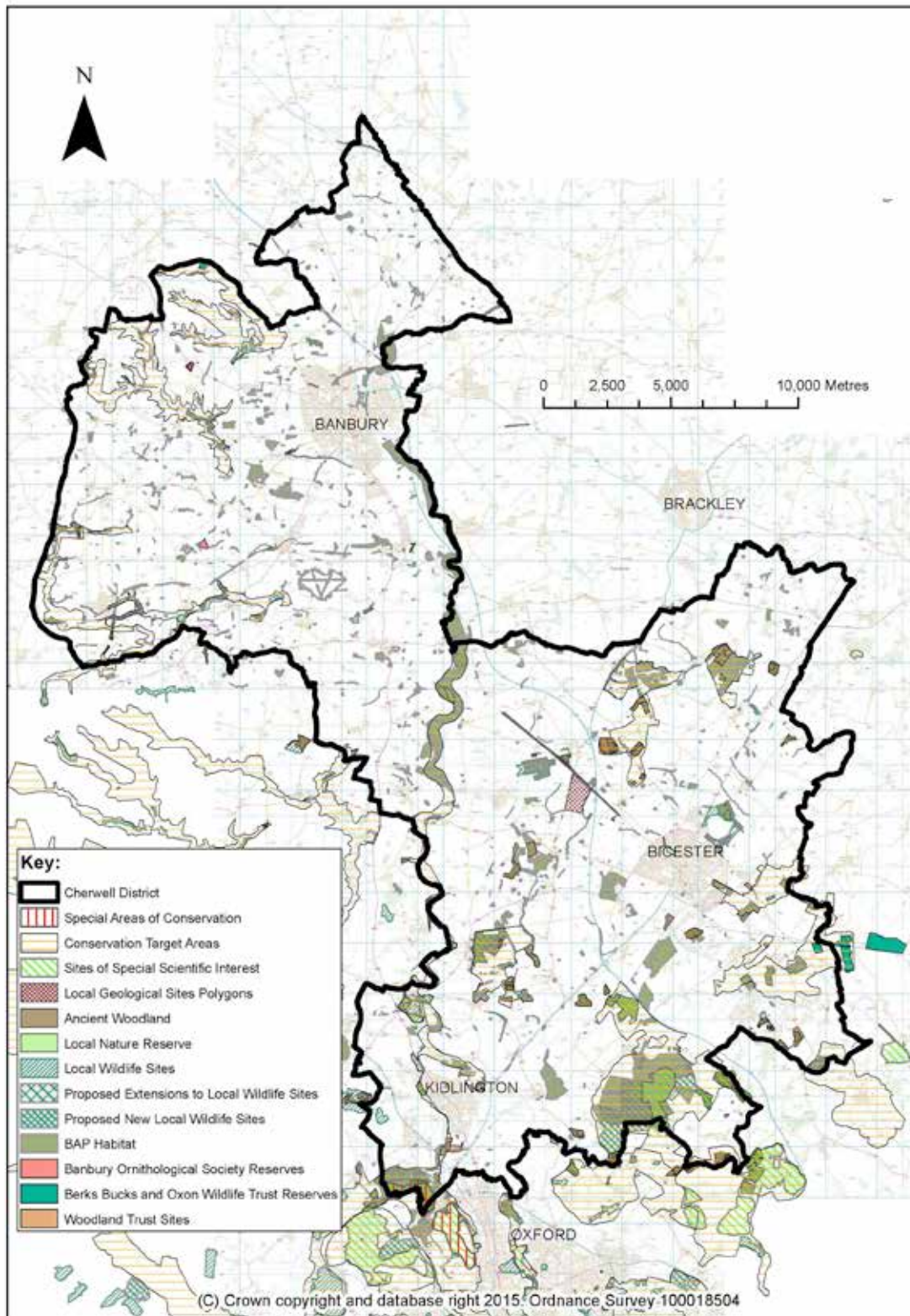


Swift Boxes, Coach House Mews, Bicester
(Cherwell Build Project)

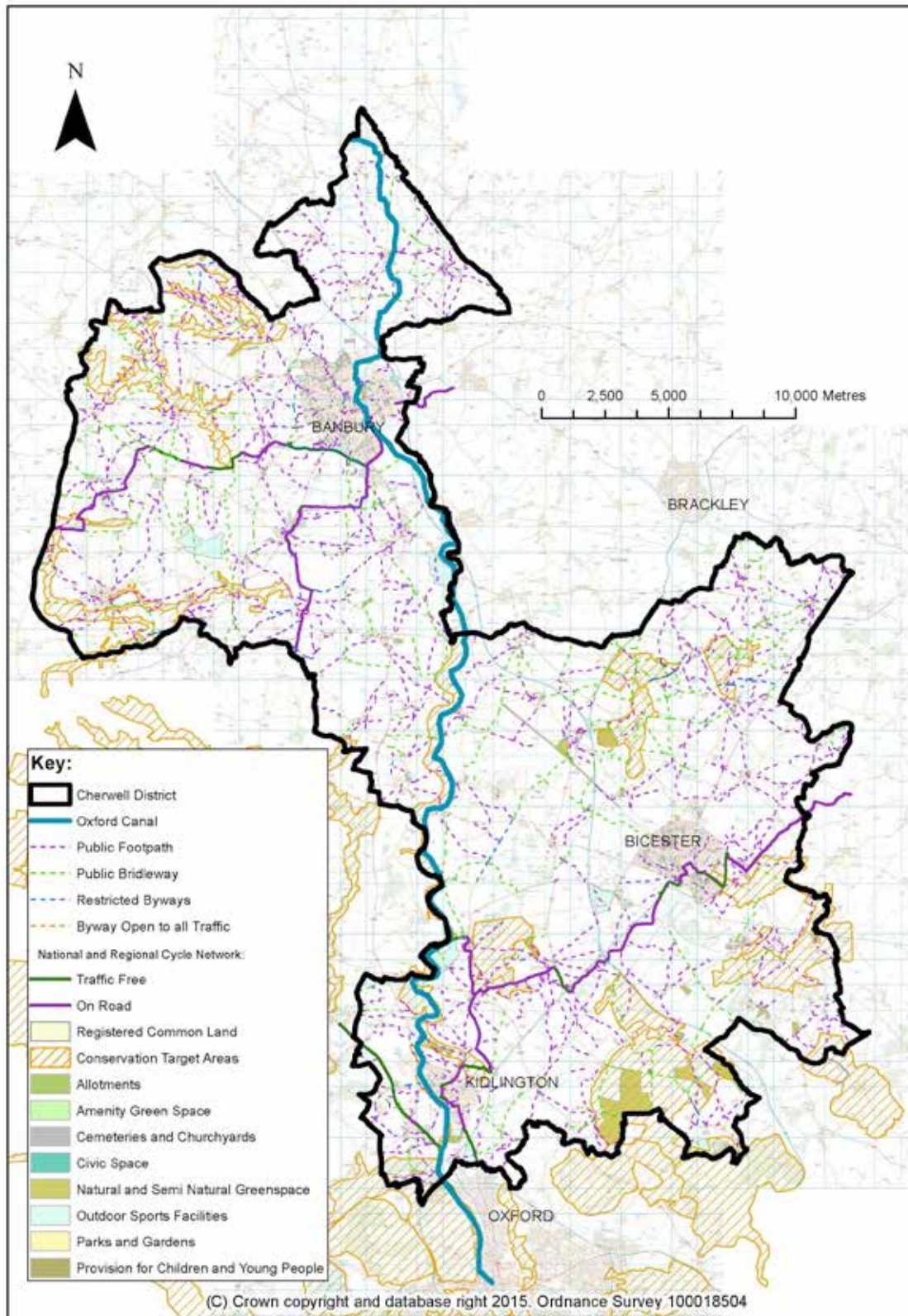


Swift

**Figure 2 – Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1)
Biodiversity Theme Map (July 2015)**



**Figure 3 – Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1)
Green Infrastructure Theme Map (July 2015)**



4. BIODIVERSITY PARTNERS

4.1 The delivery of the Corporate BAP relies heavily on partnership work. The Council supports five main environmental organisations with annual funding in accordance with service level agreements. These organisations provide progress reports during and at the end of each year which are published on the Council's biodiversity partners webpage – see www.cherwell.gov.uk/naturalenvironment

4.2 **The Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC)** supplies high quality, up to date habitat, species and site data that is required as an evidence base for the Local Plan process and for the ecological assessment of planning applications. TVERC's service involves intensive mapping work using aerial photography and survey work to assess habitat condition. TVERC also reports on Local Plan indicators, information which is required for the Council's Annual Monitoring Report.

4.3 **Wild Oxfordshire** leads on partnership work to maintain and improve the District's Conservation Target Areas which are used as a planning focus for biodiversity improvement. It also organises successful citizen science projects eg water quality testing blitz events across the County involving many volunteers and providing much valuable information about local waterbodies

4.4 **Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT)** provides land management advice to Local Wildlife Site (LWS) owners/managers. LWSs are sites of substantive nature conservation value or geological interest which are protected by planning policy. The advice helps to improve site value and maintain the robustness of the LWS designation. This is important as LWS designation is a constraint in the planning process.

4.5 **RSPB** provides land management advice to landowners/managers within the Cherwell and Ray river valleys on wetland habitat creation, restoration and maintenance. Such habitat is a national priority which supports birds and other wildlife which are national priority species.

4.6 A successful programme of primary school and youth group visits about the importance of the natural environment as a food source, for its health benefits and for its intrinsic value was delivered in 2015/16 by **Warriner School Farm**. This will be continued in 2016-18.



Great crested newt survey, Bure Park Local Nature Reserve, Bicester

5. CORPORATE BAP DELIVERY

The Council's approach to protecting and enhancing biodiversity within the Cherwell District is summarised below:

- A Corporate Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) will be produced every two years to set out, monitor and review the Council's compliance with the NERC Act Duty and other legislative and policy requirements
- TVERC, Wild Oxfordshire, BBOWT, RSPB and Warriner School Farm are key partners in the delivery of the Corporate BAP. Partnerships will be maintained in accordance with Service Level Agreements
- The Council's key policies relating to biodiversity will be included in the Local Plan and related documents
- The Council will participate in partnership working with the Oxfordshire natural environment sector, particularly with regard to the formation of a new Local Nature Partnership, and relevant projects will be supported

6. 2015-2016 REVIEW

Aims, actions and targets are divided into **five main themes**. Highlights and some areas of limited progress are listed below and expanded on within the Action Plan tables which follow on the next page.

6.1 Planning and Sustainable Development

a) Planning Policy

- Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) includes robust policies relating to biodiversity, green infrastructure and Conservation Target Areas
- Re-establishment of Green Business Award was not achieved

b) Development Management

- At least 554 planning applications were assessed in 2015/16 by the Council's Ecology Officer (small increase from 2014/15)
- Updated digital datasets for protected and notable species, priority habitats, Local Wildlife Sites and swifts data were made available to Planning Officers for use as an evidence base

6.2 District land and buildings management

- A number of biodiversity sites received, or are being considered for, external funding as a result of CDC action. For example, the Slade Nature Reserve in Bloxham was awarded a Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment (TOE2) grant; and Network Rail has prioritised Island Pond Wood in Launton and the Bicester Wetland Reserve for potential funding as part of its "East West Rail Net Biodiversity Positive" programme
- A third bat box project has been established in Daeda's Wood (the first was established in Kirtlington Quarry in 2012 and the second in Grimsbury Wood north of Banbury in 2014)

6.3 Council owned and managed land/buildings

- Cherwell Build continues to include provision for wildlife in most of its projects
- Several CDC funding bids have been approved as part of the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership's (OXLEP's) Strategic Environmental Investment Plan (SEEIP) including the proposed Cherwell Country Park

- Assessment of the tower at Trow Pool (owned by CDC and a designated Local Wildlife Site (LWS)) for provision of artificial nesting sites has been made. The structure is not suitable due to access but work is progressing on the biodiversity enhancement of the overall site as part of the LWS Project

6.4 Green Infrastructure

- Conservation Target Areas continue to be the focus of partnership work. See biodiversity partners' progress reports – www.cherwell.gov.uk/naturalenvironment

6.5 Health, Wellbeing, Economy and Education

- Funding support towards encouraging and facilitating community engagement has been given to the "Wild Banbury" Project based in Spiceball Park which is being led by BBOWT in partnership with Banbury Town Council
- At least 12 primary school and youth group biodiversity visits to Warriner School Farm and Forest School sessions at 9 primary schools were supported

7. 2016-2018 AIMS, ACTIONS AND TARGETS

Some actions and targets have changed from the 2015-2016 Corporate Biodiversity Action Plan. Where this is the case, the 2015/16 actions and/or targets have been specified and reviewed in the last column of the tables below.

Theme 1: Planning and Sustainable Development

(a) Planning Policy Context

- Protecting and enhancing biodiversity are important elements of sustainable development. The adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) includes strategic policies relating to biodiversity and the natural environment, green infrastructure and conservation target areas that will contribute to, and help ensure, sustainable development.
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) indicates that planning authorities should enhance as well as protect biodiversity and, where possible, provide net gain. The importance of ecosystem services and soils are also specifically noted (Para 109)
- The NPPF recognises the importance of good evidence and data for decision-making (Paras 167 and 188-192).

Aim	2016-2018 Action	Measure/Target	2015-2016 Review
1.1 Ensure protection, management and opportunities for enhancement and extension of biodiversity are taken into account in the preparation and implementation of the Local Plan	1.1.1 Include policies and proposals relating to biodiversity, green infrastructure (GI) and conservation target areas (CTAs) in Local Plan documents	<p>Policies/proposals to be included in Cherwell Local Plan Part 2 and the Partial Review of Local Plan Part 1</p> <p>Supplementary planning guidance relating to biodiversity to be included in all relevant Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)</p>	<p>New target for 2016-18</p> <p>2015-16 target <i>Policies/proposals to be included in the Local Plan</i></p> <p>2015-16 outcome <i>Relevant policies included in the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1)</i></p> <p><i>Work on these planning documents was progressed, particularly relating to the Developer Contributions SPD</i></p>
	1.1.2 Support the provision of high quality, up to date biodiversity information and evidence required by the Local Plan process through funding biodiversity partners	<p>Collation, analysis and supply of data from TVERC associated with Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)</p> <p>Supply of constraint GIS layers from TVERC required for planning projects and site assessments</p>	<p><i>TVERC data supplied in October for the AMR</i></p> <p><i>TVERC data supplied in July 2015 and January 2016 (swifts, protected/notable species), January 2016 (BAP habitats and whole District mapping project) and March 2016 (Local Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites).</i></p>

Aim	2016-2018 Action	Measure/Target	2015-2016 Review
1.1 contd Ensure protection, management and opportunities for enhancement and extension of biodiversity are taken into account in the preparation and implementation of the Local Plan	1.1.2 contd Support the provision of high quality, up to date biodiversity information and evidence required by the Local Plan process through funding biodiversity partners	<p>TVERC to progress District Wildlife Sites (DWS) Project (ie establish clear DWS selection protocol/provide surveys of other sites)</p> <p>Wild Oxfordshire to facilitate the conclusion of the review/update of Conservation Target Area (CTA)</p> <p>BBOWT to provide Single Data List report (LWS Project) associated with AMR</p>	<p>New target for 2016-18</p> <p>2015-16 target <i>TVERC to deliver District Wildlife Sites Project 2015 (sites identified in 2013 mapping project)</i></p> <p>2015-16 outcome <i>Final report and data received on 1 April 2016. Six sites were surveyed, one of which has secured funding due partly to the availability of survey information</i></p> <p><i>CTA review and update is ongoing. Proposals for minor amendments, extensions and new CTAs prepared but not yet approved.</i></p> <p><i>Report provided in November 2015</i></p>

(b) Development Management Context

- Where it is likely that a proposal will impact on any protected or priority species, designated site, important habitat or other biodiversity feature, appropriate surveys and reports will need to be provided with any planning application.
- British Standard (BS) 42020 has been developed to provide clear guidance to ensure that actions and decisions taken at each stage of the planning process are informed by sufficient and appropriate ecological information.

Aim	2016-2018 Action	Measure/Target	2015-16 Review
1.2 Incorporate biodiversity management into each stage of the planning process	1.2.1 Work towards achieving British Standard 42020 – a code of practice for biodiversity in planning and development	Review validation checklist and biodiversity planning conditions	<p>2015-16 target <i>Review validation checklist and biodiversity planning conditions</i></p> <p>2015-16 outcome <i>Review did not take place. Validation checklist and planning conditions to be reviewed in 2016-18</i></p>
1.3 A net gain in biodiversity will be sought when considering proposals for development by protecting, managing, enhancing and extending existing resources	1.3.1 Screen all planning applications with regard to their impact on important sites, habitats and species	Ecology Officer to be consulted whenever important sites, habitats and species are affected	<i>Planning application checklist which includes all protected sites, habitats and species and some additional constraint information (eg swifts, District Wildlife Sites) is used by all Registration Officers</i>

Aim	2016-2018 Action	Measure/Target	2015-16 Review
<p>1.3 contd A net gain in biodiversity will be sought when considering proposals for development by protecting, managing, enhancing and extending existing resources</p>	<p>1.3.2 Assess planning applications that impact upon important sites, habitats and species with regard to relevant biodiversity legislation/policy</p>	<p>Send comments to relevant Planning Officer within required timescale</p> <p>Consider using a biodiversity accounting tool to assess net gain</p> <p>Produce internal standing advice for Planning Officers relating to biodiversity and planning applications</p>	<p><i>At least 554 planning applications have been assessed by the Council's Ecology Officer with regard to relevant biodiversity legislation/policy (small increase from 2015-16)</i></p> <p>New target for 2016-18</p> <p>New target for 2016-18</p> <p>2015-16 target <i>Assessment to be made of need for additional staff resource</i></p> <p>2015-16 outcome <i>Capacity of the Ecology Officer will be considered as part of the joint service development management restructure</i></p>
	<p>1.3.3 Assess the impact of the NW Bicester ecotown on important sites, habitats and species with regard to relevant biodiversity legislation/policy</p>	<p>Secure biodiversity net gain</p> <p>Ensure that all planning applications accord with relevant development requirements and principles set out in the draft NW Bicester SPD</p> <p>Ensure that all planning applications include relevant ecological surveys that are sufficiently current</p>	<p><i>Offsite compensation scheme relating to loss of farmland bird habitat which is required to achieve net gain has yet to be secured.</i></p> <p><i>Conditions will be reviewed before issue to ensure that planning applications accord with the SPD</i></p> <p><i>Conditions will be reviewed before issue as there could be specific areas that will require survey prior to implementation</i></p>
	<p>1.3.4 Support the provision of high quality, up to date biodiversity information required by development control through funding of biodiversity partners</p>	<p>Annual supply of ecological constraint GIS layers from TVERC</p>	<p><i>TVERC data supplied in July 2015 and January 2016 (swifts, protected/notable species), January 2016 (BAP habitats and whole District mapping project) and March 2016 (Local Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites).</i></p>

Aim	2016-2018 Action	Measure/Target	2015-16 Review
<p>1.3 contd A net gain in biodiversity will be sought when considering proposals for development by protecting, managing, enhancing and extending existing resources</p>		<p>TVERC to progress District Wildlife Sites (DWS) Project (ie establish clear DWS selection protocol/provide surveys of other sites)</p> <p>Wild Oxfordshire to facilitate the conclusion of the review/update of Conservation Target Areas</p>	<p>New target for 2016-18</p> <p>2015-16 target <i>TVERC to deliver District Wildlife Sites Project 2015 (sites identified in 2013 mapping project)</i></p> <p>2015-16 outcome <i>Final report and data received on 1 April 2016. Six sites were surveyed, one of which has secured funding due partly to the availability of survey information</i></p> <p><i>CTA review and update is ongoing. Proposals for minor amendments, extensions and new CTAs prepared but not yet approved..</i></p>
	<p>1.3.6 Provide information/training for officers, members and the Cherwell Local Strategic Partnership Board (LSP) on new and updated legislation, policy and issues relating to important sites, habitats and species</p>	<p>Promote internal training and provide information about relevant external training, co-ordinating attendance as and when required</p> <p>Provide legislative, policy and issue updates as and when required</p> <p>Update natural environment web pages and maintain as a source of biodiversity information</p>	<p><i>Ecology Officer attended IEEM course on biodiversity and buildings as well as 'The Role of Planning in the Future of Oxfordshire' event organised by Wild Oxfordshire in July. Summary of the latter was circulated to all planners. Two biodiversity related lunchtime seminars for planners scheduled for June and July 2016.</i></p> <p><i>Presentation about Council's engagement work with Local Enterprise Partnership (OXLEP) delivered to LSP Board by Oxfordshire County Council's Economic Development Strategy Officer</i></p> <p><i>Web pages updated throughout the year to include 2015/16 Corporate BAP, biodiversity partners' reports and swift project update – see www.cherwell.gov.uk/naturalenvironment</i></p>

Theme 2: Land and buildings management

There are various ways that the Council can influence the management of land and property for wildlife throughout the District.

Aim	2016-2018 Action	Measure/Target	2015-16 Review
2.1 Support environmental organisations that manage, or provide advice on the management of, land in the District	<p>2.1.1 Continue to fund the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and the Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT)</p> <p>2.1.2 Support conservation projects in the active Conservation Target Areas of the District – the Ray and Cherwell Valleys</p> <p>2.1.3 Support Network Rail's 'Net Biodiversity Positive' project relating to East West Rail</p>	<p>Organisations to provide a report twice a year to demonstrate delivery of land management/land management advice in accordance with funding agreements</p> <p>Promote relevant projects</p>	<p><i>Satisfactory interim and end of year reports received. Available to view on the Council's website</i> www.cherwell.gov.uk/naturalenvironment</p> <p><i>Funding support has been given to BBOWT led 'Wild Banbury' project based in Spiceball Park. Annual support of RSPB for its Upper Thames Wader Project.</i></p> <p>New action and target for 2016-18</p>
2.2 Support local groups/communities to fulfil their biodiversity obligations and to improve management of land and buildings for habitats and species	<p>2.2.1 Support local projects that involve land/building management for important habitats and species</p> <p>2.2.2 Support BBOWT with bat and bird box provision on local sites</p> <p>2.2.3 Investigate the potential for a water vole project based on the Oxford Canal through Kidlington</p>	<p>Support three local projects</p> <p>Provide bat/bird boxes for The Slade Nature Reserve in Bloxham and Warriner School Farm Wood</p> <p>Progress in partnership with BBOWT's Water Vole Project Officer, Canal & River Trust and Kidlington Parish Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Continuing support for Cherwell Swift Conservation Project</i> • <i>Advice given to Sibford Gower PC on community orchard and pond – TOE2 funding achieved</i> • <i>Advice given to The Slade Nature Reserve, Bloxham – TOE2 funding achieved</i> <p>New action and target for 2016-18</p> <p>New action and target for 2016-18</p> <p>2015-16 target <i>Support BBOWT & Woodland Trust with bat box project in Daeda's Wood, Deddington</i></p> <p>2015-16 outcome <i>16 bat boxes were donated to the project and erected in May 2015</i></p>

Aim	2016-2018 Action	Measure/Target	2015-16 Review
2.3 Secure improved management for habitats/ species as part of new build/refurbishment	2.3.1 Provide guidance on biodiversity and the built environment	Biodiversity guidance to be included in Sustainable Buildings in Cherwell Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)	<i>Work on this planning document will progress in 2016-18</i>

Theme 3: Council owned and managed land and buildings

The Council has specific responsibility for maintaining and enhancing biodiversity on its own estate and on sites that it manages.

Aim	2016-2018 Action	Measure/Target	2015-2016 Review
3.1 Secure improved management of parks and open spaces for habitats and species	3.1.1 Encourage protected and priority habitats and species at appropriate sites 3.1.2 Work in partnership with others to deliver biodiversity improvements associated with the development of Cherwell Country Park	Work in partnership with the Local Wildlife Sites Restoration project to improve Trow Pool Work in partnership with the Local Wildlife Sites Restoration project to improve Enslow Marsh Liaise with stakeholders with a view to protecting and enhancing biodiversity	New target for 2016-18 2015-16 target <i>Assess suitability of Trow Pool tower for provision of artificial nesting sites</i> 2015-16 outcome <i>Assessment of the tower at Trow Pool (owned by CDC and a designated Local Wildlife Site (LWS)) for provision of artificial nesting sites has been made. Structure not suitable due to access</i> <i>Some small scale management works involving clearance of sedge were undertaken in September 2015 involving the Oxford Conservation Volunteers and the Kidlington fire crew</i> <i>Surveys and two stakeholder workshops have informed emerging masterplan. Purchase of the northern field is still being negotiated with the Environment Agency</i>
3.2 Secure improved management of buildings and associated external environments for habitats and species	3.2.1 Encourage protected and priority species at appropriate sites	Monitor wildflower meadow at Bodicote House with a view to plantings at other sites if successful Cherwell Build team to include biodiversity protection and enhancement measures within its projects	<i>Bodicote House survey to be carried out in summer 2016. Wildflower meadow to be planted at the Dovecote site in Milcombe</i> <i>Eight projects completed overall which include provision for swifts/bats</i>

Theme 4: Green Infrastructure

- Green infrastructure comprises the network of accessible multifunctional green space in both rural and urban areas. Protecting and enhancing biodiversity is a key benefit resulting from the provision of high quality, connected open space.
- Nature conservation has traditionally focused on the protection of special sites such as SSSIs and Local Wildlife Sites. However, isolated reserves are unlikely to be able to sustain wildlife in the longterm and connectivity is crucial. Sites will need to be buffered, extended and linked if wildlife is to be able to adapt to climate change. Habitat fragmentation should be avoided as plants and animals need large, functional areas or networks which give them room to adapt, resilience to change and the opportunity to spread.
- Conservation Target Areas (CTAs) are an important component of the GI network in the Cherwell District. They include some of the most important areas for biodiversity and provide a focus for co-ordinated action.

Aim	2016-2018 Action	Measure/Target	2015-16 Review
4.1 Support the establishment and development of GI through implementation of relevant policies	4.1.1 Ensure new development meets local and qualitative standards of open space provision to form a multi-functional and resilient network	Progress GI work within the District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bicester GI project (led by the Oxford University Environmental Change Institute and in partnership with CDC's Bicester delivery team) is underway involving considerable work around the collation of baseline information</i> • <i>Work relating to aspects of the District's GI evidence base has been commissioned by Local Plan team and will be extended to inform the preparation of Local Plan documents and decisions on planning applications</i> • <i>The preparation of masterplans for Bicester, Banbury and Kidlington is taking GI considerations into account</i>
4.2 Support the establishment and development of ecological networks through delivery of the Conservation Target Area (CTA) project.	4.2.1 Continue to fund the environmental organisations that coordinate and deliver the CTA Project	Organisations to provide a report twice a year to demonstrate that they are working towards the development of ecological networks in accordance with funding agreements	<p><i>Satisfactory interim and end of year reports received from Wild Oxfordshire, RSPB and BBOWT. Available to view on the Council's website - www.cherwell.gov.uk/biodiversitypartners</i></p>
4.3 Support Oxfordshire partnership work relating to GI and strategic biodiversity issues	4.3.1 Work collaboratively to progress the County's Local Nature Partnership	Attend and contribute to partnership meetings	<p><i>New action and target for 2016-18</i></p> <p><i>2015-16 target</i> <i>Work in partnership to deliver a County GI Strategy</i></p> <p><i>2015-16 outcome</i> <i>County GI Strategy has not been progressed</i></p>

Theme 5: Health, Wellbeing, Economy and Education

- The value of the natural environment for the health and wellbeing of both people and the economy is well recognised. A Nature and Wellbeing Green paper, prepared by the Wildlife Trusts and RSPB, sets out the evidence showing how much people need nature for their mental and physical health; and how important natural capital is to the economy.
- Biodiversity conservation should not just be left to land managers and nature conservation organisations. It needs to involve many sectors of society and people in all walks of life. Public understanding and education are vital.
- BBOWT's recently published **Strategic Plan 2016-2021 Be part of nature's recovery** aims to embed nature into people's lives, giving them more natural green spaces to explore and discover their local wildlife.

Aim	2016-2018 Action	Measure/Target	2015-16 Review
5.1 Work in partnership with others to link action to improve the natural environment with social and economic priorities	5.1.1 Support and contribute to BBOWT's Strategic Plan 2016-2021	Support 'healthy for wildlife, healthy for people' initiatives at Meadow Farm near Bicester and other District sites	<i>New action and target for 2016-18</i>
	5.1.2 Provide replacement biodiversity information boards in Bure Park Local Nature Reserve in partnership with Bicester Green Gym and Bicester Town Council as part of Bicester Wayfinding Project	Information boards to be provided by March 2017	<i>New action and target for 2016-18</i> <i>2015-16 target</i> <i>Contribute to Wild Oxfordshire's work through support for the "Health and Natural Environment" strategic project</i> <i>2015-16 outcome</i> <i>Specific project not progressed by Wild Oxfordshire</i> <i>2015-16 action</i> <i>Facilitate involvement of appropriate Officers with the SEEIP (Strategic Environment & Economic Investment Plan)</i> <i>2015-16 outcome</i> <i>Engagement of CDC Officers resulted in approval of several funding bids as part of the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership's (OXLEP's) SEEIP including the proposed Cherwell Country Park</i>
5.2 Support and promote initiatives to encourage involvement in the natural environment and improve public understanding of biodiversity	5.2.1 Engage young people through promotion of conservation activities in/with schools and organised groups	Support Warriner School Farm to provide subsidised school and youth group visits	<i>At least 12 primary school and youth group biodiversity visits were supported as well as Forest School sessions at 9 primary schools</i>

Aim	2016-2018 Action	Measure/Target	2015-16 Review
	<p>5.2.2 Engage Parish Councils and interested groups/individuals through provision of information</p> <p>5.2.3 Produce publicity material</p>	<p>Promote Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment (TOE2's) grant funding for local projects and provide support where possible</p> <p>Maintain information on web pages and use website/Cherwell Link for promotion</p>	<p>New target for 2016-18</p> <p>2015-16 target Send 'Nature Conservation News' to all Parish Councils and local groups annually</p> <p>2015-16 outcome Not achieved in this way but TOE2 environmental project funding presentation at November Parish Liaison meeting</p> <p>Web pages updated regularly – Corporate BAP, biodiversity partners reports, annual swifts report. Autumn 2015 Cherwell Link – Daeda's Wood bat box project.</p>

How to contact us

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Call **01295 221707**
or visit [www.cherwell.gov.uk/
naturalenvironment](http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/naturalenvironment)

Community Services JB03417

The information in this document can be made available in other languages, large print braille, audio tape or electronic format on request. Please contact 01295 227001

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo uzyskać informacje w innym języku lub w innym formacie, prosimy dać nam znać. 01295 227001

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如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。01295 227001

اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے پوچھئے۔
01295 227001

Cherwell District Council

Executive

5 September 2016

<p style="text-align: center;">Neighbourhood Planning: Decision on whether to proceed to a Referendum for the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan</p>

Report of Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy

This report is public

Purpose of Report

The Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan has been examined by an independent examiner. The examiner has produced an Examiner's report and the Council as the Local Planning Authority is required to consider the report recommendations and determine whether the draft Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan incorporating the modifications set out at Appendix 1 to this report should proceed to a referendum and confirm the area covered by the referendum.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To approve all of the Examiner's recommendations and modifications to enable the Plan to proceed to a referendum;
- 1.2 To approve the modifications to the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with the Examiner's recommendations, to authorise the issue of a decision statement to that effect, and to approve the making of any minor presentational changes necessary to ready the Plan for referendum;
- 1.3 To approve the area for the referendum as recommended by the examiner to be the administrative boundary of Bloxham Parish (which is the approved designated neighbourhood area) and to note that there will be no extension to the area.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 Cherwell District Council received an area application (dated 10 January 2013) from Bloxham Parish Council to designate a Neighbourhood Area. Under Section 61G of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) Bloxham Parish Council is a 'relevant body' for the purpose of making the application. On the 3 June 2013 the Council's Executive designated the area proposed in the application which covers the whole of the Bloxham Parish administrative area. The designation was been publicised on Cherwell District Council's website in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations.
- 2.2 The Parish Council engaged with the local community in preparing its Plan and formal 'pre-submission' consultation took place between 10 January and 22 February 2015. Responses were received from some 140 individuals, organisations and other bodies.
- 2.3 In November 2015, the Parish Council submitted its Plan proposal to the Council. This was publicised from 27 November 2015 to Friday 22 January 2016 and representations invited. In February 2016 Council officers submitted the Neighbourhood Plan for independent examination supported by its associated evidence documents and the representations received.
- 2.4 The Council received the Examiner's report on 7 July 2016 which in summary recommends that the Neighbourhood Plan proceeds to referendum subject to modifications. The modifications recommended by the Examiner are incorporated into the draft Plan and shown in tracked changes at Appendix 1 to this report. The Examiner's report is at Appendix 2. Appendix 3 provides the Examiner's questions posed during the examination (which are also contained in the Examiner's Report) and the Council's responses to these questions. Also appended to this report are:
- The representations received to the Submission Plan (Appendix 4)
 - The Submission Plan Public Notice (Appendix 5)
 - The Submission Consultation Statement (Appendix 6)
 - The Submission Basic Conditions Statement (Appendix 7)
 - The Submission Sustainability Report (Appendix 8)
 - SEA Screening Statement (Appendix 9)
 - The Submission Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan 2015 – 2031 (Appendix 10)
- 2.5 Subject to the Executive's approval, the next main stage in producing the Neighbourhood Plan would be for it to be subject to a public referendum which would take place in the autumn of 2016 (date to be confirmed). Following the Executive meeting minor amendments would be made, including to page numbering and the contents page, to create a version of the Neighbourhood Plan for Referendum (with tracked changes accepted). If the Neighbourhood Plan is successful at referendum it can be then be 'made' (adopted) by this Council. When 'made' it will form part of the statutory Development Plan for the District.

3.0 Report Details

Submission

- 3.1 In February 2016 the Council sent the submitted Neighbourhood Plan and associated documents including the representations received to an appropriately qualified examiner appointed by the Council for examination.
- 3.2 The Submission documents and further information relating to the Neighbourhood Plan are available on the Cherwell District Council <http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning/index.cfm?articleid=10998> and Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan <http://bloxhamneighbourhoodplan.co.uk> websites.

Examination

- 3.3 Under the neighbourhood planning legislation introduced by the Localism Act 2011 the appointed examiner must:
- be independent of the Parish Council and Local Planning Authority
 - have no interest in any land that may be affected by the draft plan
 - have appropriate qualifications and experience.
- 3.4 Ann Skippers BSC (Hons) Dip Mgmt (Open) PGC (TLHE) (Open) MRTPI FRSA AoU was appointed by Cherwell District Council, with the consent of Bloxham Parish Council, to carry out the independent examination, through the Neighbourhood Planning Independent Examiner Referral Service (NPIERS).
- 3.5 When examining a Neighbourhood Plan, the examiner is required to consider a number of matters, which are set out in the Examiners report, including whether the Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions as set in the legislation (paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as applied to neighbourhood plans by section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004). Only a draft neighbourhood plan that meets each of a set of basic conditions can be put to a referendum and be made.
- 3.6 The examination was conducted by consideration of written representations. The examiner did not consider that a public hearing was necessary for the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan.
- 3.7 Under the legislation the examiner must make a report with recommendations, the reasons for them and a summary of findings. The report must recommend either:
- a. the draft Plan is submitted to referendum,
 - b. modifications specified in the Examiner's report are made to the draft Plan and the draft Plan as modified is submitted to referendum, or
 - c. the draft Plan is refused.
- 3.8 If a recommendation to proceed to a referendum is made it must also be accompanied by a recommendation as to whether the area for the referendum should go beyond the neighbourhood, and if so what the extended area should be.

Examiner's Report

- 3.9 The examiner has recommended that the draft Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan, with modifications, should proceed to a referendum. The Examiner's findings are presented in her report (Appendix 2).
- 3.10 The examiner is satisfied that the draft Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan subject to the recommended modifications would meet the basic conditions and all other requirements, including:
- having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the Neighbourhood Plan
 - the draft Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development
 - it is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area
 - it does not breach and is otherwise compatible with European Union obligations
 - the making of the Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European Site
 - the draft Plan is compatible with Convention rights
- 3.11 The examiner has not recommended that the referendum area should be extended beyond the neighbourhood plan area.
- 3.12 In reaching her decision the examiner made a number of observations some of which include:
- The Plan is well presented with the vision right at the start of the Plan.
 - Although recognising the need for growth and development, the Plan seeks to ensure that future growth is managed so that the unique attributes of the Parish and its character are respected and that infrastructure is provided appropriately.
 - It is clear that various and numerous efforts have been made to engage the community and that these efforts have taken place over a long period of time.
 - The Basic Conditions Statement sets out how the Plan has responded to national policy and guidance, focusing on the core principles of the NPPF. The BCS encourages readers to read any references to the "Adopted Plan (1996)" as "the Past Plan (1996)". This is not correct as the saved and retained policies of the LP 1996 still form part of the development plan and references in the Plan should be changed.
 - The Basic Conditions Statement also includes a section detailing how the Plan contributes to sustainable development.
 - A Sustainability Report has been produced and rightly confirms on the front cover that it is not a Sustainability Appraisal (SA). It demonstrates that the Parish Council has kept sustainability issues in mind all the way through the evolution of the Plan.

- Cherwell District Council issued a screening opinion on 9 September 2015 which confirmed that the Plan is unlikely to result in significant environmental effects.
- There is nothing in the Plan that leads the examiner to conclude there is any breach of the Convention or that the Plan is otherwise incompatible with it.

Proposed Modifications

- 3.13 Modifications are proposed to a number of the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. In broad terms these modifications are recommended to ensure the Plan meets the legal requirements, the NPPF requirements are followed, the Plan is clear, consistent and accurate. Recommended modifications are intended to ensure conformity with the strategic policies of the Cherwell Local Plan. Public involvement and representations have been considered. All proposed modifications are shown at Appendix 1.
- 3.14 Under the legislation in relation to the draft Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan the Planning Authority can decide:
- (a) to decline to consider a plan proposal under paragraph 5 of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act (as applied by section 38A of the 2004 Act);
 - (b) to refuse a plan proposal under paragraph 6 of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act (as applied by section 38A of the 2004 Act);
 - (c) what action to take in response to the recommendations of an examiner made in a report under paragraph 10 of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act (as applied by section 38A of the 2004 Act) in relation to a neighbourhood development plan;
 - (d) what modifications, if any, they are to make to the draft plan under paragraph 12(6) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act (as applied by section 38A of the 2004 Act);
 - (e) whether to extend the area to which the referendum is (or referendums are) to take place;
- or
- (f) that they are not satisfied with the plan proposal under paragraph 12(10) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act (as applied by section 38A of the 2004 Act).
- 3.15 The Council must consider the examiner's recommendations and the reasons and determine its response. The modifications that the authority may make include:
- (a) modifications that the authority consider need to be made to secure that the draft Plan meets the basic conditions
 - (b) modifications that the authority consider need to be made to secure that the draft Plan is compatible with the Convention rights
 - (c) modifications that the authority consider need to be made to comply with the definition of an NDP and the provisions that can be made by a NDP
 - (d) modifications for the purpose of correcting errors.
- 3.16 If the Council is satisfied that the draft Plan meets the basic conditions and other legislative requirements or would do so if modifications were made a referendum must be held. If the authority considers it appropriate to do so, they may extend the area in which the referendum is to take place to include other areas (whether or not those areas fall wholly or partly outside the authority's area).

- 3.17 It should be noted that under the legislation where a Local Planning Authority proposes to make a decision that differs from the Examiner's recommendation then there would need to be further public consultation and the issues can be referred to independent examination.
- 3.18 The Parish Council can withdraw the Neighbourhood Plan but have not indicated this. The Parish Council have been sent a copy of the examiner's report, have seen the modifications proposed to the Neighbourhood Plan at Appendix 1 to this report, and are aware of the Executive agenda and meeting.
- 3.19 Subject to endorsement of the recommendations by the Executive the next step is to produce a 'Regulation 18 decision statement' in accordance with the Regulations. This would be published along with the examiner's report on the District Council's website.

Referendum

- 3.20 The referendum must be undertaken in accordance with legislation. This stage requires a timetable to be drawn up for the referendum and the publication of an information statement with a requirement to publish and to give at least 28 days' notice of the Referendum. This information and documents will also need to be made available on the Council's website and at locations in Bloxham.
- 3.21 The information statement prepared by the Council must include the following information:
- a) that a referendum will be held
 - b) the date of the referendum
 - c) the question to be asked
 - d) a map of the referendum area, (which in Bloxham's case will be the neighbourhood plan area as designated and recommended by the examiner)
 - e) a description of those entitled to vote in each referendum
 - f) the referendum expenses limit applicable and the number of people identified as entitled to vote on which the limit was calculated
 - g) that the referendum will be conducted in accordance with procedures similar to those for local government elections, and
 - h) the address and times at which a copy of the specified documents can be inspected.
- 3.22 The referendum question, as set out in the Regulations, will be:
- 'Do you want Cherwell District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Bloxham to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?'*
- 3.23 Should more than half of the people who vote in the referendum vote in support of the question then the Executive would need to ratify the Neighbourhood Plan before it is made and publish this on their website. Once the Plan is ratified by the LPA it would then form part of the Cherwell District Council's Development Plan.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan as recommended for modification by the Examiner meets the necessary legal and procedural requirements. The Bloxham Neighbourhood plan as recommended for modification by the Examiner and shown at Appendix 1 to this report should therefore proceed to a referendum.

5.0 Consultation

- 5.1 Councillor Colin Clarke, Lead Member for Planning.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected. Reasons are set out below:

Option One - Not to approve some of the Examiner's recommendations and to proceed to a referendum. Where a LPA proposes to make a decision that differs from the Examiner's recommendation then there would need to be further consultation. This would take more time and would have cost implications.

Option Two - Not to accept the Examiner's recommendations and not to proceed to a referendum. This option can only be justified if the Examiner recommends that the Plan should not proceed to a referendum, or the Council is not satisfied that the plan has met the procedural and legal requirements.

Option Three - To extend the area in which the referendum is to take place. The Neighbourhood Plan has been produced with public involvement for the area designated.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 The costs of appointing the Examiner, undertaking the examination and the holding of the referendum are the responsibility of Cherwell District Council.
- 7.2 There have been costs associated with the preparation for and the undertaking of the examination mainly the examiner's fees and staff resources, which have been met from the CDC Planning Policy budget. The decision not to hold a hearing contributed to lower costs.
- 7.3 The preparation for and the undertaking of the referendum will require a significant amount of officer time from Planning Policy and the Democratic Elections team.
- 7.4 The elections team have estimated that the cost for the referendum will be approximately £3,000 in Bloxham. The team will have to create brand new templates for every document poll cards (ordinary, postal and proxy), envelopes, postal packs etc.
- 7.5 However, as the Plan has been successful at examination the Council qualifies to claim the third phased payment of £20,000 from the DCLG Neighbourhood Planning

Grant. This is to cover costs of the examination and any other further steps that may be needed for the neighbourhood plan to come into legal force, including the referendum.

Comments checked by:

Paul Sutton, Chief Finance Officer, 0300-003-0106
Paul.Sutton@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Legal Implications

- 7.6 When completed ('made') the Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the statutory Development Plan for Cherwell District Council.
- 7.7 The Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended).

Comments checked by:

Nigel Bell, Team Leader – Planning & Litigation, Law and Governance, 01295 221687
Nigel.Bell@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Risk Management

- 7.8 There is a risk that the Plan may fail to achieve the 50% support required at the referendum. However the Plan has had strong community support and this risk is considered to be relatively low.
- 7.9 There is a risk that the Plan will be subject to Legal Challenge meaning the referendum would need to be cancelled after notification has been provided that a Referendum will take place.

Comments checked by:

Nigel Bell, Team Leader – Planning & Litigation, Law and Governance, 01295 221687
Nigel.Bell@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

8.0 Decision Information

Key decision - No

Financial Threshold Met - No

Community Impact Threshold Met - No

Wards Affected – Bloxham and Bodicote

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

- Accessible, Value for Money Council
- District of Opportunity

- Safe and Healthy
- Cleaner Greener

Lead Councillor
Councillor Colin Clarke - Lead Member for Planning

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Draft Neighbourhood Plan with modifications
Appendix 2	Examiners Report
Appendix 3	Examiners questions and Council's responses
Appendix 4	The representations received to the Submission Plan
Appendix 5	The Submission public notice
Appendix 6	The Submission Consultation Statement
Appendix 7	The Submission Basic Conditions Statement
Appendix 8	The Submission Sustainability Appraisal
Appendix 9	SEA Screening Statement
Appendix 10	Submission Neighbourhood Plan
Background Papers	
None	
Report Authors	Chris Thom, Principal Planning Officer
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Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan 2015 – 2031



~~This should be read in conjunction with the
Separate Appendix 1 – The BNDP Sustainability Report~~

~~Submission Version
19th Nov 2015~~



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.

Table of Contents

A. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOR BLOXHAM	4
1. FOREWORD	4
1.1 How Bloxham's Neighbourhood Plan fits into the Planning Process	4
1.2 Meeting Basic Conditions	5
1.3 The Sustainability Report	5
2. OUR BLOXHAM	5
2.1 The Parish	6
2.2 Locality and Connections	6
2.3 The Demographic Context	7
2.4 Historical Context	8
2.5 The Education Context	11
2.6 The Village Economy	12
3. OUR VOICE	13
3.1 The consultation process	13
3.2 Issues Raised by Residents	15
4. A VISION FOR BLOXHAM	16
5. THEMES AND OBJECTIVES	16
5.1 Themes	16
5.2 Objectives	17
6. POLICIES	18
Theme 1 Deliver the houses the Village needs	18
POLICIES ON SUSTAINABLE HOUSING AND SIZE OF DEVELOPMENTS	22
POLICY ON CONNECTIVITY	24
POLICIES ON PARKING	24
POLICIES ON ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE	26
POLICY ON HOUSING THAT ADAPTS TO DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE	28
POLICY ON REGARD FOR THE AMENITY OF EXISTING RESIDENTS	29
Theme 2 Protect and enhance our rural heritage	30
POLICY ON THE CONSERVATION AREA	31
POLICY ON CONTRIBUTING TO THE RURAL CHARACTER OF THE VILLAGE	33
POLICY ON THE IMPORTANCE OF SPACE AND KEY STREET SCENES AND VIEWS	40
Theme 3 Promote Economic Vitality	42
POLICY TO PROTECT EMPLOYMENT LAND	42
POLICY TO ENCOURAGE START-UP AND SMALL BUSINESS EXPANSION	43
POLICY TO ENCOURAGE IMPROVED DIGITAL COMMUNICATION	44
POLICY TO ADDRESS EMERGING NEED FOR ADDITIONAL RETAIL	45
Theme 4 Ensure a safe, healthy, cohesive community	46
POLICY TO PROTECT IMPORTANT RECREATION SPACES	50
POLICIES ON PROVIDING A BETTER RANGE OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES	51
7. BLOXHAM PROJECTS	52
8. MONITORING AND DELIVERY	52
9. THE EVIDENCE BASE	53
APPENDICES	55
APPENDIX 1 THE BNDP SUSTAINABILITY REPORT	55
APPENDIX 2 THE CONSERVATION AREA	55
APPENDIX 3 THE PLAN-MAKING PROCESS	56
APPENDIX 4 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT	57

Table of Contents

A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOR BLOXHAM	1
1. FOREWORD	1
1.1 How Bloxham's Neighbourhood Plan fits into the Planning Process	1
1.2 Meeting Basic Conditions.....	2
1.3 The Sustainability Report	2
2. OUR BLOXHAM	2
2.1 The Parish.....	3
2.2 Locality and Connections	3
2.3 The Demographic Context.....	4
2.4 Historical Context.....	5
2.5 The Education Context	8
2.6 The Village Economy	9
3. OUR VOICE	10
3.1 The consultation process.....	10
3.2 Issues Raised by Residents	13
4. A VISION FOR BLOXHAM	14
5. THEMES AND OBJECTIVES	14
5.1 Themes.....	14
5.2 Objectives.....	14
6. POLICIES	15
Theme 1 Deliver the houses the Village needs	15
POLICIES ON SUSTAINABLE HOUSING AND SIZE OF DEVELOPMENTS	22
POLICY ON CONNECTIVITY.....	25
POLICIES ON PARKING.....	26
POLICIES ON ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE	27
POLICY ON HOUSING THAT ADAPTS TO DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE.....	28
POLICY ON REGARD FOR THE AMENITY OF EXISTING RESIDENTS.....	32
Theme 2 Protect and enhance our rural heritage	33
POLICY ON THE CONSERVATION AREA	34
POLICY ON CONTRIBUTING TO THE RURAL CHARACTER OF THE VILLAGE	37
POLICY ON THE IMPORTANCE OF SPACE AND KEY STREET SCENES AND VIEWS.....	38
Theme 3 Promote Economic Vitality	48
POLICY TO PROTECT EMPLOYMENT LAND	48
POLICY TO ENCOURAGE START-UP AND SMALL BUSINESS EXPANSION.....	49
POLICY TO ENCOURAGE IMPROVED DIGITAL COMMUNICATION.....	50
POLICY TO ADDRESS EMERGING NEED FOR ADDITIONAL RETAIL.....	51
Theme 4 Ensure a safe, healthy, cohesive community	52
POLICY TO PROTECT IMPORTANT RECREATION SPACES	52
POLICIES ON PROVIDING A BETTER RANGE OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES.....	57
7. BLOXHAM PROJECTS	59
8. MONITORING AND DELIVERY	60
9. THE EVIDENCE BASE	61
APPENDICES	63
APPENDIX 1 THE BNDP SUSTAINABILITY REPORT	63
APPENDIX 2 THE CONSERVATION AREA	63
APPENDIX 3 THE PLAN-MAKING PROCESS	64
APPENDIX 4 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT	65

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 build upon recent unplanned development in a manner that respects our rural heritage and which is measured, timely and sustainable.~~ 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 ~~it will be~~ subject to independent examination and an final edition produced that incorporates the modifications required by the Examiner.
6. It will then be 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

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
- [generally conforming with strategic local policy 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

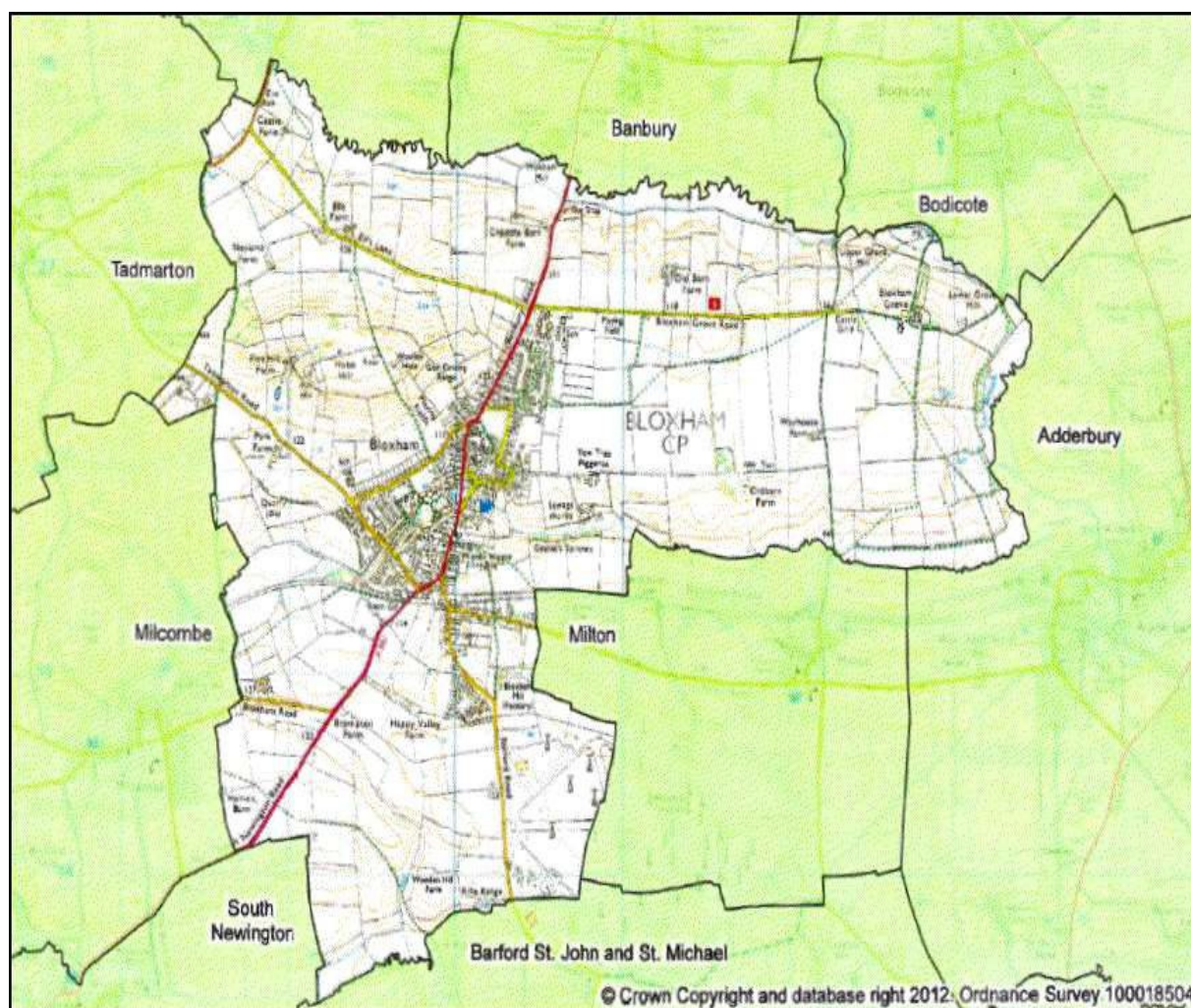
~~This Plan should be read alongside the Bloxham Neighbourhood Development plan (BNDP) Sustainability Report as this document greatly clarifies the context of the policies herein.~~ [We have produced a Sustainability Report which sets out further contextual information about the policies in the Plan and forms part of the evidence base for it.](#) The report is available ~~from the BNDP website~~ at <http://bloxhamneighbourhoodplan.co.uk/submission-of-publication-version-of-the-plan/>

2. Our Bloxham

On 3rd 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, [Part 2, S. 5\(1\)](#).

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'¹ categorises as 'low density rural.' ~~The general area was classified in Cherwell District Council's past adopted Local Plan (1996)² as an area of 'high landscape value.' This is not a saved policy and the recently Adopted Plan (2015) no longer uses this term but~~ Policy ESD13 of the Adopted Plan (2015) ~~seeks retains concern~~ 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.³

¹ [Manual for Streets-Evidence and Research](#)

² [The Adopted Cherwell Local Plan \(1996\)](#)

³ [Sustrans Report – Walking and cycling in Bloxham \(2015\)](#)

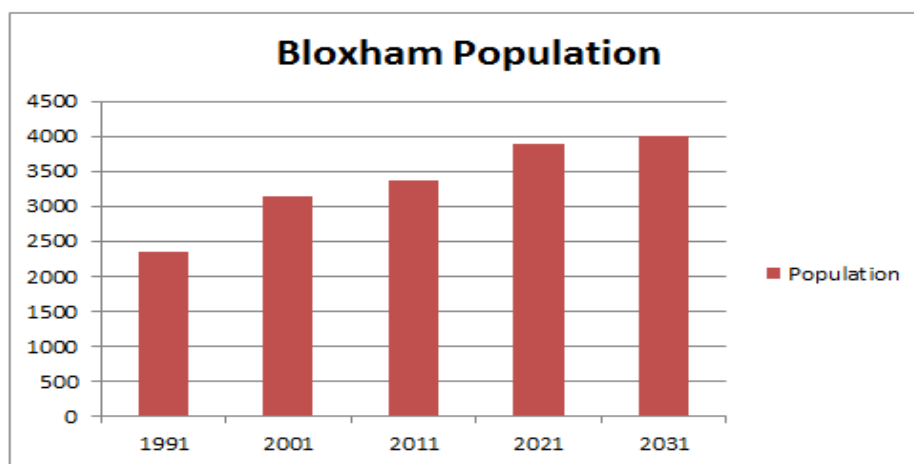
The local Banbury to Chipping Norton bus service provides the public transport link between these two urban centres and stops at Bloxham en route. Work destinations beyond Banbury include Oxford, Stratford, Coventry, Birmingham and London. There is a generally good rail service from Banbury to these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

2.3 The Demographic Context

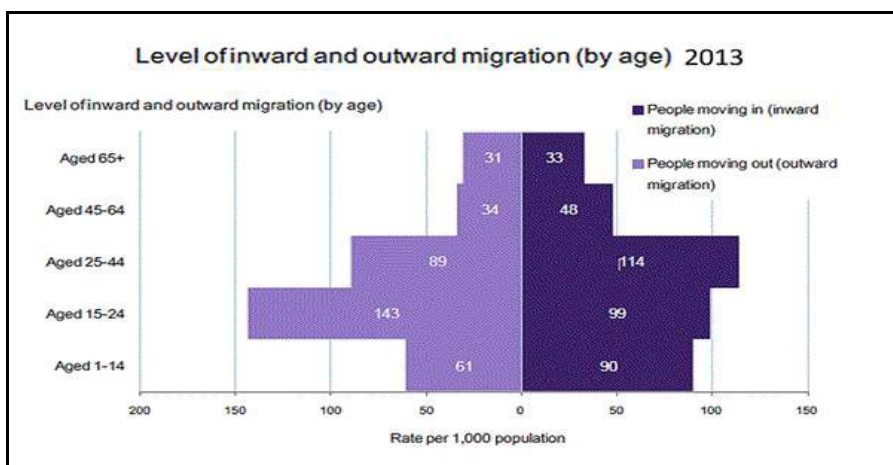
Population: Bloxham is a village where the population⁴ remained broadly unchanged between 1801 and 1961 since when it has grown at a significant rate.

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

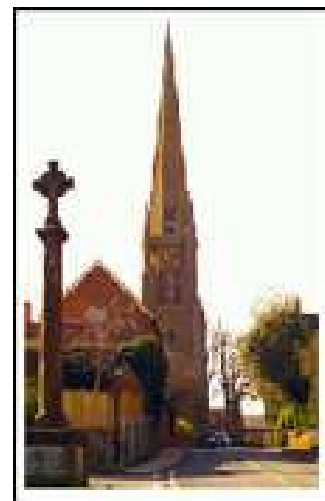
⁴ [A vision of Britain through time - Bloxham](#)

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 British⁵ 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

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 Jenkins⁶ 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.

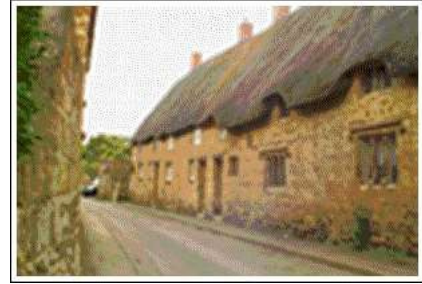


Since earliest times the village was based upon agriculture. Corn grew well and the good grasslands and plentiful water supply allowed successful sheep rearing contributing to the above-mentioned prosperity. In the 1950s there were still 13 working farms employing much of a largely self-sustaining village 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.

⁵ ONS Neighbourhood Statistic - National Identity - Bloxham

⁶ [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 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.

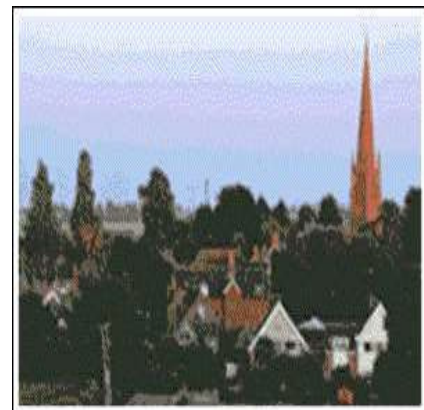


The mid-19th century saw the foundation of Bloxham School: a public school, which became a major landowner and significant employer within the village. The main school buildings still impart a striking visual impact that plays a significant role in defining the 'sense of place' of Bloxham.

Creation of the A361 around 1820 led to loss of the village green and the protection of the few remaining 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-19th 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.



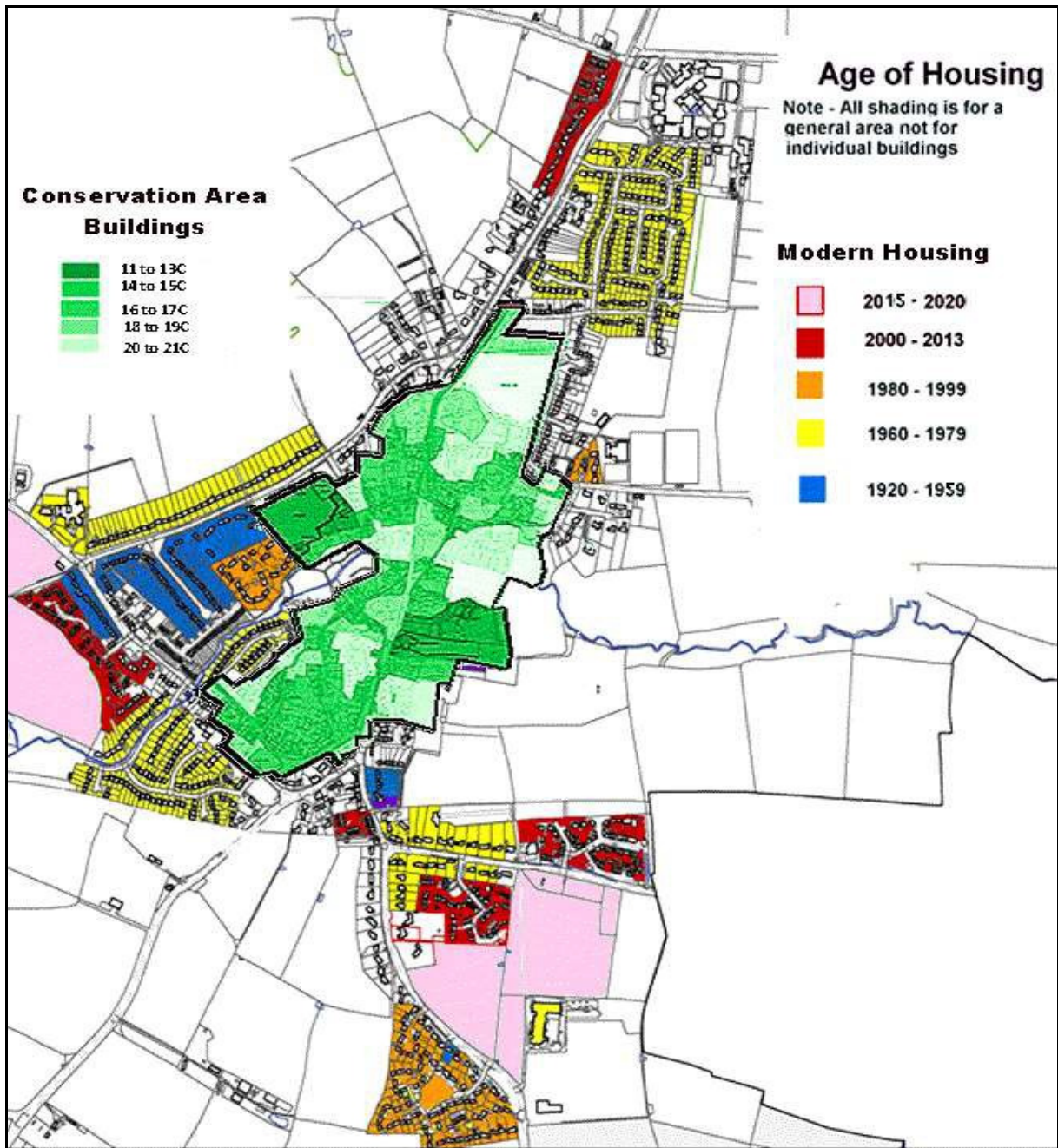
Despite on-going expansion, it remains a largely cohesive community with a 'rural sense of place' the preservation of which features highly in this plan.





Bloxham had little growth until the late 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.

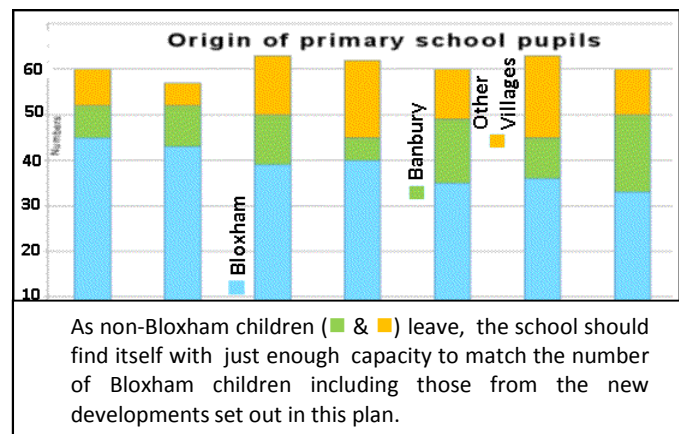


Since 2000, Bloxham has seen extensive development mainly at its southern end with house builders gaining permissions for more than 450 homes. These developments exhibit a variety of styles and a recurrent theme of this Plan is the avoidance of cumulative urbanisation that fails properly to respect our 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. ~~over the coming 4 to 5 years whilst new catchment areas take effect and out of catchment children are progressively replaced by the children of residents.~~



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. ~~At the time of writing, Oxfordshire see a likely need for expansion but have no definitive plans available.~~ A Feasibility assessment is underway into expanding

[the school.](#)

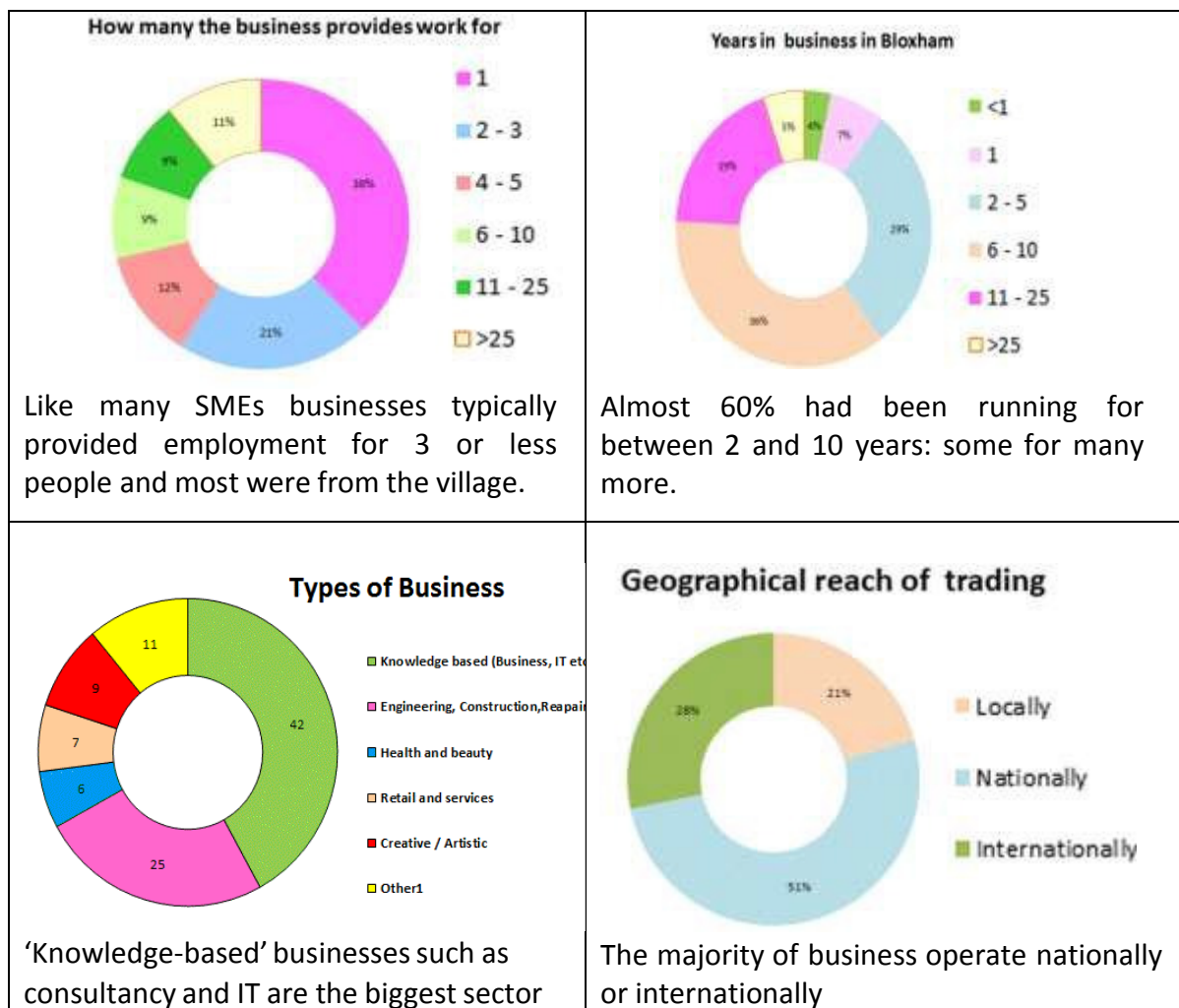
2.5.3 Bloxham School

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.⁷
- 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

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

⁷ [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.

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.

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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%) ⁸
2. NP Business Questionnaire	Jan 2014	76 (31%) ⁹
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.

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.

⁸ Main Questionnaire based on delivery to 1340 houses in 2014. Parish Plan based on 1196 houses in 2009.

⁹ Based on estimate of 250 Bloxham businesses

3.2 Issues Raised by Residents

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

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

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 within the conservation area should protect and enhance this area and fully accord with the Conservation Area document. <u>All developments in the Conservation Area should protect or enhance its character or appearance and take account of the latest Conservation Area Appraisal.</u>
	B. Development outside of the conservation area should protect, enhance and contribute to the rural character of the village as a whole.
	C. Developments should recognise that lower density and the role played by public and private open space are significant components of rural character. 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.
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

There are five elements to policies in this area:

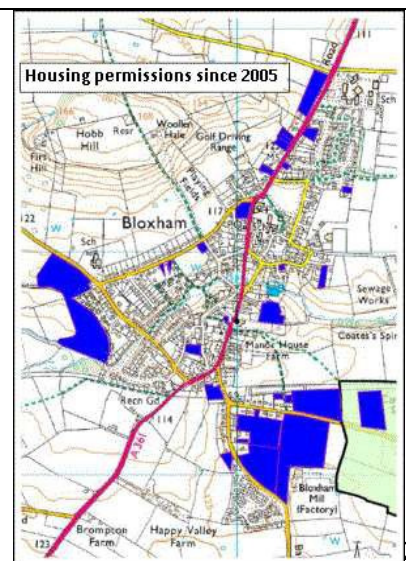
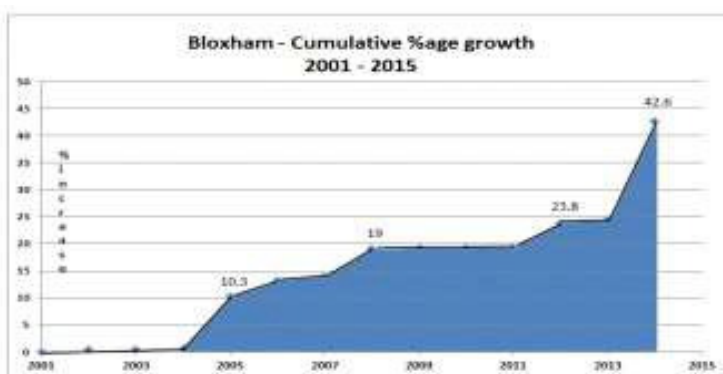
- A. Housing Need and sustainability
- B. Developments that enhance village connectivity and have minimal impact upon village traffic congestion
- C. Homes that adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change

- 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 centres¹⁰.
- 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 (highlighted blue.)



¹⁰ 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:

~~Decisions before March 2014 do not count towards the Adopted Local Plan (2015) housing projections of 750 allocated and 754 projected dwellings.~~

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 infrastructure¹¹.



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.

¹¹ 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 country¹² 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.)

~~In total Bloxham will accommodate at least 220 new dwellings during the period of this plan although 135 of these are from permissions too early to contribute towards the 750 allocated and 754 projected dwellings projected in the adopted Local Plan (2015.)~~

During the creation of this Plan three major developments highlighted in the table on page 19 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.

¹² [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 dwellings¹³ (Policy BL1) plus additional sustainable development by infill, conversion and minor development (Policy BL2) will be seen as in conformity with the NPPF and with the adopted Local Plan (2015). A significant aim of this NDP is to ensure that in future years Bloxham can truly be said to be a sustainable village.~~

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

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| ✓ NPPF | Para 7 ...by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure. |
| | Para 72 - The Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs... |
| ✓ Adopted Local Plan (2015) | Policy Villages 1 (C261 ->) sets out the types of development that may be accommodated in rural villages: <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Minor development: less than 10 dwellings;ii. Infill: development of a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage;iii. Conversions: the conversion of either residential or non-residential buildings. |

¹¹ See BNDP Sustainability Report

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.

Policy Villages 2 (C272 ->) seeks to allocate sites for 10 or more dwellings to create a further 750 dwellings in the more sustainable (category A and B) rural areas including Kidlington.

Policy INF 1 (D11) states infrastructure should be provided as an integral part of development.

Para A9 states - We will ensure people have convenient access to health, education & open space.

✓ 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 **in-village** primary school capacity to development proposals.

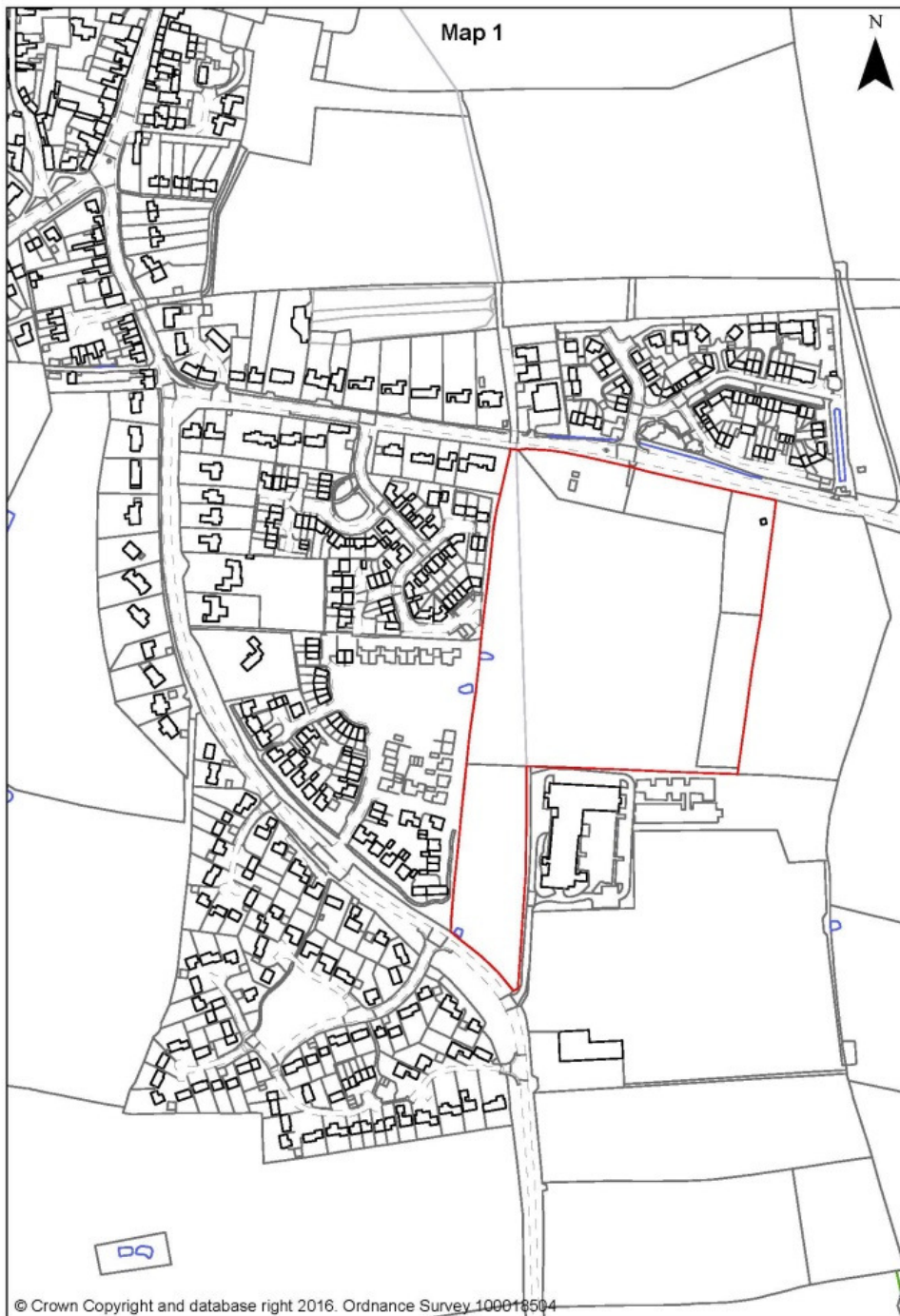
✓ Community Support

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 ~~Detailed proposals (and / or reserved matters) will be supported for the development approved in outline of up to 85 houses to the south of Milton Road where such proposals comply with the detailed policies of this Plan.~~

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.



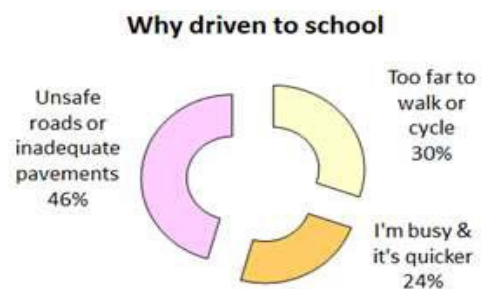
BL2 a. In addition to the major development set out in Policy BL1 the following sustainable development will also be permitted: conversion, infilling and minor development within the existing built up limits provided that:

a. ~~Such~~ additional developments are small in scale typically, but not exclusively, five dwellings or fewer.

~~b. All such development proposals during the plan period will be expected to show proper regard for the policies that follow with policy BL9d (in village primary school places) being considered especially important by the local community.~~

B. Village connectivity and parking

Residents have repeatedly highlighted¹⁴ 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 2016th) decision by Oxfordshire County Council cabinet members to scrap all subsidised bus routes.¹⁵

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.

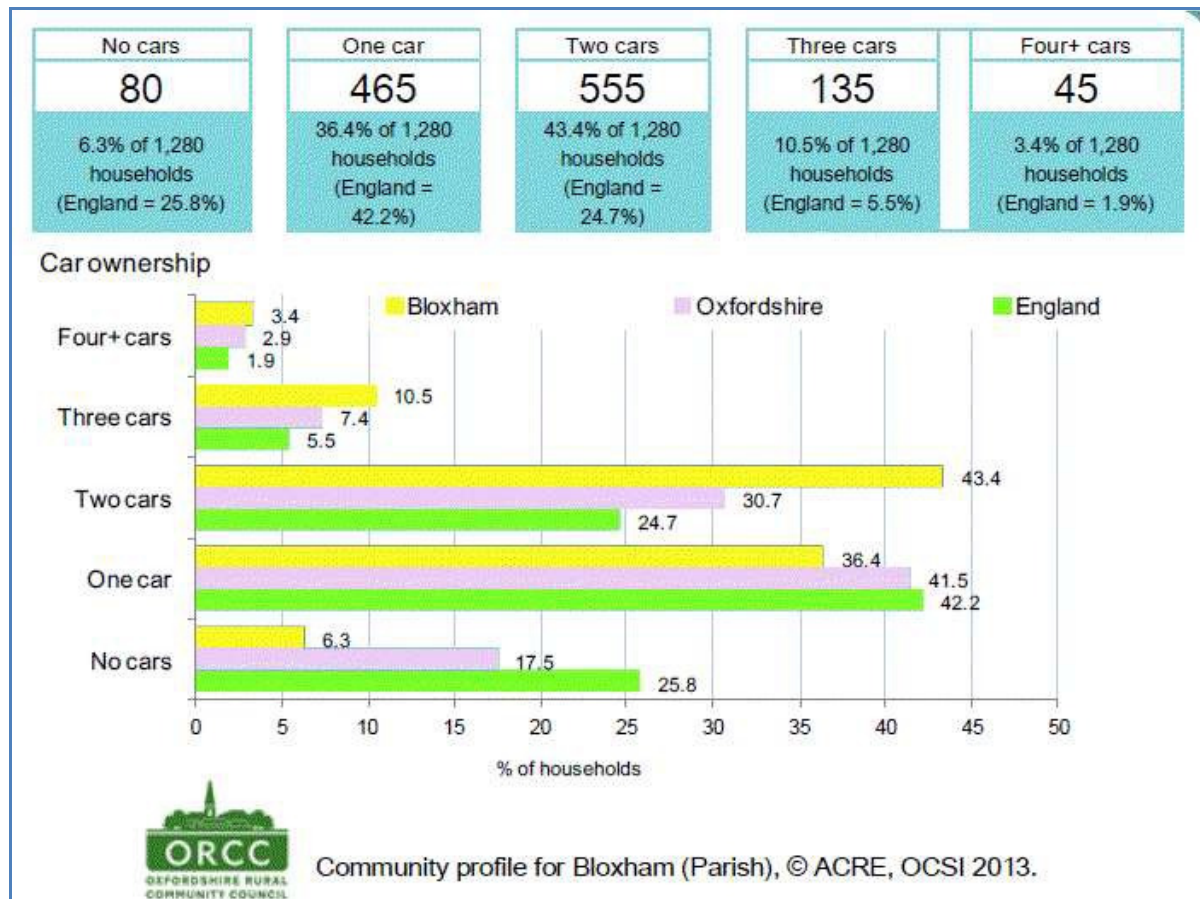
There is extensive data upon levels of car ownership in Bloxham and all point to the proportion of households with multiple vehicles being around twice the Cherwell and UK average.¹⁶

¹⁴ [See BNDP Main Questionnaire results](#)

¹⁵ [Oxon CC cuts to transport funding – Banbury Guardian 15th May 2015](#)

¹⁶ [See BNDP Main questionnaire or BNDP infrastructure and business report for detailed evidence.](#)

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.¹⁷ This plan seeks that new developments offer on-plot parking that is commensurate with the evidenced levels of car ownership¹⁸ rather than the more general Oxon. C.C. parking standards which are, according to the OCC consultation response, only advisory¹⁹.



¹⁷ [Planning update – March 2015: parking](#)

¹⁸ [ORCC Rural community profile for Bloxham](#)

¹⁹ [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 ~~All new housing development shall comply with the following requirements with regard to parking:~~

~~a. Each new home with one or two bedrooms will have a minimum of one car space on its plot along with further nearby shared visitor parking of at least 0.5 spaces per dwelling.~~

~~b. Each new home with three bedrooms will have a minimum of two car spaces on its plot.~~

~~c. Each new home with more than three bedrooms will have a minimum of two car spaces on its plot along with nearby shared parking at a rate of at least 0.5 spaces for each additional bedroom beyond the third.~~

~~d. Where garages are provided they should be in direct physical association~~

~~with the houses whose inhabitants may be expected to use them and spacious enough to accommodate modern cars.~~

~~e. Where on-plot parking spaces are specified in a, to c, the use of parking courts will not be considered an acceptable alternative.~~

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 Planning applications seeking modifications or extensions to an existing dwelling that would reduce parking space to below the levels set out in BL4 will not be supported.~~

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 runoff²⁰. 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!

²⁰ [BNDP Infrastructure and Business Report - Flooding](#)

²¹ See [infrastructure and business report](#) also see both [residents and business questionnaires](#).

²² [Next steps to zero carbon h](#)

There is a history of poor resilience of the electricity supply²¹ 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.²² 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.

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 All new housing development, irrespective of size, shall:

- ~~a. Be avoided in areas with a history of either fluvial or run-off flooding where less vulnerable alternatives are available;~~
- ~~b. Be subject to site specific flood risk assessment, adopt the principles of sustainable drainage and comply with Policy BL9~~
- ~~c. Where pumped drainage is employed, incorporate design features that demonstrate property flooding will not occur in the event of temporary failure of the mains electricity supply.~~

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.

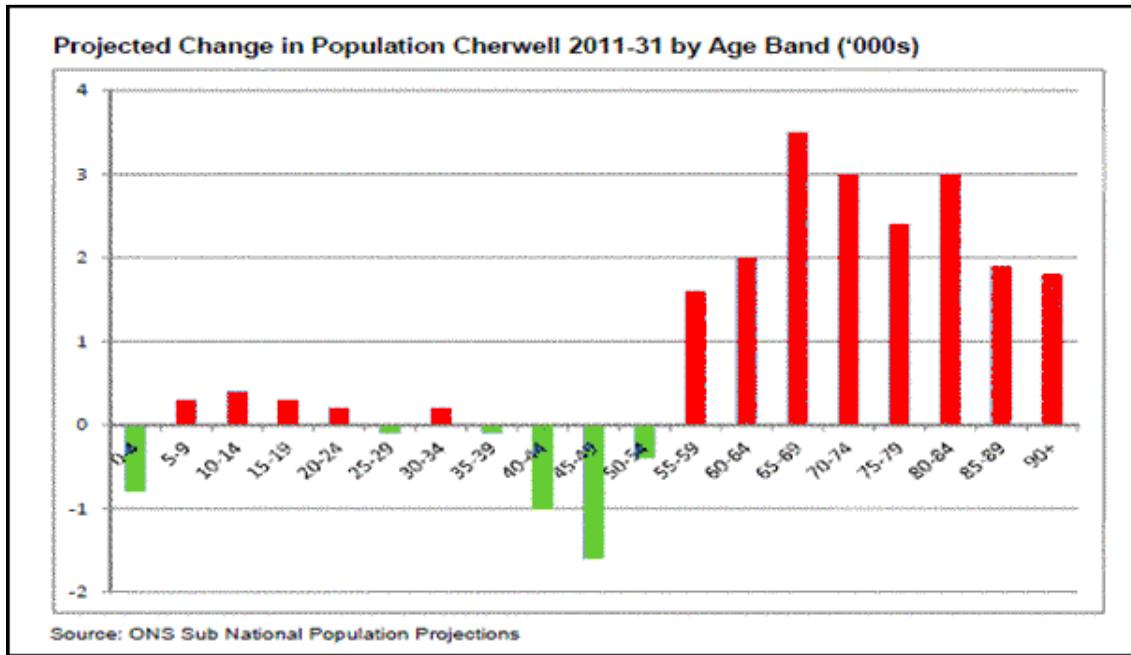
The use of sustainable urban drainage systems will be encouraged where appropriate.

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.²³ 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.²⁴

²³ [See BNDP Housing & Landscape Report: The Ageing Population](#)

²⁴ [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.²⁵ 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;
- ~~IV. There are sixteen areas set out in the Lifetime Homes standards²⁶. We seek to draw upon just three of these: parking, access and personal hygiene facilities.~~

We consider these policies consistent with the following:

✓ NPPF

Para 50 Plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic Trends.
 Para 159 Meet household and population projections, taking account of migration and demographic change

²⁵ [Page 35 Strategic Housing Market Assessment review and update 2012](#)

²⁶ [Lifetime Homes Standards](#)

<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>	<p>The proposed Optional “Access and use of Buildings” criteria for Accessible and Adaptable dwellings offer much of what we seek in BL8</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 storeys including any roof accommodation; and
- d. ~~Meet the Lifetime Homes standards (or its successors) being accessible and adaptable dwellings in respect of:~~
 - i. ~~The distance from the car parking space to the dwelling being kept to a minimum and being on the plot;~~
 - ii. ~~Being built to a wheelchair adaptable level, enabling full fit out to be carried out easily, where and when necessary;~~
 - iii. ~~Being designed with entrance level WC and shower drainage such that some one could 'live' on the ground floor; and~~
 - iv. ~~Ensuring WC and bathroom walls are capable of firm fixing for grab rails.~~

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. ~~Avoid impinging upon the amenity of nearby residents in terms of noise or light pollution, privacy or access to daylight;~~ Ensure that the living conditions of neighbouring residents are not materially harmed
- b. ~~Demonstrate that there is adequate wastewater and water supply capacity both on and off the site to serve the development and that it would not lead to problems for existing or new users;~~ 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. ~~Minimise impacts of additional traffic especially, but not exclusively, for infill or live-work developments; and~~ 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. ~~Demonstrate that there is capacity to educate primary aged children within the village and that proposed development will not lead to lack of school places for families of residents.~~ 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

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)²⁷ 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 Data²⁸ offers more detail of listed assets.

We consider these policies consistent with the following:

- | | |
|--------|--|
| ✓ NPPF | Foreword: Our historic environment – buildings, landscapes, towns and villages –can better be cherished if their spirit of place thrives, rather than withers
Para 7 Contributing to, protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.

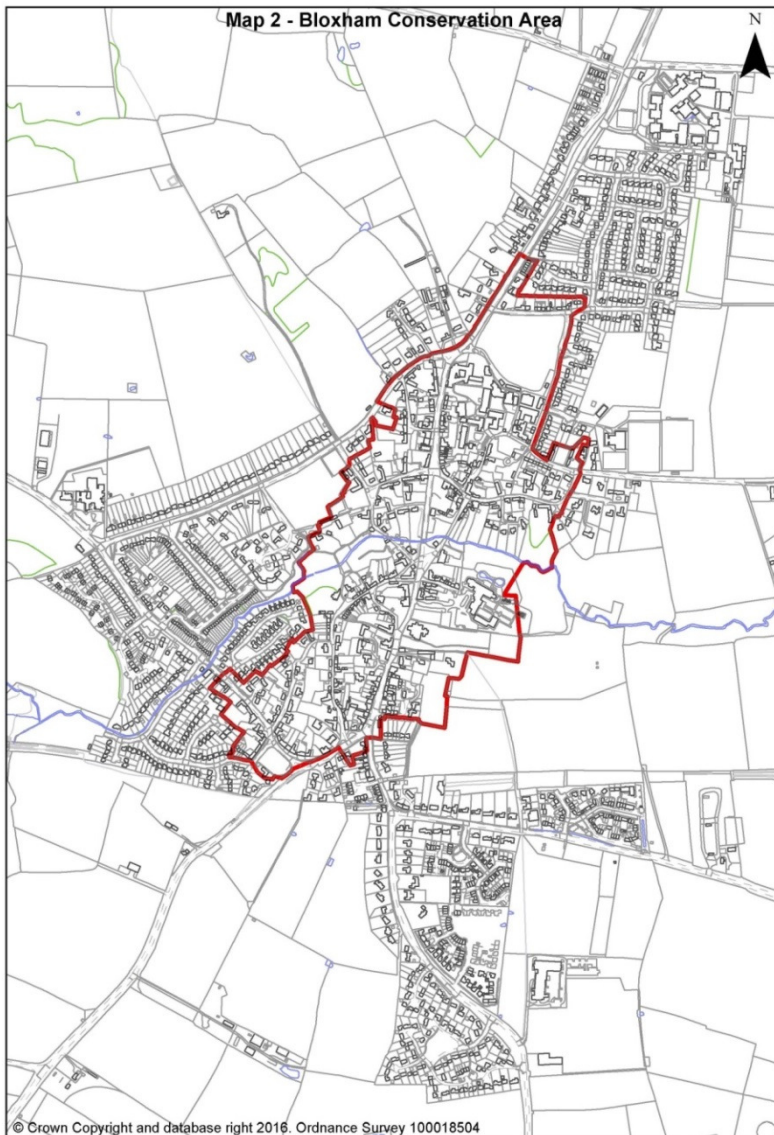
Para 17 Take account of the different roles and character of different areas |
|--------|--|

²⁷ [Policy statement on the conservation area](#)

²⁸ [BNDP Archaeological and Heritage Data](#)

- ✓ ~~Past Local Plan (1996)~~ ~~C27 Respect historic settlements—Particular attention will be paid within the existing and proposed conservation areas where the character of the settlement is particularly sensitive to change.~~
- ✓ 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	<p>Development shall be permitted within the Conservation Area (shown on Map 2)as identified in Cherwell D.C. Bloxham Conservation Area Appraisal (2007) where if it can demonstrate that it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Preserves or enhances the character and or appearance of the area; b. Takes account of the Conservation Area Appraisal (2007) or any successor documents; Shows compliance with guidance given in the Conservation Area Appraisal; and c. Preserves important open spaces, important gaps in the built form and significant views into and out of the area. <p>Where these criteria are not met planning permission will not be granted.</p>



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 Summary²⁹ 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.

²⁹ [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	Para 17 Planning must be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives. Para 57 Inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces. Para 59 Guiding new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally.
✓ Past Local Plan (1996)	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.
✓ Adopted Local Plan(2015)	A9 We will cherish protect and enhance our distinctive natural and built environment and our rich historic heritage.

✓ Community Support

98.3% think developments should preserve the rural feel of Bloxham.

Less than 10% think modern 3-storey 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 not exceed 30 dwellings per hectare;~~ 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 or create new public open space to help maintain rural character;~~ 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. both recognises the generally lower density in rural areas³⁰ and also notes: 'The public realm in rural settlements was often also generous, with village greens and wide streets providing communal space.'~~ They Cherwell D.C also 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)³¹ 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 ~~tranquillity~~ tranquillity

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 tranquillity of, Public Rights of Way

³⁰ ~~Cherwell Submission Local Plan (2013) Housing Density~~

³¹ Cherwell Open Space Assessment (201106)

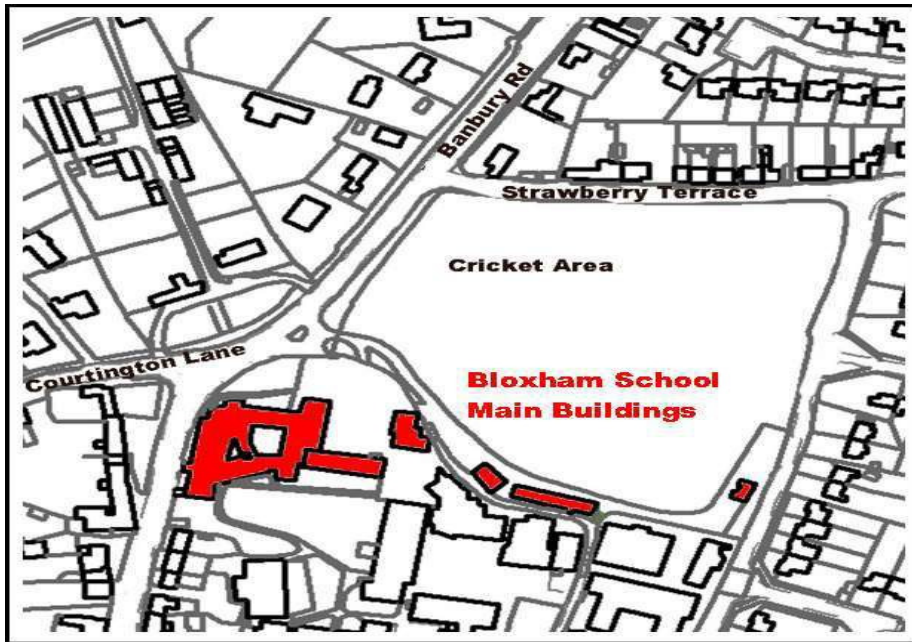
5. Certain areas earmarked for recreational / amenity use as part of recent planning approvals

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 ~~tranquillity~~ 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.

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



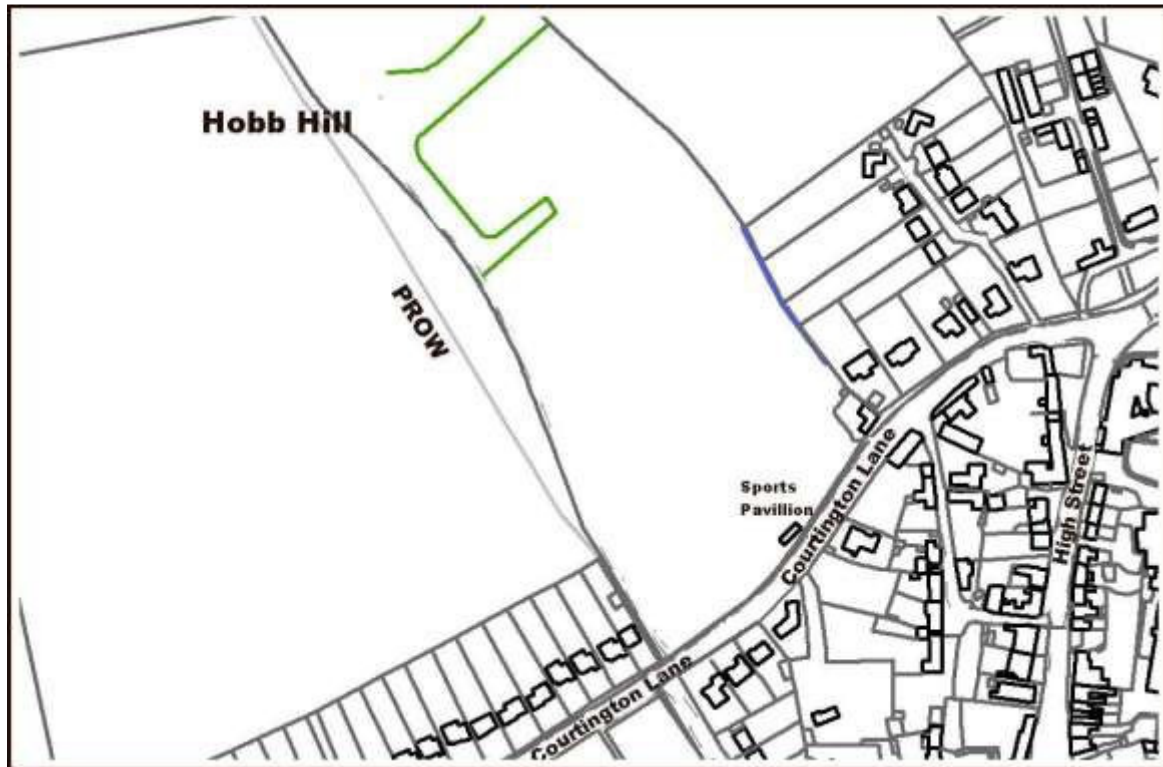
The CPRE Consultation comment states, 'Few other villages have such a statement of arrival.'
It has dominated the northern approach for around 150 years and regularly appears on school marketing materials. It is an area significant for its beauty and holds an important place in the history of the village.



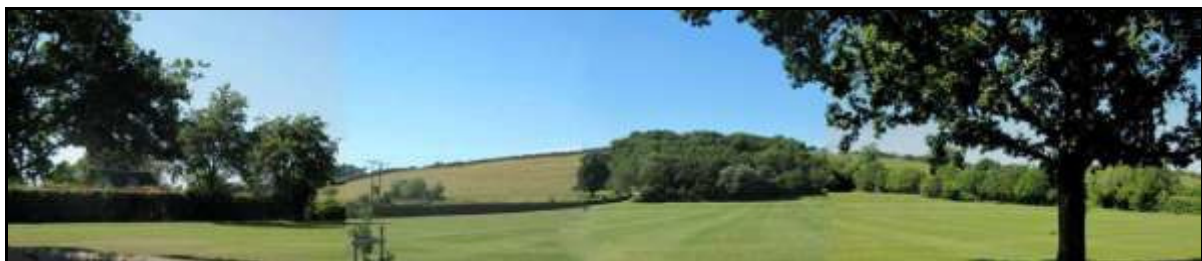
With the possible exception of the parish church, its visual impact is unsurpassed. We would expect any future development would show great sensitivity to preserving the overall visual impact.



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 bid³²

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.

³² [Red Lion Gardens – 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>
Past 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 IMPOTANCE OF SPACE AND KEY STREET SCENES AND VIEWS

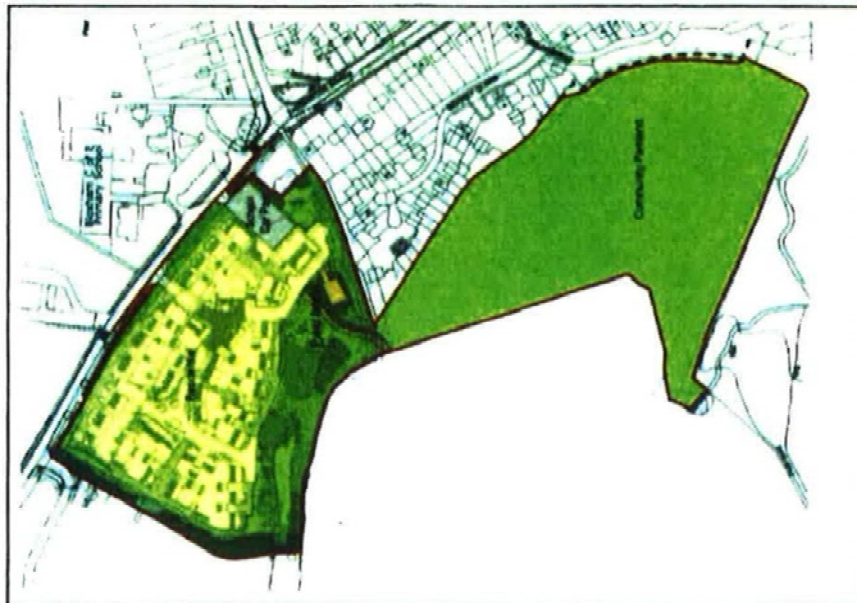
- BL12** ~~a. Development that endangers visual impact of the key views set out in the Cherwell D.C. Bloxham Conservation Area Appraisal (2007) shall not be permitted.~~
- ~~b. Development anywhere in the village shall demonstrate it does not inflict significant harm upon the rural or heritage character. This will include consideration of the effect of development upon:~~
- ~~i. Views of high positive visual impact, particularly of the Parish Church or the area fronting the Bloxham School main buildings, towers or arches and views to and from Hobb Hill;~~
- ~~ii. The rural character engendered by all types of amenity green spaces;~~
- ~~iii. The views from, and the tranquillity of public rights of way within the parish. See Appendix 5.~~
- ~~iv. The historic character area of the Red Lion garden.~~
- ~~c. Development of domestic gardens will not be permitted unless such proposals fully meet all the criteria set out in Policies BL10 and BL11.~~
- ~~d. Development upon land designated for amenity use as part of recently approved planning decisions will not be supported. Such land will include~~
- ~~i. the country park associated with the forthcoming Tadmarton Road development;~~
- ~~ii. the proposed amenity space adjacent to the Barford Road and the entrance road to Bloxham Mill Business Park.~~
- 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 tranquillity 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



Map 5



Map 4



Note – Where we refer to [amenity green spaces](#) [open spaces and sports and recreational land](#) in the policies [above](#) [below](#) 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](#) [allocated](#) as part of the planning process. ~~[associated with permissions granted since 2006.](#)~~

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 |
| ✓ Past 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 212 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; |
| ✓ Past 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 lead to the loss of A1 shops or of community facilities;~~
 - ~~ii. does not harm local residential amenity;~~
 - ~~iii. does not create parking problems;~~
 - ~~iv. does not encourage other than light vehicles onto residential streets;~~
- ~~and~~
- ~~v. does not exacerbate flood risk.~~
- 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.

a.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 they do not harm local amenity as set out in Policy BL9~~ 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.
✓ Past 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

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ DCLG Planning update March 2015 ✓ Past Local Plan (1996) ✓ Adopted Local Plan(2015) ✓ Community Support 	<p>This government is keen to ensure adequate parking provision both in new residential developments and around our town centres and high streets</p> <p>87% of residents think plans for additional shops in Bloxham have to identify suitable off street parking for staff and customers</p> <p>Around 65% of village businesses identify parking and congestion as a problem for them.</p>
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POLICY TO ADDRESS EMERGING NEED FOR ADDITIONAL RETAIL

BL16 ~~Applications for additional or expanded retail facilities in the High Street and Church Street will be supported only if accompanied by a statement of how any additional impact upon traffic flow and pedestrian safety will be mitigated.~~

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

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 naturalists³³, schools and families and is demonstrably special for its ~~tranquillity~~ [tranquillity](#) 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)

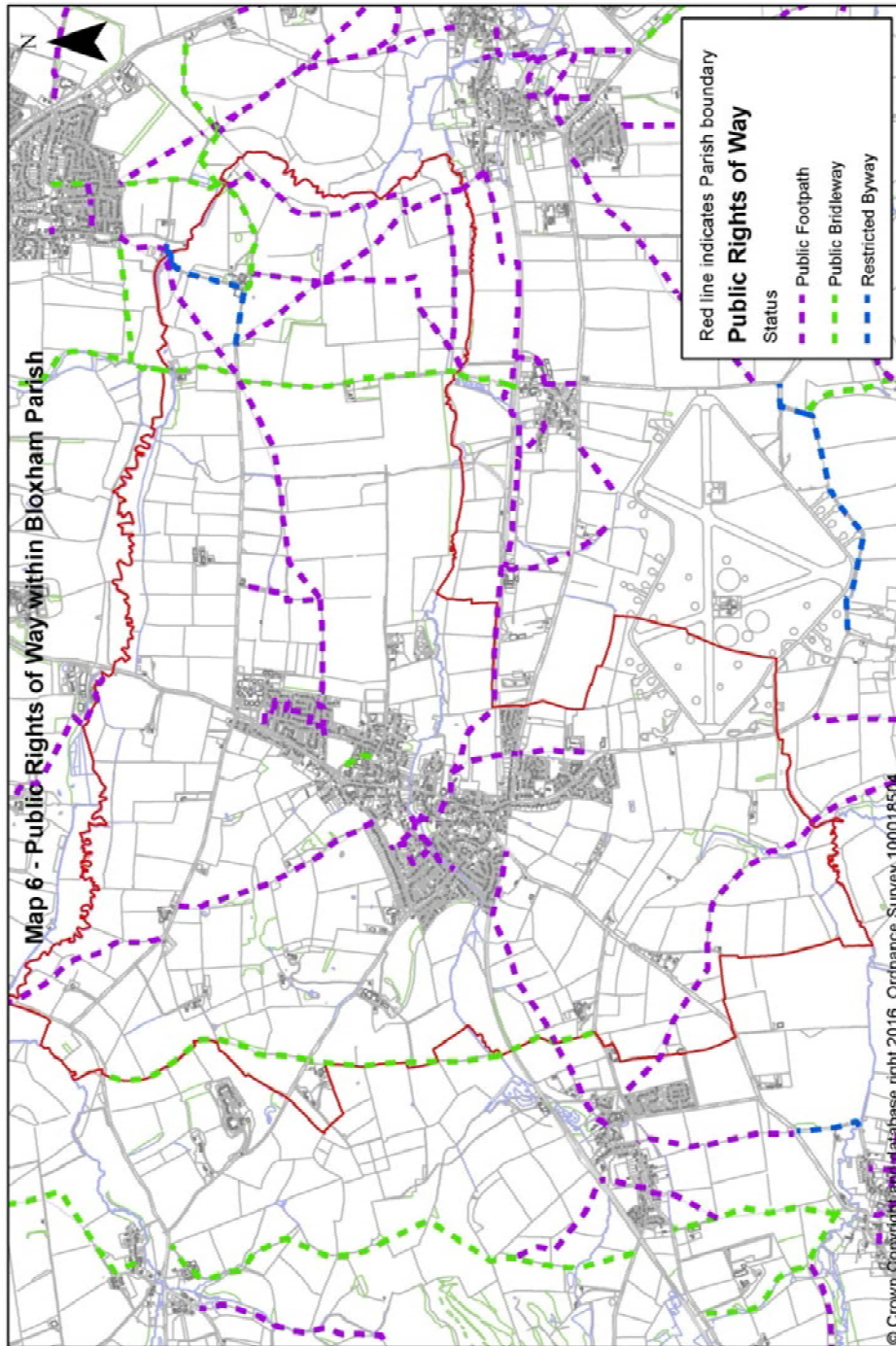
The importance of PROW from a connectivity perspective has already been highlighted but they are also important from a health and recreation perspective. Paths that still meander through green village fields offer residents of all ages quick access to healthy traffic-free exercise.

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 ~~tranquillity~~ [tranquillity](#) 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 2015-25³⁴

The [definitive](#) map of Oxfordshire PROW can be found on the Oxon C.C. site³⁵ ~~but there is a partial map of the area around Bloxham below.~~ [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.

³³ See The birds of the Slade Nature Reserve Bloxham by Anthony Brownnett (1992)



³⁴ [Oxfordshire Rights of Way Management Plan 2015-25](#)

³⁵ [Oxfordshire definitive P,R,O,W, map](#)

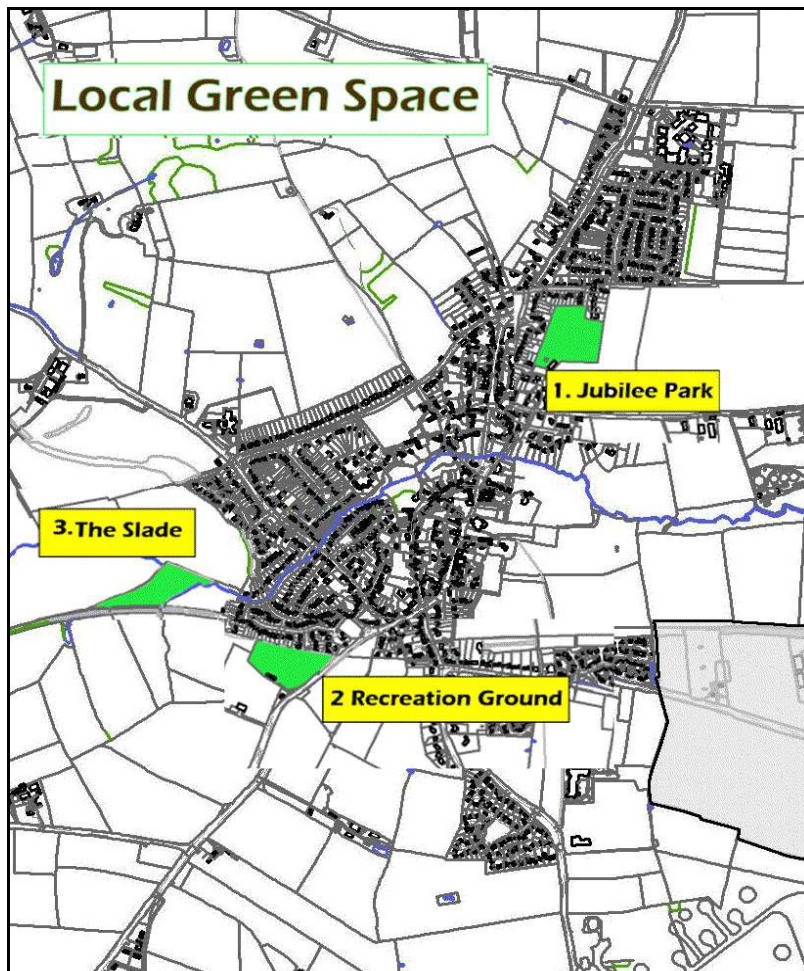
We consider these policies consistent with the following:

✓ 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 <u>tranquility</u> 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. along with two Bloxham School areas. Bloxham School objected to such designation as unreasonably constraining. As there is limited public access to these two areas, it is clearly the visual impact that is important to residents. In the light of the school's objections, we have removed LGS designation but stress the fact that the view of the school and the green area fronting it remain demonstrably special to the village and its general visual impact continues to receive protection in policy BL12.

POLICY TO PROTECT IMPORTANT RECREATION SPACES

- BL17 a. The previously shown Local Green Space map (page 47) sets out designated Local Green Spaces. Proposals for development not ancillary to the use of the sites for recreational and sport purposes will be resisted. The three areas identified below and shown on the Map above below (titled Map 7 Local Green Space) 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.
- i. The Jubilee Park
 - ii. The Recreation Ground
 - iii. 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 accompanied by a formal shared use agreement and~~ 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...)
✓ Past Local Plan (1996)	6.59 Land and buildings available for use by the whole community are an essential part of the social life of the village and it is important that such facilities are maintained and that, when required, new facilities provided.
✓ 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.

POLICIES 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.

~~BL19 Development of an all-weather pitch at Warriner School along Bloxham Grove Road shall be supported subject to a Joint Use Agreement~~

~~between the school and the community and provided that the development is consistent with Policy BL9.~~

C. Securing primary school capacity for all village children

This ~~is has already been raised~~ discussed in Theme 1 (Policy BL9d) where this issue question had a significant influence upon is an important consideration ~~the proposed number of new dwellings~~ for this Plan. We will not repeat the arguments here other than to emphasize ~~that~~ the need established in Policy BL9d which is; ~~for any new housing development to~~ 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 ~~'demonstrate that there is capacity to educate primary aged children within the village and that the development will not lead to lack of school places for families of residents.'~~ This is a hugely important policy for families, for village cohesiveness and for reducing high- carbon travel.

D. Encourage safe walking and cycling

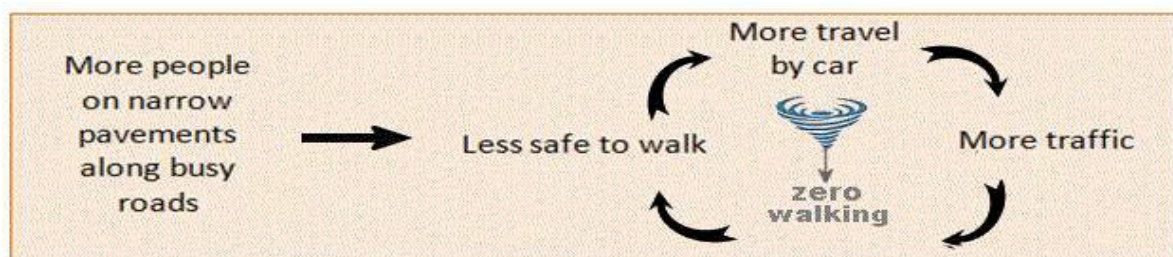
Theme 1 Policies BL3-5 focuses upon the need for improved low-carbon connectivity to improve access to services and facilities. This is strongly evidenced by the Sustrans report on Bloxham.

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 [an Appendix to](#) 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.³⁶

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.³⁷

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.³⁸

³⁶ [Bloxham Working Group Reports and consultation report](#)

³⁷ [NPPF](#)

³⁸ [CDC Evidence Base](#)

Oxfordshire County Council documents

Policies pertaining to education, highways and flooding draw heavily upon documents from Oxfordshire County Council.³⁹

The Census 2011

Much of the demographic data emanates from the 2011 census which is readily available online.⁴⁰

Oxfordshire Rural Community Council documents

Some statistical information about the village derives from the ORCC [\(now Oxfordshire—Community First Oxfordshire\)](#) Rural community profile for Bloxham.⁴¹ ORCC also carried out the production, analysis and reporting of the main questionnaire and housing needs survey.

³⁹ [OCC Website](#)

⁴⁰ [Census 2011](#)

⁴¹ [ORCC Community Place profile - Bloxham](#)

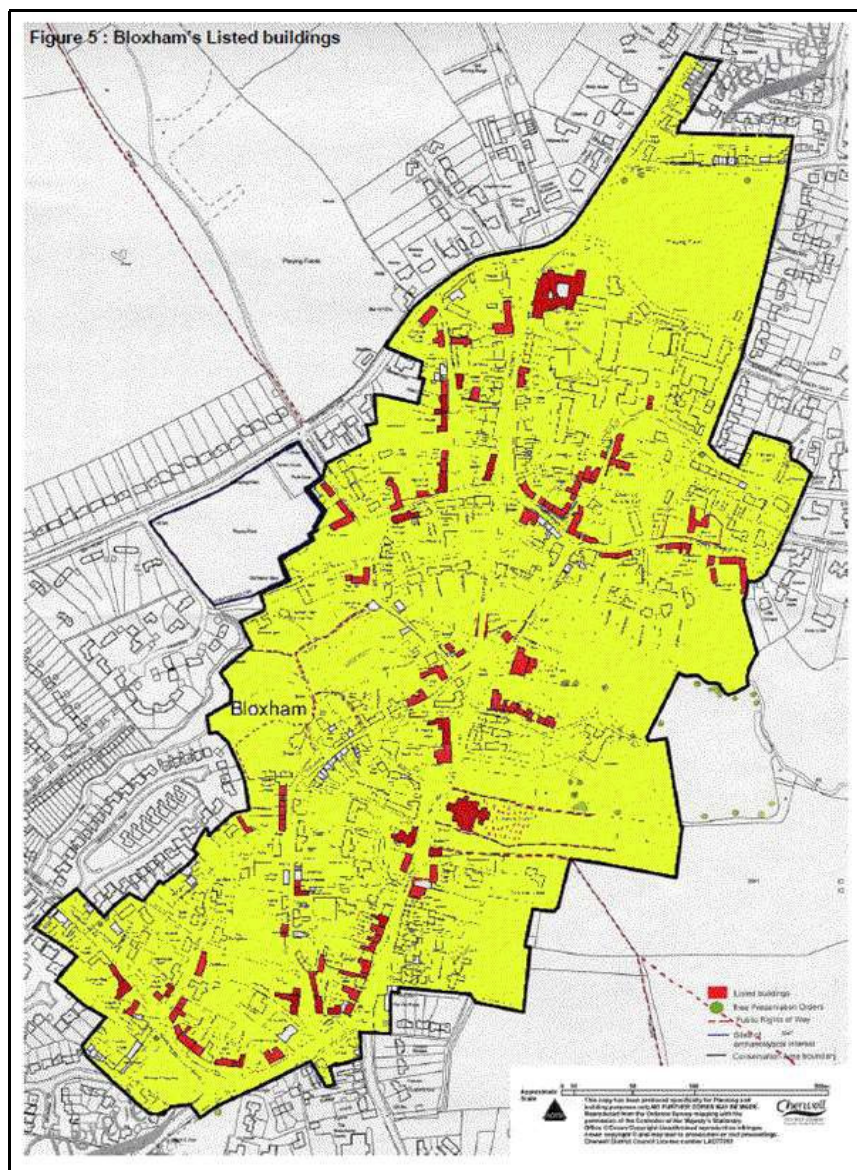
Appendices

Appendix 1 The BNDP Sustainability Report

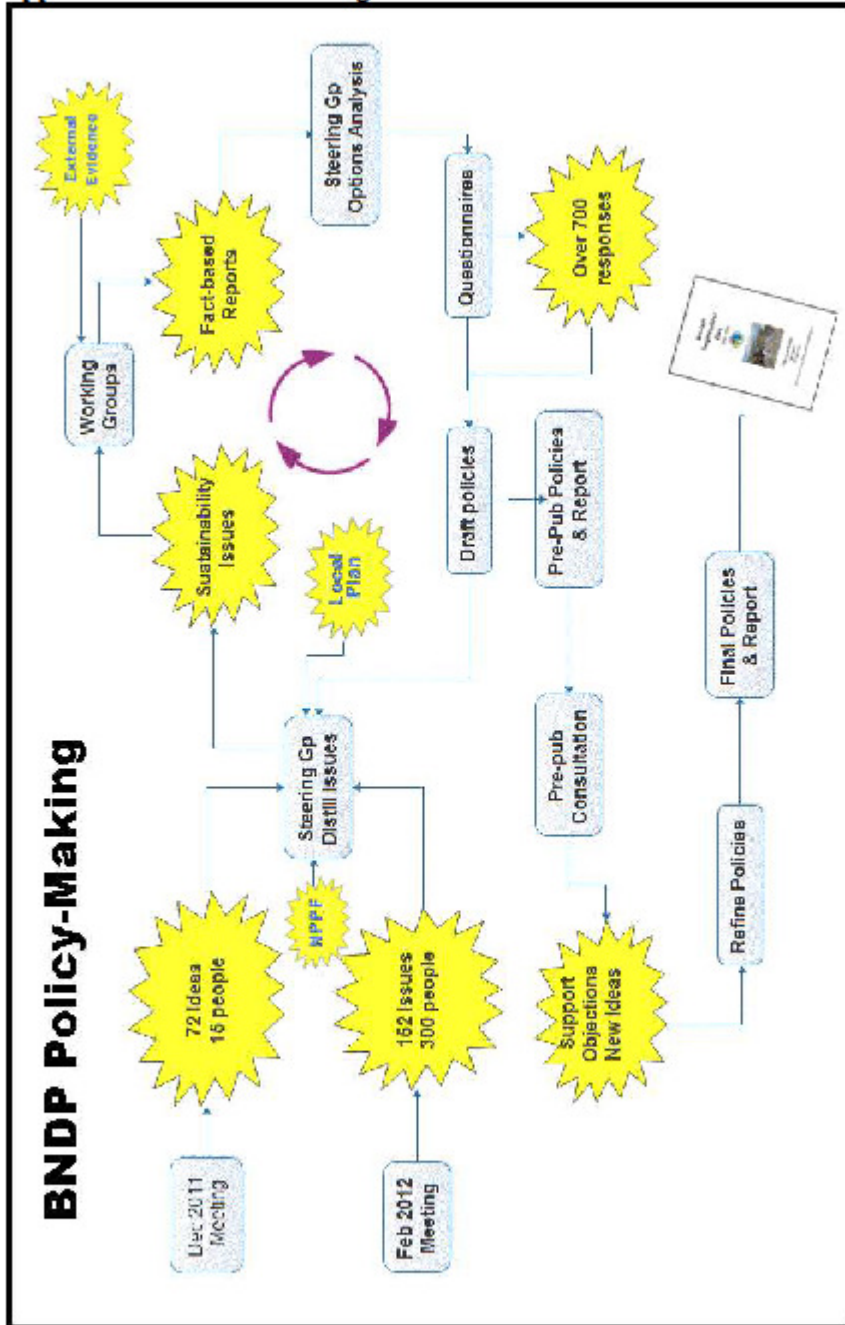
This is available as a separate document. It contains summarised evidence that impinges upon every policy in this Plan.

Appendix 2 The Conservation Area

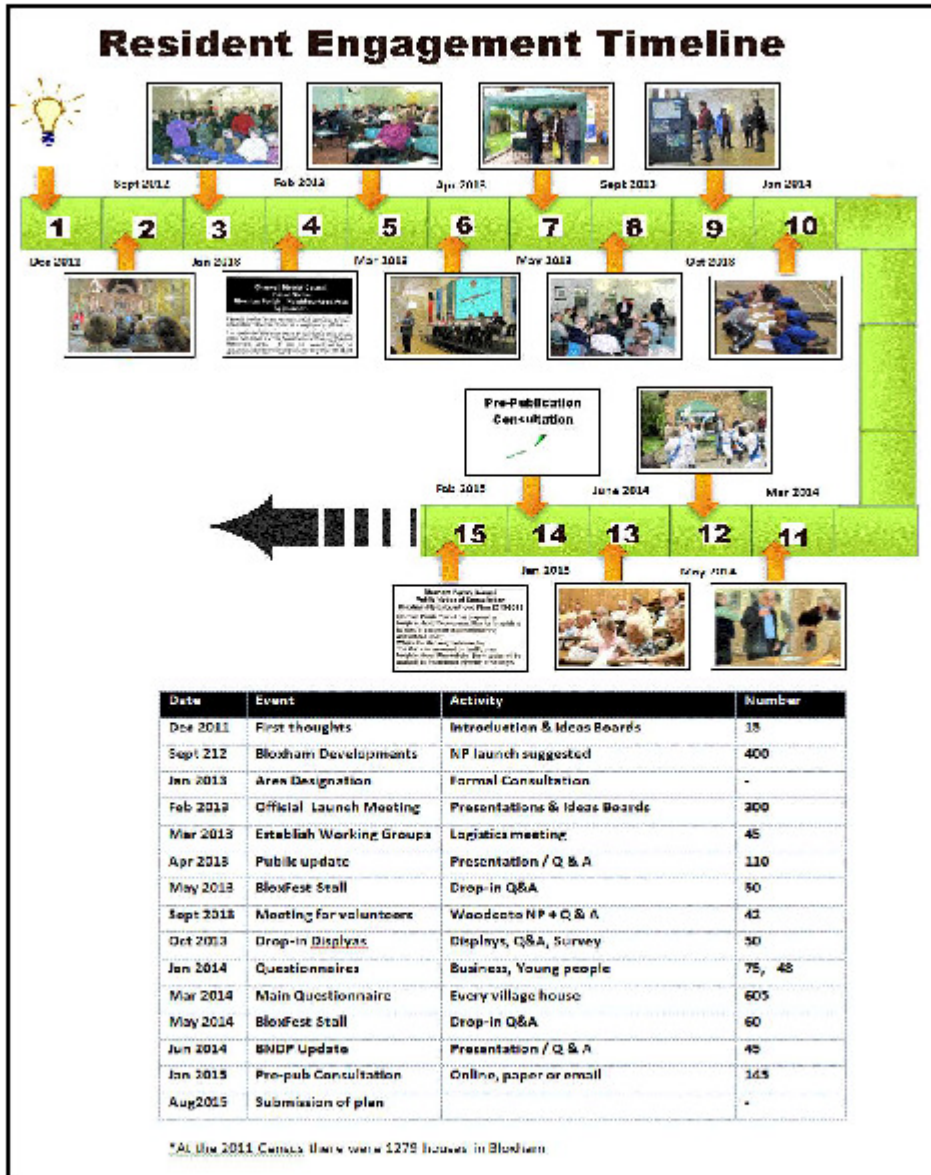
For detailed maps please see the Cherwell D.C. [2007](#) Conservation Area [Appraisal document](#) which also notes several important but non-listed assets within this area. It is available from the BNDP or Cherwell D.C. websites.



Appendix 3 The Plan-making Process



Appendix 4 Public Engagement



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Bloxham Neighbourhood Development Plan

Independent Examiner's Report

By Ann Skippers BSc (Hons) Dip Mgmt (Open) PGC(TLHE)(Open) MRTPI FRSA AoU

7 July 2016

Contents

	Summary	3
1.0	Introduction	4
2.0	Appointment of the independent examiner	4
3.0	The role of the independent examiner	4
4.0	Compliance with matters other than the basic conditions	6
	<i>Qualifying body</i>	6
	<i>Plan area</i>	6
	<i>Plan period</i>	6
	<i>Excluded development</i>	6
	<i>Development and use of land</i>	6
5.0	The examination process	7
6.0	Consultation	8
7.0	The basic conditions and human rights	8
	<i>National policy and advice</i>	8
	<i>Sustainable development</i>	10
	<i>The development plan</i>	10
	<i>European Union (EU) obligations</i>	11
	<i>Strategic Environmental Assessment</i>	12
	<i>Habitats Regulations Assessment</i>	12
	<i>European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)</i>	12
8.0	Detailed comments on the Plan and its policies	13
	<i>Foreword</i>	13
	<i>Our Bloxham</i>	14
	<i>Our voice</i>	15
	<i>A vision for Bloxham</i>	15
	<i>Themes and objectives</i>	16
	<i>Policies Deliver the houses the village needs (Policies BL1 – BL9)</i>	16
	<i>Policies Protect and enhance our rural heritage (Policies BL10 – BL12)</i>	25
	<i>Policies Promote economic vitality (Policies BL13 – BL16)</i>	31
	<i>Policies Ensure a safe, healthy, cohesive community (Policies BL17 – BL19)</i>	33
	<i>Bloxham projects</i>	36
	<i>Monitoring and delivery</i>	36
	<i>The evidence base</i>	36
	<i>Appendices</i>	36
9.0	Conclusions and Recommendations	36
	Appendix List of Key Documents	37
	Appendix Questions from the Examiner	38

Summary

I have been appointed as the independent examiner of the Bloxham Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Bloxham is the second largest village within Cherwell District. Together with a wealth of historic buildings, it boasts a number of businesses and services and attracts visitors to see its Church and Museum amongst other things and to enjoy literary and music festivals.

Although recognising the need for growth and development, the Plan seeks to ensure that future growth is managed so that the unique attributes of the Parish and its character are respected and that infrastructure is provided appropriately.

Further to consideration of the policies in the Plan I have recommended a number of modifications that are intended to ensure that the basic conditions are met satisfactorily and that the Plan is clear and consistent.

Subject to those modifications, I have concluded that the Plan does meet the basic conditions and all the other requirements I am obliged to examine. I am therefore pleased to recommend to Cherwell District Council that the Bloxham Neighbourhood Development Plan go forward to a referendum.

In considering whether the referendum area should be extended beyond the Neighbourhood Plan area I see no reason to alter or extend this area for the purpose of holding a referendum.

Ann Skippers MRTPI, Chartered Town Planner
Ann Skippers Planning
7 July 2016



1.0 Introduction

This is the report of the independent examiner into the Bloxham Neighbourhood Development Plan (the Plan).

The Localism Act 2011 provides a welcome opportunity for communities to shape the future of the places where they live and work and to deliver the sustainable development they need. One way of achieving this is through the production of a neighbourhood plan.

Bloxham is described as an entrepreneurial village with an estimated 250 plus businesses.¹ As well as being a hub for economic activity, it attracts visitors to see its Church, visit the Museum and other buildings and attractions, to visit a range of services and to enjoy literary and music festivals. A variety of issues to address have been identified alongside attributes of the village that the Plan seeks to ensure are protected and wherever possible enhanced.

2.0 Appointment of the independent examiner

I have been appointed by Cherwell District Council (CDC) with the agreement of the Parish Council, to undertake this independent examination. I have been appointed through the Neighbourhood Planning Independent Examiner Referral Service (NPIERS).

I am independent of the qualifying body and the local authority. I have no interest in any land that may be affected by the Plan. I am a chartered town planner with over twenty-five years experience in planning and have worked in the public, private and academic sectors and have examined a number of neighbourhood plans. I therefore have the appropriate qualifications and experience to carry out this independent examination.

3.0 The role of the independent examiner

The examiner is required to check² whether the neighbourhood plan:

- Has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body
- Has been prepared for an area that has been properly designated for such plan preparation

¹ Basic Conditions Statement page 9

² Set out in paragraph 8 (1) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

- Meets the requirements to i) specify the period to which it has effect; ii) not include provision about excluded development; and iii) not relate to more than one neighbourhood area and that
- Its policies relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood area.

The examiner must assess whether a neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions and other matters set out in paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

The basic conditions³ are:

- Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan
- The making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development
- The making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area
- The making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, European Union (EU) obligations
- Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the neighbourhood plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan.

Regulation 32 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) sets out a further basic condition in addition to those set out in primary legislation and referred to in the paragraph above. This is:

- The making of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site⁴ or a European offshore marine site⁵ either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

I must also consider whether the draft neighbourhood plan is compatible with Convention rights.⁶

The examiner must then make one of the following recommendations:

- The neighbourhood plan can proceed to a referendum on the basis it meets all the necessary legal requirements or
- The neighbourhood plan can proceed to a referendum subject to modifications or

³ Set out in paragraph 8 (2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

⁴ As defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012

⁵ As defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2007

⁶ The combined effect of the Town and Country Planning Act Schedule 4B para 8(6) and para 10 (3)(b) and the Human Rights Act 1998

- The neighbourhood plan should not proceed to a referendum on the basis it does not meet the necessary legal requirements.

If the plan can proceed to a referendum with or without modifications, the examiner must also consider whether the referendum area should be extended beyond the neighbourhood plan area to which it relates.

If the plan goes forward to referendum and more than 50% of those voting vote in favour of the plan then it is made by the relevant local authority, in this case Cherwell District Council. The plan then becomes part of the 'development plan' for the area and a statutory consideration in guiding future development and in the determination of planning applications within the plan area.

4.0 Compliance with matters other than the basic conditions

I now check the various matters other than the basic conditions set out above in section 3.0 of this report.

Qualifying body

Bloxham Parish Council is the qualifying body able to lead preparation of a neighbourhood plan. This requirement is satisfactorily met.

Plan area

The Plan area is coterminous with the Parish Council administrative boundary. Cherwell District Council approved the designation of the area on 3 June 2013. The Plan relates to this area and does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area and therefore complies with these requirements. The Plan area is shown on page 6 of the Plan.

Plan period

The front cover of the Plan clearly states that the period for the Plan is 2015 -2031 and so this requirement is satisfactorily met.

Excluded development

The Plan does not include policies that relate to any of the categories of excluded development and therefore meets this requirement. This is also confirmed in the Basic Conditions Statement (BCS).

Development and use of land

Policies in neighbourhood plans must relate to the development and use of land. Sometimes neighbourhood plans contain aspirational policies or projects that signal the

community's priorities for the future of their local area, but are not related to the development and use of land. Where I consider a policy or proposal to fall within this category, I have recommended it be moved to a clearly differentiated and separate section or annex of the Plan or contained in a separate document. This is because wider community aspirations than those relating to development and use of land can be included in a neighbourhood plan, but actions dealing with non-land use matters should be clearly identifiable.⁷ Subject to any such recommendations, this requirement can be satisfactorily met.

5.0 The examination process

It is useful to bear in mind that the examination of a neighbourhood plan is very different to the examination of a local plan. I am not examining the Plan against the tests of soundness used for Local Plans,⁸ but rather whether the submitted Plan meets the basic conditions, Convention rights and the other statutory requirements. I have set out this role in some detail earlier in this report.

The general rule of thumb is that the examination will take the form of written representations.⁹ However, there are two circumstances when an examiner may consider it necessary to hold a hearing. These are where the examiner considers that it is necessary to ensure adequate examination of an issue or to ensure a person has a fair chance to put a case. After consideration of the documentation and all the representations, I decided that neither circumstance applied and therefore it was not necessary to hold a hearing.

The submission (Regulation 16) consultation was carried out between 27 November 2015 and 22 January 2016 sensibly allowing more time over the festive period. This attracted a number of representations which I have carefully considered and taken into account in preparing my report. On occasion I refer to a specific representation, but I have not felt it necessary to comment on each of them. In accordance with the statutory requirements I have focused on giving reasons for any recommendations I make.

Where modifications are recommended they appear in **bold text**. Where I have suggested specific changes to the wording of the policies or new wording these appear in ***bold italics***.

During the course of the examination I clarified a number of factual matters. The list of my questions is appended to this report and included a request for a map showing the amenity green spaces referred to in the Plan. The responses to this request are publicly available. I would like to record my thanks for the helpful and quick responses that I received from the officers at CDC and the Parish Council.

⁷ PPG para 004 ref id 41-004-20140306

⁸ NPPF para 182

⁹ Schedule 4B (9) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

I undertook an unaccompanied site visit to the neighbourhood plan area on 22 May 2016.

I would also like to record my appreciation of the presentation of documents to me from CDC which was exemplary.

6.0 Consultation

A Consultation Statement has been submitted which provides details of the engagement process and meets the requirements of the Regulations. A lot of information is contained in the Consultation Statement, its appendices and on the Parish Council website.

The Plan has built upon an earlier Parish Plan. A number of events were held and ranged from presence at events such as BloxFest or more formal meetings.

Three Working Groups considering housing and landscape, infrastructure and business and recreation and leisure were established to lead on these issues.

Four separate questionnaires were developed including one specifically aimed at young people and one at businesses. What is described as the “full questionnaire” sent to all homes and businesses in the village in Spring 2014 attracted a response rate of about 45%.

Publicity and information about the Plan were also made available through a bespoke website, use of the Bloxham Broadsheet website, newspapers and leaflet drops.

Pre-submission (Regulation 14) consultation took place between 10 January and 22 February 2015. A summary of the responses received from some 140 individuals, organisations and other bodies is to be found in Appendix 1.

It is clear that various and numerous efforts have been made to engage the community and that these efforts have taken place over a long period of time. I am confident that the submission version of the Plan has been the result of sustained effort and consultation.

7.0 The basic conditions and human rights

Regard to national policy and advice

The main document that sets out national planning policy is the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in 2012. In particular it explains that the application of the

presumption in favour of sustainable development will mean that neighbourhood plans should support the strategic development needs set out in Local Plans, plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development that is outside the strategic elements of the Local Plan and identify opportunities to use Neighbourhood Development Orders to enable developments that are consistent with the neighbourhood plan to proceed.¹⁰

The NPPF also makes it clear that neighbourhood plans should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area. In other words neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. They cannot promote less development than that set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies.¹¹

On 6 March 2014, the Government published a suite of planning guidance. This is an online resource available at www.planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk. The planning guidance contains a wealth of information relating to neighbourhood planning and I have had regard to this in preparing this report. This is referred to as Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

The NPPF indicates that plans should provide a practical framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made with a high degree of predictability and efficiency.¹²

PPG indicates that a policy should be clear and unambiguous¹³ to enable a decision maker to apply it consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications. The guidance advises that policies should be concise, precise and supported by appropriate evidence, reflecting and responding to both the context and the characteristics of the area.¹⁴

PPG states there is no 'tick box' list of evidence required, but proportionate, robust evidence should support the choices made and the approach taken.¹⁵ It continues that the evidence should be drawn upon to explain succinctly the intention and rationale of the policies.¹⁶

The Basic Conditions Statement sets out how the Plan has responded to national policy and guidance, focusing on the core principles of the NPPF.

¹⁰ NPPF paras 14, 16

¹¹ *Ibid* para 184

¹² *Ibid* para 17

¹³ PPG para 041 ref id 41-041-20140306

¹⁴ *Ibid*

¹⁵ *Ibid* para 040 ref id 41-040-20160211

¹⁶ *Ibid*

Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development

A qualifying body must demonstrate how the making of a neighbourhood plan would contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF as a whole¹⁷ constitutes the Government's view of what sustainable development means in practice for planning. The Framework explains that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.¹⁸

A Sustainability Report has been produced by the Group. It rightly confirms on the front cover that this is not a Sustainability Appraisal (SA). It is important that it does so because it does not in itself meet the requirements of a formal Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) or SA and I would be concerned if other Groups took it as a basis for formal SEA or SA and some could unintentionally do so given some of the language used and diagrams contained within it. Nevertheless it is sufficiently clear that the report is not a SA or SEA. It demonstrates that the Parish Council has kept sustainability issues in mind all the way through the evolution of the Plan.

The Basic Conditions Statement also includes a section detailing how the Plan contributes to sustainable development. Whilst a little more detail about the specifics would have been welcomed, the commentary provided is straightforward and deals with the topic headings detailed in the NPPF.

General conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan

The Plan evolved in the context of the Local Plan 1996. However, the development plan now consists of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011 - 2031 Part 1 (LP) which was adopted on 20 July 2015 together with various other documents including the saved and retained policies of the Local Plan 1996 (LP 1996) which are detailed in Appendix 7 of the LP. CDC has helpfully confirmed that they do not consider any of the saved policies of the LP 1996 which have been retained to be strategic in nature.

I note that a partial review of the LP is underway and concerns Oxford's unmet housing need. In addition an 'issues' consultation on the LP Part 2 was undertaken earlier this year. This will contain detailed policies to assist the implementation of strategic policies in Part 1 of the LP and development management and will also, I understand, identify smaller, non-strategic development sites.

It is important to be clear that the basic conditions relate to the adopted development plan rather than any emerging plan. This has been confirmed by judgments handed down from the Courts.¹⁹ However, it is common sense that the Plan's evolution has an eye to future policy produced at District Council level and it is clear that the Plan has tried to do this.

¹⁷ NPPF para 6 which indicates paras 18 – 219 of the Framework constitute the Government's view of what sustainable development means in practice

¹⁸ *Ibid* para 7

¹⁹ *BDW Trading v Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council* [2014] EWHC 1470 and *R. (Gladman Developments Ltd) v Aylesbury Vale District Council* [2014] EWHC 4323 (Admin)

It is also important to note it is widely accepted that a neighbourhood plan can be developed before or at the same time as the production of a local plan.²⁰ There is therefore no need as some representations suggest, for the Plan to ‘wait’ until LP Part 2 has been adopted.

The Basic Conditions Statement²¹ refers to the situation that for much of time the Plan was being developed, it was the LP 1996 that was the relevant development plan. The Parish Council has clearly tried to ensure that all documents are updated to reflect the adoption of the LP in July 2015. The BCS encourages readers to read any references to the “Adopted Plan (1996)” as “the Past Plan (1996)”. This is not correct as the saved and retained policies of the LP 1996 still form part of the development plan. This then should be changed in the interests of accuracy so that the BCS cannot be open to allegations of being misleading.

References to “Past Local Plan (1996)” also appear in the Plan itself and this requires amendment in the interests of accuracy. A check should also be carried out to make sure that any such policies referred to in the neighbourhood plan remain extant after the adoption of the LP last July.

The following modifications are therefore recommended and apply throughout the Plan:

- **Change any references to “Past Local Plan (1996)” to “Local Plan 1996” and ensure that it is clear that the saved and retained policies of the Local Plan 1996 are part of the development plan for the area**
- **Ensure that any Local Plan 1996 policies referred to in the neighbourhood plan remain extant after the adoption of the LP Part 1 (see Appendix 7 of the LP) and remove any references to policies which have not been retained**

Moving on from this issue, the BCS only considers the strategic objectives of the LP and not any specific policies. Therefore the BCS is deficient. However, this does form part of my own assessment and therefore despite this, I am able to carry out the examination.

European Union Obligations

A neighbourhood plan must be compatible with European Union (EU) obligations, as incorporated into United Kingdom law, in order to be legally compliant. A number of EU obligations may be of relevance including Directives 2001/42/EC (Strategic Environmental Assessment), 2011/92/EU (Environmental Impact Assessment), 92/43/EEC (Habitats), 2009/147/EC (Wild Birds), 2008/98/EC (Waste), 2008/50/EC (Air Quality) and 2000/60/EC (Water).

²⁰ PPG para 009 ref id 41-009-20160211 and Gladman Developments Ltd v Aylesbury Vale District Council [2014] EWHC 4323 (Admin)

²¹ Basic Conditions Statement page 12

Strategic Environmental Assessment

Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment is relevant. Its purpose is to provide a high level of protection of the environment by incorporating environmental considerations into the process of preparing plans and programmes. This Directive is commonly referred to as the Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) Directive. The Directive is transposed into UK law through the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

Cherwell District Council issued a screening opinion on 9 September 2015 which confirmed that the Plan is unlikely to result in significant environmental effects. Whilst I accept points made in representations that the screening assessment could have taken place earlier in the process, the screening statement has nevertheless been prepared with the requirements set out in Regulation 9 of the Regulations. This included the requirement to consult the three statutory bodies namely the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England; all three bodies concur with the conclusion a SEA is not needed. I have taken the screening statement to be the statement of reasons. I am therefore satisfied that the requirements in this respect have been satisfactorily met.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats, commonly referred to as the Habitats Directive, is also of relevance to this examination. A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) identified whether a plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.²² The assessment determines whether significant effects on a European site can be ruled out on the basis of objective information.

The Sustainability Report and BCS consider whether there is a need to prepare a HRA. As there are no European sites in or near to the Plan area, it was considered that there was no requirement for such an assessment. No objection indicates that any European site would be or might be affected by the Plan and no such site has been identified in or in close proximity to the Parish. I am therefore satisfied that the Plan is not likely to have a significant effect on any such site.

European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)

The BCS contains a short statement about human rights. I consider that the Plan has had regard to fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the ECHR and complies with the Human Rights Act 1998. There is nothing in the Plan that leads me to conclude there is any breach of the Convention or that the Plan is otherwise incompatible with it.

²² PPG para 047 ref id 11-047-20150209

8.0 Detailed comments on the Plan and its policies

In this section I consider the Plan and its policies against the basic conditions. As a reminder, where modifications are recommended they appear in **bold text**. Where I have suggested specific changes to the wording of the policies or new wording these appear in ***bold italics***.

The Plan is well presented with the vision right at the start of the Plan. This is followed by a comprehensive table of contents to help readers find their way around the document.

As a general comment the Plan is interspersed with photographs or shots of the covers of documents or information from studies; this adds a unique style to the Plan, but whether it is my failing eyesight or not, I did find many of these very hard to read and see properly. May I therefore suggest that the inclusion of this material at a larger scale is considered? This is not a recommendation that I need to make to ensure the Plan meets the basic conditions.

The front cover of the Plan makes reference to the Sustainability Report and indicates that the Plan should be read in conjunction with it. The Plan should be a freestanding document and given the contents of the Sustainability Report it is not necessary or appropriate for this given the stage the Plan has now reached. It is also referred to as Appendix 1, but it is more akin to a supporting evidence document. Therefore in order to provide the practical framework national policy and guidance seeks, this reference on the front cover should be deleted.

The following modification is therefore suggested:

- **Delete the words “This should be read in conjunction with the Separate Appendix 1 – The BNDP Sustainability Report” from the front cover of the Plan**

1. Foreword

This section helpfully and clearly sets the scene for the Plan explaining the background to the Plan and setting out the stages of plan making. It explains the status of the Plan once it has been adopted.

I find the phrase “We seek to build upon recent unplanned development...” in the Foreword a little odd and I am unsure what it means. This could be more positively worded perhaps to acknowledge that the Plan seeks to support new development by ensuring it is achieved in a manner that respects the rural heritage and which is sustainable.

Section 1.1 indicates that the stages and timeline the Plan has been through and of course will need some updating as the Plan reaches the latter stages.

Section 1.2 summarises the basic conditions and there is always a danger that they are lost in translation; I do not think that is the case here, but the second bullet point could be made more precise and accurate as CDC indicates and there could be some doubt as to what the phrase “strategic local policy” means.

Section 1.3 refers to the importance of reading the Sustainability Report alongside the Plan indicating it “greatly clarifies the context of the Plan”. Given my earlier recommendation that the Plan needs to stand on its own two feet and the Sustainability Report is essentially a contextual and evidence base for the Plan, this section should be reworded to ensure that the Sustainability Report does not assume the status of the Plan.

Therefore the modifications suggested are:

- **Reword the second sentence in paragraph two on page 4 of the Plan to read: *“We seek to support new sustainable development which respects our rural heritage.”***
- **Update section 1.1 as necessary for the final version of the Plan**
- **Reword the second bullet point in section 1.2 on page 5 to read: *“is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area”***
- **Reword section 1.3 on page 5 of the Plan to read: *“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...”***

2. Our Bloxham

The Plan area is coterminous with the Parish area and is shown on a map on page 6 of the Plan. I consider it would be helpful if the heading for the map could also make it clear that the Plan area is the same as the Parish area and that the map is included at a larger scale so that it is more readily deciphered.

The section details the history, key issues and some of the challenges facing the Parish today.

CDC point out that the reference at the bottom of page 5 is inaccurate and this should be changed.

Reference is made to the “past” adopted Local Plan 1996 on page 6 of the Plan. As previously explained this is inaccurate as the LP 1996 remains part of the development plan at the time of writing.

Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)²³ refer to paragraphs 2.5.1 and 2.5.2 on page 11 of the Plan and indicate there are no plans to revise catchment areas and that with the passage of time since the draft Plan was written feasibility work has begun on the expansion of Warriner School. In the interests of accuracy, both these paragraphs should be revised to take account of OCC comments so that they reflect the most up to date position given reference is made in the text to OCC.

The following modifications are therefore recommended:

- **Add “*and Plan area*” to section 2.1 heading and include the map at a larger scale**
- **Delete “Part 2, S.5(1)” from the final bullet point on page 5 of the Plan**
- **Delete the word “past” before “adopted Local Plan (1996)” on page 6 of the Plan**
- **Revise paragraphs 2.5.1 and 2.5.2 to reflect the most up to date information from Oxfordshire County Council**

3. Our voice

Section 3 offers a summary of the engagement which has taken place and rightly draws attention to the greater detail contained in the Consultation Statement. The summary offers a useful insight to the work that has been sustained over a long period of time.

The second part of the section highlights key issues raised by residents which emerged from the consultation phases. Not all are strictly development and use of land issues, but most are related and as an account of the issues of most concern to residents this is a useful and succinct summary.

4. A vision for Bloxham

The clearly articulated vision states:

“Bloxham will appeal to people of 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.”

²³ See OCC representation of 21 January 2016

5. Themes and objectives

Four themes have been identified from the issues and challenges. These are:

- Deliver the houses the village needs
- Protect and enhance our rural heritage
- Promote economic vitality
- Ensure a safe, healthy, cohesive community

Each theme is underpinned by a number of objectives; all are clearly articulated and reflect the concerns and priorities of the community.

Reference is made to a “Conservation Area document” in Theme 2, objective A. It is not clear to me what this refers to although I suspect it is the Conservation Area Appraisal. If this is the case, then it would be preferable to give the full title of the document and to indicate that account will be taken of it rather than all developments need to fully accord with it as this then becomes a policy statement and the appraisal document is not a policy document. Of equal importance is that the objective should better reflect the statutory provision. Therefore I have recommended a reworded objective to address these points.

The modification recommended is:

- **Change objective A in Theme 2 to read: “All developments in the Conservation Area should protect or enhance its character or appearance and take account of the latest Conservation Area Appraisal.”**

6. Policies

Theme 1 Deliver the houses the village needs

The LP seeks to boost the supply of housing in line with national policy and to that end 22,840 homes are provided for over the LP plan period to 2031. Of this figure, some 5,392 houses are to be provided in the rural areas (LP Policy BSC 1 refers). The LP recognises that a substantial amount of housing in the rural areas has already taken place in recent years, but that some further development is needed.

Policy Villages 1 of the LP identifies the most sustainable villages (Category A) where minor development (typically a site for less than 10 dwellings) within built up limits will, in principle, be supported through minor development, infilling and conversions. CDC²⁴ advise that some 754 dwellings are anticipated through this policy as “windfalls”.

LP Policy Villages 2 provides for a further 750 homes to be provided within or outside the built up limits of Category A villages and this figure does not include windfalls. The

²⁴ See CDC representation

base date is 31 March 2014. This provision will usually be for 10 or more dwellings on identified sites. The LP explains that these sites will be identified through neighbourhood plans, in the Local Plan Part 2 or through planning applications. The LP makes it clear that this is in addition to previously approved sites. The housing figures reflect the need within the District itself. At the time of writing, an Issues Consultation on Part 2 of the Local Plan has been held.

Bloxham is the second largest village in the District and is identified as a Category A service village in the LP. I understand that the Plan and its supporting documents seek to challenge this categorisation. Nevertheless the strategy in the LP has identified Bloxham as a Category A service village. This means that Bloxham has been identified in LP Policy Villages 1 as being suitable for minor development, infilling and conversions, but the LP explains that the appropriate form of development will depend on the character of the village and development in the immediate locality.

A table on page 19 of the Plan details the major developments that have been approved. CDC²⁵ indicate that clarification is required as an allocation of 750 dwellings has been made for new sites of ten or more units in the rural areas including Kidlington in LP Policy Villages 2 and an additional allowance of 754 homes is made for sites of less than ten dwellings “windfalls”. It would be unfortunate if the table were to be construed as misleading in any way and so a modification is suggested to help address any concern.

The same point applies to the last paragraph on page 20; this paragraph specifies that Bloxham will accommodate at least 220 new dwellings over the Plan period, but recognises the situation outlined above that 135 of those dwellings fall outside the base date for either this Plan or indeed the LP. As a result the paragraph could also be construed as misleading and so requires modification.

The opportunity for the Plan to continue to be misinterpreted is continued at the top of page 21. This paragraph indicates that given the community’s concerns about the capacity of infrastructure including the transport system and the availability of places at the primary school, a policy supporting some 85 dwellings which have already been approved and infill, conversion and minor development “will be seen as in conformity with the NPPF and with the adopted Local Plan (2015).”

Bloxham has had a considerable amount of development over recent years; indeed at my site visit I could see a number of new estates and construction work was being undertaken at various sites. I also recognise the community’s concerns about the ability of infrastructure in its many forms to cope with new development. I note that one of the criteria in LP Policy Villages 2 relates to the necessary infrastructure being provided and this should help to address the community’s concerns in this respect.

²⁵ See CDC representation

OCC point out²⁶ that the figure for accidents involving pedestrians and cyclists given on page 20 of the Plan is 10% rather than 46%. In the interests of accuracy, this should be checked and if confirmed, the figure changed.

In the interests of accuracy and clarity, the following modifications are recommended:

- **Change the text in red in the table on page 19 to read:**

“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.”

- **Change the last paragraph on page 20 to read:**

“During the creation of this Plan three major developments highlighted in the table on page 19 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.”

- **Change the first paragraph on page 21 to read:**

“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) 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.”

- **Check the figure for accidents on page 20 and update the % figure as necessary**

Policy BL1

Policy BL1 supports detailed proposals (or reserved matters) for a development on land to the south of Milton Road where such proposals comply with the detailed policies of the Plan. Outline planning permission has been granted²⁷ for a scheme of up to 85

²⁶ See CDC representation

²⁷ Planning application 14/01017/OUT

dwellings on this site. The restriction on “up to” 85 dwellings even though in line with the outline grant of permission may prevent acceptable schemes for more houses on this site springing from detailed work or a design-led solution from being supported.

In addition, the policy despite indicating the need for any scheme to comply with the other policies of the Plan could be interpreted as offering unconditional support for a detailed scheme and this would potentially pre-determine any planning application. Any reserved matter or other proposal for this site would be assessed against the policies in this Plan in any case.

Therefore the policy as currently worded does not provide the practical framework sought by the NPPF and may even prevent the achievement of sustainable development. It does not meet the basic conditions.

However, it is important to recognise that the Plan supports development on this site. Even though it has outline consent, this permission may lapse over the lifetime of the Plan. For that reason a policy should be included in the Plan to recognise the support for development on this site and this would also make a contribution to, and be in general conformity with, LP Villages 2. In the interests of clarity the site should be shown on a plan that accompanies the policy.

The modifications recommended are:

- **Reword Policy BL1 to read:**

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

- **Insert a map of the site south of Milton Road which clearly identifies the site alongside the policy**

Policy BL2

Policy BL2 refers to the previous policy which supports development of 85 or so dwellings on land to the south of Milton Road. It then supports conversions, infilling and minor development within the existing built up limits reflecting LP Policy Villages 1.

With regard to the details of Policy BL2, criterion a. seeks to restrict development to typically five dwellings or fewer. Although the LP indicates in the supporting text to LP Policy Villages 1 that minor development is typically less than ten units, Policy BL2 does not impose a blanket ban on more than five units and it is not at odds with the higher level policy. Therefore there is sufficient flexibility in this respect.

Policy BL2 then expects that all proposals will have “proper regard” to other policies in the Plan and draws particular attention to Policy BL9d which I refer to later in this report and recommend modifications to in any case. There is however no need or benefit in singling out a particular policy no matter how important this is to the community. Any developer must take account of all the relevant policies in the Plan when promoting schemes as there is little benefit in not doing so as any proposal contrary to them should be refused unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

The recommended modification is:

- **Delete criterion b. of the policy in its entirety**

Policy BL3

This policy seeks to improve connectivity around the village and promotes improvements to, or new, pedestrian and cycle routes, particularly to village services. This is in line with national policy and guidance. The policy is worded clearly and has sufficient flexibility. I note that Oxfordshire County Council considers the policy to be positive and also has the potential to assist in seeking developer contributions as appropriate. It meets the basic conditions and **no modifications are recommended**.

Policy BL4

Policy BL4 sets out minimum car parking standards for new residential development.

Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)²⁸ note that they have published information about parking standards and that these state that no minimum or maximum is imposed on residential developments but rather an ‘optimal’ standard is sought. With this in mind OCC consider it inappropriate that a neighbourhood plan sets its own minimum standards whilst noting that the standards set differ only marginally to OCC guidance, but I consider the principle of setting of a local parking standard is supported by national policy. The supporting text explains that parking and congestion are particular problems in this area. The evidence indicates that car ownership levels are high compared to both the District and national average. In addition I recognise that in certain locations other means of transport cannot always be practical.

The policy identifies an appropriate on-site parking provision for new development which reflects the circumstances in the Plan area. However, it also seeks “nearby shared visitor parking of 0.5 spaces per dwelling” and whilst this could arguably be practicably provided for developments of more than one house, it would be difficult to

²⁸ Representation from OCC of 21 January 2016

achieve this for single dwellings. In addition I envisage there may be some feisty arguments about the meaning of “nearby”. To try and address the impracticability of implementing the policy’s requirements as currently worded, a modification is suggested.

OCC also consider criterion e. resisting parking courts springs from a concern that they can encourage crime. However, OCC point out that Secured by Design guidance points to these usually being rear parking courtyards. I do consider this criterion to be overly restrictive and onerous with the potential for this to prevent the achievement of sustainable development given that there may well be appropriately designed schemes and so such a blanket restriction is difficult to support. To address this concern and to make sure the policy complies with the basic conditions, I have added in some flexibility to the reworded policy.

The recommended modifications are:

- **Reword Policy BL4 so that it reads:**

“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.”

Policy BL5

Relying on Policy BL4, this policy seeks to ensure that any proposals to modify or extend an existing dwelling would not result in the levels of parking provision falling below the new standard set by Policy BL4. This would be difficult to enforce because it may well be the case that dwellings built prior to this Plan have been built with a lower parking provision; in fact it is more than likely. This would then potentially mean that dwellings could not be extended unless the provision in Policy BL4 could be attained.

Nevertheless the intent behind the policy seems to me to be a practical one borne out by local circumstances. Therefore I suggest a rewording of this policy that would have the same intent, but allow for greater flexibility and also recognise that many alterations to existing dwellings do not require the submission of a planning application.

The modification suggested is:

- **Reword Policy BL5 to read:**

“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.”

Policy BL6

The Government has created a new approach to setting technical standards for new housing development. A Written Ministerial Statement (WMS)²⁹ made it clear that neighbourhood plans cannot set out any additional local technical standards or requirements relating to the construction, internal layout or performance of new dwellings. Optional new technical standards can now only be required through Local Plan policies. This policy sets water efficiency standards for new housing. I note that it mirrors a requirement in LP Policy ESD 3. As it does not introduce any new technical standards, but simply restates the LP policy, I consider that the policy can be retained although it is arguably unnecessary to repeat the LP policy. **No modifications are recommended.**

Policy BL7

Policy BL7 reflects the community’s clear concern about flooding and desire to seek more sustainable solutions.

There is little doubt that consideration of flood risk will proactively help to meet one of the challenges of climate change. The NPPF states that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk.³⁰ It advocates a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development to avoid where possible flood risk to people and property.³¹ The NPPF sets out the circumstances in which a site-specific flood risk assessment will be

²⁹ Written Ministerial Statement of 25 March 2015

³⁰ NPPF para 100

³¹ *Ibid*

required.³² PPG advises that the general approach and requirements for site-specific flood risk assessments should be applied to developments in areas at risk from flooding.

A Written Ministerial Statement (WMS)³³ advises that from 6 April 2015, policy and decisions on major development should ensure that sustainable drainage systems (SuDs) are put in place where appropriate.

I have some concerns about the application of this policy and some of those are shared by CDC. Therefore this policy should be modified so that it takes better account of national policy and guidance on the location of development in relation to flood zones and to encourage the use of SuDs.

The modification recommended is:

- **Reword Policy BL7 as follows:**

“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.”

Policy BL8

The need to provide housing for older people is critical given that the projected increase in the number of households aged 65 and over accounts for over half of new households.³⁴ Policy BL8 specifically encourages housing for older people wherever practicable as part of housing schemes sending out a clear message, but with sufficient flexibility to respond to market conditions and also the most up to date evidence on

³² NPPF para 103

³³ Written Ministerial Statement 18 December 2014

³⁴ PPG para 021 ref id 2a-021-20160401

housing need. This is a good example of positive planning, is in line with national policy and advice, reflects LP Policy BSC 4 and will help to achieve sustainable development.

The second part of the policy refers to Lifetime Homes Standard selecting four of the criteria to focus on. As mentioned in relation to Policy BL6, in a WMS,³⁵ the Government announced that it is not now appropriate to refer to any additional local technical standards or requirements relating to the construction, internal layout or performance of new dwellings in neighbourhood plans. In the light of this WMS and to have regard to national policy, I have little option but to recommend deletion of the reference to Lifetime Homes Standards in the policy.

The modification recommended is:

- **Delete criterion d. in its entirety**
- **Consequential amendments to the supporting text will be required**

Policy BL9

This is a well intentioned policy that seeks to achieve a number of things. The first is to ensure that development does not adversely harm the amenity of nearby residents. Its aim is laudable, but the wording would benefit from more precision and so in order to provide a practical framework, a reworded criterion a. is put forward.

Criterion b. refers to wastewater and water supply capacity and seeks to ensure that capacity is adequate and no adverse issues arise for existing users. Again this is a laudable aim, but the phrasology would benefit from greater clarity.

The supporting text at the top of page 30 indicates that “it may be necessary for developers to fund studies to ascertain whether development would lead to overloading of existing wastewater and water infrastructure.” in relation to this criterion. This might be regarded as an onerous requirement, but the wording is flexible and given that it would largely be the statutory undertakers who would identify any concerns in these regards, it can be retained in the Plan.

Criterion c. seeks to minimise the impact of additional traffic especially for infill or live-work developments; I am not sure why these type of development has been singled out and it seems to me more appropriate that new development has an acceptable impact and so a modification is recommended to address this.

Criterion d. seeks to ensure that there is capacity to educate children of primary school age within the village and that the proposed development will not lead to a lack of school places for residents. This is clearly an issue of particular concern to this

³⁵ Written Ministerial Statement of 25 March 2015

community and one that I empathise with. The NPPF explains that the Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient supply of school places is available to meet new and existing needs.³⁶ There is a strong emphasis then on ensuring that schools have sufficient capacity, but it comes at this issue from the provision of choice. It emphasises the need for the planning system to support the creation, extension or alteration of schools and highlights working with schools promoters to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.

I also understand the community's desire to ensure that locally based children can attend the local school and appreciate the strong sense of community that this can foster as well as the desire to avoid children travelling elsewhere. However, the criterion would mean that all development, even a minor householder application, would need to show that adequate capacity existed and that the proposed development would not adversely affect the availability of school places. This is not feasible or practicable.

The recommended modifications are:

- **Reword criterion a. to read: *“Ensure that the living conditions of neighbouring residents are not materially harmed;”***
- **Reword criterion b. to read: *“Ensure that there is adequate wastewater and water supply capacity to serve the new development and to avoid the exacerbation of any existing problems;”***
- **Reword criterion c. to read: *“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.”***
- **Reword criterion d. to read: *“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.”***

Theme 2 Protect and enhance our rural heritage

Policy BL10

Bloxham has a wealth of history and heritage and this policy seeks to ensure that any development within its Conservation Area is acceptable. The policy cross-references the Conservation Area Appraisal of 2007 which is now relatively elderly and I feel that given the reference seems to be made in order to identify the Conservation Area it

³⁶ NPPF para 72

would be preferable for a map of the Conservation Area and its extent be included in the Plan so that this is more practical for its users.

There is then a small typo I think in the first line of the policy as it says development shall be permitted “where if”; I think the “if” is superfluous.

Criterion a. reflects the statutory test for development in Conservation Areas, but needs a small, but important correction so that the test is portrayed accurately.

Criterion b. refers to guidance in the Conservation Area Appraisal of 2007. Usually these types of documents are not regarded as guidance and so it would be preferable to rephrase this so that account is taken of the Appraisal or any successor documents given the age of the latest one.

Criterion c. seeks to preserve important open spaces, gaps and views. It seems to me that the significance of all or any of these features would fall to be considered within the first criterion of the policy and are subject to Policy BL12 anyway which I discuss later. There is then no need for this criterion which does not meet with the statutory duty referred to above.

The final sentence of the policy then resists any proposals which do not accord with all three criteria. This is too ‘black and white’ and does not meet either the statutory tests or the advice in national policy and guidance and so does not accord with the basic conditions and should be deleted.

The modifications suggested are:

- **Delete the words “...as identified in Cherwell D.C Bloxham Conservation Area Appraisal (2007)” and replace with “*shown on Map XXXX*” and include the map of the Conservation Area in the Plan**
- **Delete the word “if” from the first sentence of the policy**
- **Replace the word “and” in criterion a. with “or” so that it reads “the character or appearance of the area”**
- **Replace criterion b. with the words: “*Takes account of the Conservation Area Appraisal (2007) or any successor documents; and*”**
- **Delete criterion c. in its entirety**
- **Delete the last sentence of the policy that states “Where these criteria are not met planning permission will not be granted.”**

Policy BL11

A strong sense of pride comes through this section of the Plan and a keen desire to ensure that new development is of the highest standard and reflects the rural character of the village and its surrounds. Policy BL11 is generally worded clearly and will achieve these aims. I have one or two concerns about specific criteria.

Criterion a. caps density at 30 dwellings per hectare. The NPPF enables local approaches to density to be set out reflecting local circumstances.³⁷ However, in this instance there is little explanation for the maximum density and the imposition of a maximum figure may be unnecessarily restrictive and lead to an inefficient use of land.

It is important that the policy reflects the NPPF's aim of ensuring new development functions well and adds to the overall quality of the area; responds to local character and history; and reinforces and promotes local distinctiveness. The imposition of a maximum density could prevent development at a higher density which is otherwise acceptable coming forward.

The NPPF is clear that good design (of which density is one consideration) is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning and should contribute positively to making places better for people.³⁸ It continues³⁹ that permission should not be refused for development that promotes high levels of sustainability because of "concerns about incompatibility with an existing townscape" if those concerns are mitigated by good design.

In other words higher density may well be acceptable if there is a design-led approach. In addition I note that LP Policy BSC 2 seeks density of at least 30 dwellings per hectare unless there is justification for a lower density. Therefore in order to take account of the NPPF and to be in general conformity with the LP, this part of the policy should be reworded more positively and flexibly.

CDC note the reference to a draft LP at the bottom of page 33 and top of page 34. CDC confirm that this paragraph no longer reflects the adopted LP including the reference to the generally lower densities in rural areas. With the passage of time, this sort of thing often occurs and is readily remedied.

Criterion f. preserves public open space which is important to retain local distinctiveness, but it also seeks the creation of new open space. This would potentially be difficult to achieve for smaller scale development, but I note the LP identifies a shortfall of such space in the rural areas and that such provision would broadly be in line with LP Policies BSC 10 and Village Policy 4. Therefore a modification to make this more flexible is suggested.

³⁷ NPPF para 47

³⁸ *Ibid* para 56

³⁹ *Ibid* para 65

Criteria g. and i. also need to have more flexibility so that they encourage rather than require.

The other criteria largely reflect the principles of good planning and are appropriate.

The modifications recommended are therefore:

- **Reword criterion a. to read: “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.*”**
- **Change criterion f. to read: “*Preserve existing areas of open space and take every available opportunity to create new open space to help retain rural character;*”**
- **Add “*wherever possible*” to the end of criterion g.**
- **Add “*wherever possible*” after “...protect and...” and before “...enhance...” in criterion i.**
- **Update the last paragraph on page 33 and the following page to reflect the adopted LP**

Policy BL12

This is a complex policy that tries to achieve a number of different things. I had a number of queries of clarification in relation to this policy.

Firstly, this policy seeks to resist development that would “endanger the visual impact” of key views identified in the Bloxham Conservation Area Appraisal (2007) of which there are a considerable number.

Secondly, the policy seeks to ensure that development “does not inflict significant harm” on rural character and heritage. It indicates that this will include the effect on views, the rural character gained from amenity green spaces, the views from, and the tranquility of, public rights of way and the Red Lion garden.

The preceding text on page 34 of the Plan specifies the views in the Conservation Area Appraisal, views of the Church and other key views identified in the Plan. These other views are a) the area fronting Bloxham School, b) Hobb Hill across Bloxham School’s rugby grounds from Courtington Lane and a public footpath and c) the Red Lion garden.

The Parish Council has helpfully confirmed in response to a query that there are five areas of amenity green space and at my request has shown these spaces on a plan. I consider it would be helpful in the interests of providing a practical framework for the five amenity green spaces to be identified and shown on a plan included in the Plan.

The policy also refers to an Appendix 5, but the Parish Council confirms that this should be a reference to page 48 which shows a map of public rights of way in the Plan area.

In principle, it is important that the views identified by the community as being of particular importance are protected. The key views referred to in the Conservation Area Appraisal are clearly documented. The three other key views are clearly documented within the Plan itself. With the inclusion of plans of the amenity green spaces and the public rights of way, the other views will also be clearly documented.

It is important to ensure that new development is not precluded per se, but that any new development respects those views so that there is an appropriate balance between development and the protection of local distinctiveness. It is also important to ensure that the wording is without ambiguity and as currently worded I find this part of the policy to be a little nebulous. For that reason I have suggested a variety of modifications to this policy.

Bloxham School has objected to the inclusion of the area fronting the main building and the playing fields off Courtington Lane making the point that future development will be constrained. This is a matter of concern as the school is a major employer in the village and supports the local community in a variety of ways. With the suggested modification I consider that the balance referred to above can be achieved; I do not believe it is the intention of the Plan to prevent development per se, in fact the Plan clearly expresses that it is the expectation that any future development will “show great sensitivity to visual impact”.⁴⁰ The area in front of the main school building also falls within a Conservation Area and the significance of this area and the contribution it makes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area is substantial.

Criteria c. and d. prevent development on residential gardens and on land designated for amenity use. The latter criterion refers to recently approved schemes and refers to country park and an amenity space next to Bloxham Mill Business Park. A note explains that this includes all the amenity green spaces in the CDC Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Needs Assessment Audit and Strategy (2006) and any open space allocated as such as part of any planning permission granted since 2006. CDC advise me that an update to the 2006 assessment was carried out in 2011. The Parish Council confirms it is the intention of the policy to apply to all amenity areas in approved developments.

In line with the NPPF⁴¹ policies which resist the inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where such a scheme would cause harm to the local area are acceptable.

⁴⁰ Pages 35 and 36 of the Plan

⁴¹ NPPF para 53

The NPPF⁴² also indicates that existing open spaces and recreational land should not be built upon and the amenity green spaces referred to in the Plan would fall in this category. The NPPF does not impose a blanket ban on such development, but rather indicates a number of scenarios when development might be acceptable. However, I note the provisions of LP Policies BSC 10 and BSC 11 and the deficiencies in open space provision and that Bloxham is identified for priority provision of amenity open space in the LP.

I consider that criteria c. and d. would benefit from some clearer wording so that they are precise and will stand the test of time; for example “recently approved” will change over the lifetime of the Plan.

The recommended modifications are:

- **Reword criterion a. to read:**

“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.”

- **Reword criterion b. to read:**

“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 XXXX***
- iii. The key features of the views from, and the tranquillity of, public rights of way within the Parish show on Map XXXX***
- iv. The historic and open character of the Red Lion garden.”***

- **Insert Maps into the Plan in line with the reworded criterion b. above to i) show the five amenity green spaces and ii) the public rights of way within the Parish**

- **Reword criterion c. to read:**

“Development on residential gardens will not usually be permitted.”

⁴² *Ibid* para 74

- **Reword criterion d. to read:**

“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 XXXX and the amenity space at the Bloxham Mill Business Park shown on Map XXXX.”

- **Consequential amendments to the text and the Plan will be needed including the updating of the note at the bottom of page 40**

Theme 3 Promote economic vitality

Policy BL13

The NPPF⁴³ sets out the Government’s commitment to sustainable economic growth and the role this plays in creating jobs and prosperity. Support for businesses is clearly indicated. Policy BL13 seeks to protect and retain existing employment land. The NPPF is keen to avoid the long-term protection of employment sites where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose. This policy includes consideration of viability which will be an important factor in determining this and reflects LP Policy SLE 1. Given the local circumstances described in the Plan, this policy has sufficient flexibility and meets the basic conditions. **No modifications are therefore suggested.**

Policy BL14

This policy seeks to support start-up and small businesses within the built up area subject to a number of criteria. The principle of supporting flexible working practices such as live work units is promoted in the NPPF.⁴⁴ Criterion a. contains a number of criteria which are all principles of good planning, but the wording should be more precise to avoid ambiguity thereby providing the practical decision-making framework required by national policy and guidance.

The second element of the policy supports Class B1 uses of up to 150 square metres, again providing local amenity is protected. The policy cross references (the existing) Policy BL9, but only some of this policy would be relevant to this type of proposed use. I consider it better to do away with the cross-reference and make this policy stand on its own two feet.

⁴³ NPPF Section 1

⁴⁴ *Ibid*

Incidentally the reference to the NPPF paragraph on page 43 should be 21 rather than 22 I think.

The recommended modifications are:

- Change reference to the NPPF on page 43 of the Plan to “Para 21”
- Reword criterion a. to read:

“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.”*
- Renumber criterion b. (which needs to be numbered *b.* due to a small typo) and delete the words “...provided they do not harm local amenity – as set out in Policy BL9.” and replace with “...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.*”

Policy BL15

Policy BL15 supports technology and plans positively for high quality communications infrastructure. Poor infrastructure such as broadband and mobile phone coverage is often a key barrier to economic growth. The policy has regard to the NPPF particularly in relation to building a strong, competitive economy, supporting a prosperous rural economy and supporting high quality communications infrastructure. It is in general conformity with LP Policy BSC 9 and will help to achieve sustainable development. The policy meets the basic conditions and **no modifications are recommended.**

Policy BL16

The Plan recognises that now that Bloxham has expanded, more people use their car to access village services. This policy seeks to ensure that any additional retail activity in the High Street and Church Street considers the impact on traffic flow and pedestrian safety.

The policy raises a number of issues; there is an assumption that only retail uses might contribute to traffic issues, but more importantly the policy seems to support retail use as long as a statement accompanies any planning application rather than any implementation of any measures identified in such a statement. Statements of this nature would also impose an additional burden on the local planning authority.

Given that the issue identified in the supporting text indicates that the root cause of concern is parking, this policy may well have the unintended consequence of preventing more retail uses in the area or reducing the ability of existing retailers to expand their businesses and therefore decreasing the vitality and viability of the High Street and Church Street. For this reason, I am not convinced the policy as currently worded takes sufficient account of national policy and guidance or would help to achieve sustainable development. Therefore in order for it to meet the basic conditions it should be reworded.

The modification recommended is:

- **Reword Policy BL16 to read:**

“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

Policy BL17

This policy seeks to designate three areas of Local Green Space (LGS); South Newington Road Recreation Ground, Jubilee Park and The Slade. All three areas are shown on a map on page 47 of the Plan.

The NPPF⁴⁵ is clear that local communities have the opportunity of designating LGS, but that such a designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. The NPPF lists a number of criteria that such a designation needs to meet. It further states that identifying land should be consistent with local planning of sustainable development. I consider that the three areas proposed as LGS meet the NPPF requirements.

Criterion a. of the policy says the right things but could be structured more clearly. In addition it allows ancillary recreation and sport development. As the protection this

⁴⁵ NPPF paras 76, 77, 78

designation offers is similar to Green Belt, the Parish Council should ensure that this designation will not unintentionally thwart any potential development sought.

The policy also seeks to protect public rights of way. Reference is made to Oxfordshire County Council's definitive map which is reproduced in part on page 48 of the Plan, but which I found very hard to read. A better map of the Bloxham Circular Walk is found on page 49 of the Plan and when finalising the Plan, if there is an updated map as this was in draft form I understand from a representation, then the final map should be included, but this is not a recommendation I need to formally make.

There is also reference in the 'consistency' box on page 49 to a previously included area proposed for LGS designation which has not been included in later versions of the Plan. At this stage of the Plan's evolution and as things move on, it is no longer appropriate or necessary for such commentary to remain in the Plan.

The recommended modifications are:

- **Reword criterion a. as follows:**

"The three areas identified below and shown on Map XXXX 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." Add the three areas of Jubilee Park, the Recreation Ground and The Slade Nature Reserve. (for the avoidance of any doubt criterion b. is retained)

- **Remove references to a proposed LGS at Bloxham School from page 49 of the Plan**

Policy BL18

This policy supports the upgrading and expansion of the Jubilee Village Hall as long as the play area and pitches are retained. This is in line with the NPPF⁴⁶ as it seeks to promote the retention and development of this community facility and sports venue. This in turn will help to promote health and well being facilitating shared spaces and social interaction. This will help to achieve sustainable development. This policy should be considered in the light of the proposed designation of Jubilee Park as a LGS in the previous policy and ensure that no conflict arises between the two policies. It might be possible to designate a smaller area of Jubilee Park so that the village hall facilities can be improved for example. The policy meets the basic conditions and **no modifications are recommended.**

⁴⁶ NPPF para 28 and Section 8

Policy BL19

An all-weather pitch is supported at Warriner School subject to a Joint Use Agreement between the School and the community and provided the development meets Policy BL9. The implication here is that such a pitch would not be supported unless an agreement was forthcoming. I think the linking of support for such a facility and the joint use clause causes some difficulty as the latter might be considered to be a non development and use of land matter. So I think that either support for the pitch is given or this can be retained as a community aspiration which would send out a strong signal about the desired joint use.

If the policy is to be retained in its current form, then it also refers to Policy BL9. It would be preferable for the policy to stand on its own two feet in the interests of providing a practical framework and so if it is retained then a new form of words is recommended for this policy.

Unusually then there is some uncertainty about what I can recommend here as it relies on the Parish Council deciding whether it wishes to offer support for such a facility without a joint use agreement or whether it prefers to delete the policy in its entirety and to include it as a community aspiration in a separate section of the Plan.

The suggested modification is:

- **Decide whether a) the policy is to be deleted, b) the policy is deleted and moved to a separate community aspirations section of the Plan or c) whether the policy is retained, but without the reference to the joint use agreement. If option c) is selected and the policy is retained the policy should be reworded to read:**

“Development of an all-weather pitch at Warriner School is supported 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.”

Other matters

Section C. on page 51 of the Plan refers to Policy BL9 and in particular criterion d. I have recommended changes to that policy. This section will therefore need amendment so that the Plan is internally consistent.

- **Revise Section C. on page 51 of the Plan as appropriate**

7. Bloxham projects

This is a useful section that refers to the non-development and use of land community aspirations which are to be found in the Consultation Statement.

8. Monitoring and delivery

It is good to see that the Plan will be reviewed regularly and the Parish Council is to be commended for this approach.

9. The evidence base

This is a useful section that details relevant supporting information and other published documents. This practice is to be commended to other Groups.

Appendices

This part of the Plan contains four appendices. I particularly like Appendix 3 which is an unusual diagram of the Plan making process and clearly shows the links and how the community has become involved from an initial 72 ideas and 15 people to 152 issues and 300 people. Appendix 4 showing a timeline of engagement is also a very interesting idea for demonstrating this on one side of A4.

9.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

I am satisfied that the Bloxham Neighbourhood Development Plan, subject to the modifications I have recommended, meets the basic conditions and the other statutory requirements outlined earlier in this report.

I am therefore recommend to Cherwell District Council that, subject to the modifications proposed in this report, the Bloxham Neighbourhood Development Plan can proceed to a referendum.

Following on from that, I am required to consider whether the referendum area should be extended beyond the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan area. I see no reason to alter or extend the Plan area for the purpose of holding a referendum and no representations have been made that would lead me to reach a different conclusion. I therefore consider that the Plan can proceed to a referendum based on the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan area as approved by Cherwell District Council on 3 June 2013.

Ann Skippers MRTPI

Ann Skippers Planning
7 July 2016

Appendix List of Key Documents specific to this Examination

Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Submission Version 19 November 2015

Appendix 1 Sustainability Report

Area Map

Basic Conditions Statement Submission Version 19 November 2015

Consultation Statement Submission Version 19 November 2015

Screening Statement by CDC on the need for SEA dated 9 September 2015

The Cherwell Local Plan 2011- 2031 Part 1 adopted 20 July 2015

Cherwell Local Plan November 1996 and Proposals Map

Various evidence documents and other information on the Parish website and links within the documents referred to above

List ends

Appendix Questions from the Examiner

Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Examination

Questions of clarification from the Examiner to the Parish Council and CDC

Having completed an initial review of the Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) and some of the evidence submitted in support of it, I would be grateful if both Councils could kindly assist me as appropriate in answering the following questions which either relate to matters of fact or are areas in which I seek clarification or further information.

Please ensure that your answers are as brief as possible and factual in nature. Please do not send or direct me to evidence that is not already publicly available.

1. Does Bloxham have a defined settlement boundary or built up area boundary or an otherwise defined extent of the “existing built up limits” referred to in Policy BL2 in the (CDC) development plan or anywhere else?
2. Policy BL10 refers to development within the Bloxham Conservation Area and in particular refers to the Conservation Area Appraisal of 2007 (CAA). Please confirm whether or not that it was the intention of this policy to:
 - a) refer to the Conservation Area boundary as shown in the CAA and if so confirm that this is still the up to date/current Conservation Area boundary
 - b) any guidance in the CAA was to be complied with
 - c) the “preservation of important open spaces, important gaps in the built form and significant views into and out of the area” were those defined and identified in the CAA.
3. Policy BL11 refers to the preservation of “public open space”, but there is no indication of the location of public open spaces. Was it the intention that the policy would preserve public open space generally?
4. Policy BL12 refers to a number of things:
 - a. Key views
 - b. The Church
 - c. Key views and street scenes which are then identified as 1) Bloxham School main building, 2) Hobb Hill from i) Courtington Lane across the Bloxham School rugby pitch and ii) from the public footpath and 3) Red Lion Garden
 - d. Amenity green spaces referred to in the Open Space Assessment of 2006
 - e. Views from public rights of way in Appendix 5
 - f. Recently approved schemes including the Country Park and space adjacent to Barford Road and entrance to the Business Park

Please confirm or not whether it is the intention to restrict development that would endanger visual impact on all of the key views identified in the CAA (Policy BL12a.).

Please confirm whether it is the amenity green spaces identified in the Open Space Assessment of 2006 that Policy BL12 b. ii. seeks to cover. If this is the case, please list the spaces concerned, numbering them and identify and define each numbered space on a map.

I cannot find an appendix 5. Please advise.

Is it intended that Policy BL12 b. iii. applies to all public rights of way in the Parish?

Please confirm or not whether it was the intention to preserve all amenity areas in recently approved developments.

5. Page 14 of the Plan refers to appendices 3 and 4, but I cannot find any such appendices. Please advise.
6. Page 52 of the Plan refers to an appendix in the Consultation Statement in relation to the Bloxham projects, but I cannot find any such appendix. Please advise.
7. On which date was the neighbourhood plan submitted to CDC?
8. The Basic Conditions Statement only refers to the CDC Local Plan and not the saved policies of the Local Plan 1996 which still forms part of the development plan. Please indicate whether you consider any of the saved policies of the Local Plan 1996 are 'strategic' and if so whether the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with those, providing me with a list of those relevant policies as appropriate.
9. A representation (Cerde Planning Ltd on behalf of Cala Homes) indicates that an outline planning application was submitted on land south of Ells Lane. Please update me on the latest position with the application i.e. has it been determined and if so, what was the outcome?

It may be the case that on receipt of your anticipated assistance on these matters that I may need to ask for further clarification or that further queries will occur as the examination progresses. Please note that this list of clarification questions is a public document and that your answers will also be in the public domain. Both my questions and your responses should be placed on the Councils' websites as appropriate.

With many thanks.

Ann Skippers

9 May 2016

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CDC and BPC responses – 13/05/16

Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Examination

Questions of clarification from the Examiner to the Parish Council and CDC

Having completed an initial review of the Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) and some of the evidence submitted in support of it, I would be grateful if both Councils could kindly assist me as appropriate in answering the following questions which either relate to matters of fact or are areas in which I seek clarification or further information.

Please ensure that your answers are as brief as possible and factual in nature. Please do not send or direct me to evidence that is not already publicly available.

1. Does Bloxham have a defined settlement boundary or built up area boundary or an otherwise defined extent of the “existing built up limits” referred to in Policy BL2 in the (CDC) development plan or anywhere else?

CDC Response:

No. The Cherwell Local Plan 2011 to 2031 nor the 1996 adopted Local Plan, nor any other recent relevant planning policy document, do not contain defined settlement boundaries or built up area boundaries for Bloxham or a defined extent of the existing built up limits of Bloxham. The same applies to all settlements in Cherwell District.

BPC Response:

No, the term was incorporated within the document to be consistent with the Local Plan Part 1.

2. Policy BL10 refers to development within the Bloxham Conservation Area and in particular refers to the Conservation Area Appraisal of 2007 (CAA). Please confirm whether or not that it was the intention of this policy to:

a) refer to the Conservation Area boundary as shown in the CAA and if so confirm that this is still the up to date/current Conservation Area boundary

BPC Response (agreed with CDC):

The intention of the policy was to refer to the Bloxham Conservation Area boundary, whichever is the most up to date. The boundary in the 2007 Conservation Area Appraisal is the most up to date/current Conservation Area boundary for Bloxham.

b) any guidance in the CAA was to be complied with

BPC Response:

Yes, any guidance was to be complied with, as appropriate.

c) the “preservation of important open spaces, important gaps in the built form and significant views into and out of the area” were those defined and identified in the CAA.

BPC Response:

Yes, those referred to in the 2007 CAA or future Conservation Area Appraisal.

3. Policy BL11 refers to the preservation of “public open space”, but there is no indication of the location of public open spaces. Was it the intention that the policy would preserve public open space generally?

BPC Response:

Yes.

4. Policy BL12 refers to a number of things:

- a. Key views
- b. The Church
- c. Key views and street scenes which are then identified as 1) Bloxham School main building, 2) Hobb Hill from i) Courtington Lane across the Bloxham School rugby pitch and ii) from the public footpath and 3) Red Lion Garden
- d. Amenity green spaces referred to in the Open Space Assessment of 2006
- e. Views from public rights of way in Appendix 5
- f. Recently approved schemes including the Country Park and space adjacent to Barford Road and entrance to the Business Park

Please confirm or not whether it is the intention to restrict development that would endanger visual impact on all of the key views identified in the CAA (Policy BL12a.).

BPC Response:

The intention of the policy is to restrict development that would endanger visual impact on all the key views identified in the CAA.

Please confirm whether it is the amenity green spaces identified in the Open Space Assessment of 2006 that Policy BL12 b. ii. seeks to cover. If this is the case, please list the spaces concerned, numbering them and identify and define each numbered space on a map.

BPC Response:

The reference to amenity spaces includes those identified in the Council's PPG 17 Assessment - Open Space, sport and recreational facilities needs assessment audit and strategy (Aug 2006). These are listed below and shown on the attached map.

- 1. The Avenue Amenity Green Space*
- 2. Cumberford Close Amenity Green Space*
- 3. Greenhills Park Amenity Green Space*
- 4. Gascoigne Way Amenity Green Space*
- 5. Barford Road Amenity Green Space*

The paragraph (note) below (which should now actually say 'above' as policy BL12 is now above this paragraph in the Submission Plan) the policy also refers to those secured by legal agreements attached to planning permissions granted since 2006.

CDC Note:

CDC would be happy to provide details of these planning permissions for the examiner upon request and with the agreement of BPC.

For the examiner's awareness CDC advises that a 2011 update to the 2006 PPG17 Open Space assessment is available at <http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=9641>

CDC also advises that Map 6 of a recently produced Issues Paper for Local Plan part 2 illustrates amenity spaces, which is available on the Councils' website <http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=10941>

I cannot find an appendix 5. Please advise.

BPC Response:

There is no appendix 5 in the Submission Plan. The cross reference should be to the Plan on Page 48.

Is it intended that Policy BL12 b. iii. applies to all public rights of way in the Parish?

BPC Response:

Yes. (please note the Plan on page 48 does not show the whole Parish)

Please confirm or not whether it was the intention to preserve all amenity areas in recently approved developments.

BPC Response:

Yes, it was the intention to preserve all amenity areas in recently approved developments (please note CDC's offer to identify these if required).

5. Page 14 of the Plan refers to appendices 3 and 4, but I cannot find any such appendices. Please advise.

BPC Response:

Appendices 3 and 4 are located at the end of the Plan. They are both single pages. Appendix 3 is titled 'The Plan Making Process' and Appendix 4 is titled 'Public Engagement'.

6. Page 52 of the Plan refers to an appendix in the Consultation Statement in relation to the Bloxham projects, but I cannot find any such appendix. Please advise.

BPC Response:

There is no separate appendix for 'Bloxham projects' as part of the submitted Plan. However the projects are shown in the Main Consultation Statement in section 9, page 16.

7. On which date was the neighbourhood plan submitted to CDC?

BPC and CDC Response:

19 November 2015.

8. The Basic Conditions Statement only refers to the CDC Local Plan and not the saved policies of the Local Plan 1996 which still forms part of the development plan. Please indicate whether you consider any of the saved policies of the Local Plan 1996 are 'strategic' and if so whether the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with those, providing me with a list of those relevant policies as appropriate.

CDC Response:

Appendix 7 of the Local Plan 2011-2031 contains a list of replaced and retained saved policies. Those shown as replaced are those replaced by the Local Plan 2011-2031. Of those saved policies shown as retained in appendix 7 none of those are considered strategic.

9. A representation (Cerde Planning Ltd on behalf of Cala Homes) indicates that an outline planning application was submitted on land south of Ells Lane. Please update me on the latest position with the application i.e. has it been determined

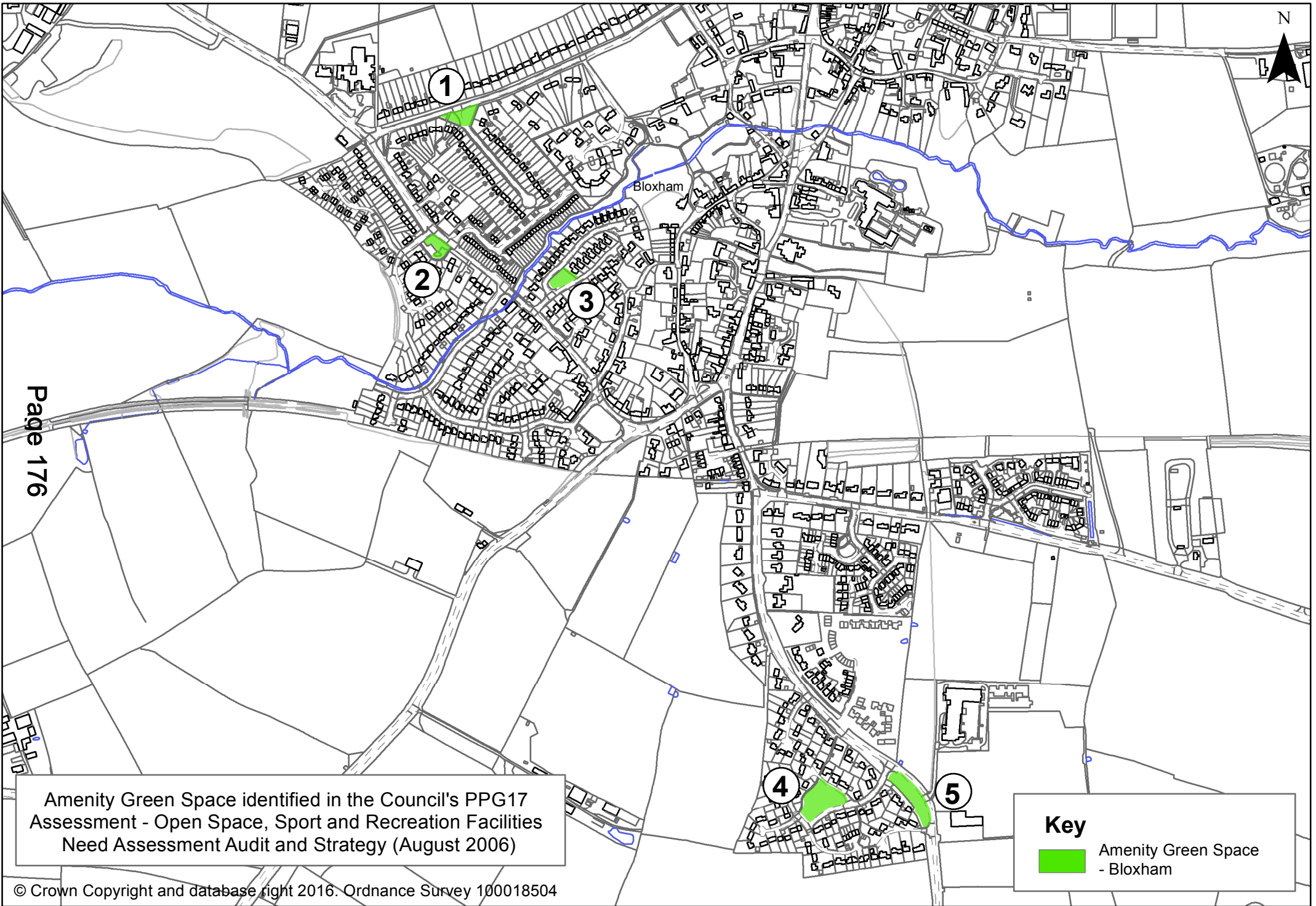
and if so, what was the outcome?

CDC Response:

The planning application (CDC REF: 15/00604/OUT which covers the same site area as shown in the Cerda Planning Ltd representation to the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan) was validated by the Council on the 7 April 2015 but was withdrawn on 9 June 2015.

It may be the case that on receipt of your anticipated assistance on these matters that I may need to ask for further clarification or that further queries will occur as the examination progresses. Please note that this list of clarification questions is a public document and that your answers will also be in the public domain. Both my questions and your responses should be placed on the Councils' websites as appropriate.

With many thanks.
Ann Skippers
9 May 2016



[REDACTED]

Dear Sir,

5 December 2015

re. Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2031

I consider that the plan is most acceptable, especially its reference to the flooding problem in the village. The flooding problem along Countington Lane was solved when Smiths drained their fields along the lane. This shows that new developments must ensure it does not cause a new flood problem.

The one area that will be a problem - the Primary School. Children come from outside the village, it is already full & will be a problem. Some action, change catchment area, build new buildings or a new school elsewhere, are all possible.

One item that was mentioned was the importance of retaining Key Views. I think this includes the retaining of the views of historic buildings as alterations there can so easily change that aspect of the village.

Yours faithfully

[REDACTED]

R E Everitt



Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Consultation

My comments on the Plan follow:-

A sense of community is initiated through friendships formed in the school playground, and at the school gate. **Policy BL2 and BL9d** underline the need for development that comprehensively addresses the pressures placed on young children (*and their parents*) in their early learning years. These Policies are clearly focussed on the need to achieve a cohesive, sustainable community, and avoid the recently documented instances of children as young as 4yrs being "taxied" to distant schools because the village school capacity has been exceeded. (Ref. NPPF para 38).

Oxfordshire County Council's Flood Risk Assessment Reports have in recent years referenced Bloxham as one of the areas worst affected by the combination of flooding from "river plus run-off". They describe the village and surrounding area as a "Flood Hot Spot". In consequence

Policy BL7 and BL14 sensibly addresses the need to undertake genuinely sustainable development in areas of the village that are not susceptible to flood nor are likely to exacerbate the risk of flooding elsewhere in the village. (Ref. NPPF paras 94, 100). *NB as I write, the Environment Agency has issued another Flood Alert for Bloxham Brook and Sor Brook.*

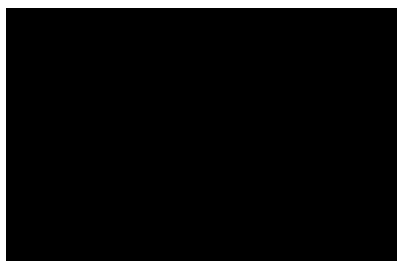
Recent Housing Developments and property adaptations have placed strain on the rural feel in several areas of the village, notably the encroachment onto open spaces, urbanisation of Public Rights of Way and the destruction of established trees and "old" hedgerow habitats. It is for these reasons that I wish to specifically emphasise my support for policy **BL11, BL12 and BL17**. (Ref. NPPF para 73, 74, 75).

I support the themes and all the policies in the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2031. I also agree that for future development to be sustainable within the village it is now absolutely essential that appropriate infrastructure is provided as an integral part of all proposals for development (a factor specifically addressed in many of the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan policies).

NB I wish to be kept informed of the Plan Progress.

Regards,

David Yates



Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Consultation

Alan Mole



Dear Examiner

The Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan has been very carefully prepared in accord with all of the regulatory requirements and consultation and offers a significantly sustainable way forward for village development.

In particular I would like you to note my support for the following:

Policy BL2 (conditional also on BL1) this policy fully supports a sustainable way forward that addresses development proposals for limited smaller scale dwellings (consistent also with policy BL9d) with full regard to the critical aspects important to the local and wider community.

Policy BL11. This policy fully supports the need to respect the local character and the historic and natural assets of the area. In particular housing density, appropriate building materials, open green spaces that support biodiversity and natural habitats. This policy fully supports the need to maintain the rural character of the village.

Please address and consider all the resident comments when judging the plan.

Regards

Alan Mole

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

Neighbourhood Plan Proposal – Bloxham Parish **Consultation Response Form**

Bloxham Parish Council has submitted its proposed Neighbourhood Plan to Cherwell District Council under Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The proposed Neighbourhood Plan and related documents can be viewed online at www.cherwell.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning/ or as a hard copy at our Bodicote House offices, Banbury OX15 4AA 8.30am – 5.00pm and at Bloxham Mill Business Centre, Barford Road, Bloxham, Banbury, OX15 4FF from 8.30am – 3.45pm Monday – Friday.

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Representations can be made using this form and should be emailed to planning.policy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk or posted to Planning Policy, Cherwell District Council, Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury OX15 4AA.

Neighbourhood Plans are not examined in the same manner as plans produced by Local Authorities. **Importantly, the Examiner is not to consider any matter other than those in the box below. As such, representations should only relate to such matters.**

When examining the Neighbourhood Plan, the Examiner is required to consider the following:

- A** whether the draft neighbourhood development plan meets the basic conditions (see paragraphs E-H)
- B** whether the draft neighbourhood development plan complies with the provision made by or under sections 38A and 38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
- C** whether the area for any referendum should extend beyond the neighbourhood area to which the draft neighbourhood development plan relates
- D** whether the draft neighbourhood development plan is compatible with the European Convention on Human Rights

The draft neighbourhood development plan meets the basic conditions if:

- E** having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood development plan
- F** the making of the neighbourhood development plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development
- G** the making of the neighbourhood development plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area,
- H** the making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.

Please include your contact details below

Name

Email/Postal Address

Name D A Jones

Please indicate if you wish to be notified about subsequent progress of the neighbourhood plan, including when the District Council makes a decision about 'making' the plan (under Regulation 19), by marking 'X' in the box below:

Using information contained in the box on Page 1, please indicate which paragraph your representation relates to by marking an 'X' in the appropriate box(es) below:

A

B

C

D

If your representation relates to paragraph A, please identify which of the following your representation relates to by marking 'X' in the appropriate box(es)

E

F

G

H

Please use the following space to write your representation, clearly stating the policy, paragraph or page number you are commenting on. Continue on further sheets, as necessary.

I support the draft plan in the above areas but would especially stress the relevance of point F, sustainability. We have already seen with the level of development taking place currently that whilst it is an oft stated mantra it seems to be sidelined or ignored in the granting of planning permissions. Schools, doctors and dentist are all over subscribed in the village yet every plan is passed on the basis that there is sustainable resource available. I feel it incumbent on you to ensure that the proposed sustainability requirements in the draft plan are seen as realistic and achievable and not just a comment to be read.

I also believe that the need for continued footpath access must be ensured as two of the recent approved developments are building across footpaths which whilst they will remain it is not the same walking across fields as it will be walking along roads..

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, occupying most of the upper half of the page. It is intended for the main content of the document.

(continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

Do you have any comments to make on the supporting documents?

A smaller, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, located below the question. It is intended for the user to provide comments on the supporting documents.



(continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

I am e-mailing to express my support for the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan which I understand is in the final stages of review & consultation, I would in particular draw you attention to the following Policies as I believe that they are critical to the future development of Bloxham as a sustainable Village:

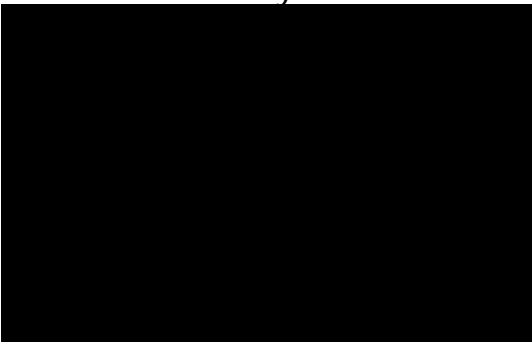
Policy	Reasons it's important to sustainability
BL10 seeks more protection for the Conservation Area	Recommendations of the Conservation Area document should be strictly enforced
BL11 is about protecting the rural nature of the village.	Sustainability includes respecting the historic character – our “rural sense of place.”
BL12 seeks to protect key views such as the Church, Bloxham School and views to and from Hobb Hill	A characteristic of rural villages is more open space. Protecting those spaces and views most important to residents has to be a priority.

BL2 recommends further developments be of a minor nature

Bloxham has grown hugely and this plan matches development to highly evidenced estimates of attainable infrastructure capacity (e.g. schools, services, village pavements, drainage and traffic.)

I look forward the Plan being forwarded to the Examiner for approval. I remain yours,

Andrew R Dixey

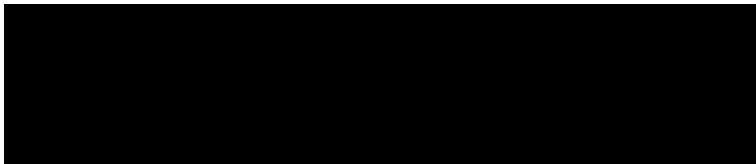


Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Consultation

I have tried using the CDC form but once saved it fails to re-open properly in my version of MS Word and so I am sending this email instead.

I would like to be kept informed of the progress of the plan.

John Groves



Comments

Policy BL1 Para A - This recognises the Local Plan requirement for the 35 category A and B villages to accommodate 1504 new dwellings and guarantees Bloxham's proper contribution towards this.

Policy BL2 Para A : This policy also seems sensible. In the light of recent Cherwell comments 15/00604/OUT about the existing over-concentration of new houses in Bloxham, supplementing the major development of Policy BL1 with further ongoing minor development shows a positive approach to development that nonetheless does not discard the genuine sustainability concerns which are commented upon in more detail below.

Policies BL4 & 5 Para A. These represent an eminently sensible attempt to address the parking situation given the traffic & parking issues already prevailing in a village bisected by the 8th most dangerous stretch of road in the UK.

The policies are very well evidenced by car ownership data. The (now confirmed) cuts in public transport can only increase the use of private vehicles and, following the ministerial announcement on this topic, it seems to have finally been recognised that inadequate parking does not discourage car ownership when no alternative public transport is available. Rather it simply exacerbates problems.

Policy BL8 Para A is again well evidenced within the questionnaire data where the biggest demand over the period of this plan is likely to be for open-market accessible and adaptable dwellings. Developers seem highly reticent to voluntarily provide such open-market dwellings despite the known demographic changes and the fact that keeping ageing people in properly adaptive homes is by far the lowest cost solution from a national perspective. It is amazing that there is no national strategy upon this!

Policy BL9 Para A: S106 'planning obligations cash' from developers for school places does nothing to offset the sustainability deficit if those places are outside of the village and Oxon CC have made crystal clear that this is exactly what will happen in the event of further large-scale development in Bloxham The consequences will be hugely problematic for working parents, harmful to village cohesion and will make worse the already dire traffic at exactly the wrong time of day. Retention of Policy BL9d is absolutely essential and totally consistent with NPPF sustainability criteria. It is also consistent with NPPF para 72 "The

Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places” and para 38 “key facilities such as primary schools and local shops should be located within walking distance of most properties.”

Policy BL11 Para A This policy is not seeking to stifle innovation or impose uniformity but it does seek that development shows proper respect to protect or enhances the existing sense of place.- as set out in the NPPF foreword and para 58 – “establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit.” It

Policy BL12 Para The village long ago lost its village green to the A361 construction and residents are aware of the urbanising impact associated with ongoing loss of openness in our rural setting. There is very strong village support for protection of the open views associated with certain specific key village areas. Some of these were originally proposed for Local Green Space designation but objections to this were taken on-board as the aim was never to preclude development but rather to ensure any such development is done in a manner that respects our rural heritage.

Policy BL17-19. Para A Regrettably the significant recent and ongoing expansion of the village has not been accompanied by any planning obligations to increase the amount of land available for sport which has consequently now slipped below the recommended levels. Given this it is important that we protect the recreation areas that we do have especially since these also contribute to providing the open spaces referred to above.

Comments on the supporting documents

Policies in general – the Plan appears to recognise a responsibility to contribute appropriately to ongoing sustainable development whilst at the same time following NPPF policy (para 58) to “respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation.” We also note the extensive work that has taken place in the creation of this plan to properly assess the scope and limitations for infrastructure. The full documentation distinguishes between where improvements are feasible (such as electricity & gas), where such improvements are possible but in reality will not happen (such as primary school expansion) and where improvement is simply infeasible given the medieval nature of the main village (such as pavements that can never offer safe access to shops and services or the dearth of parking near the retail area.) This is all totally consistent with NPPF para 177 that notes a requirement “there should be a reasonable prospect that planned infrastructure is deliverable in a timely fashion.”

The sustainability report seems particularly pertinent and offers a much more detailed appraisal of the situation than does the inevitably broad-brush CRAITLUS document from Cherwell D.C.

We note - from the content of the NP website - it is also backed up by another 400 pages of evidence in the reports from the various neighbourhood planning groups along with further expert reports that are totally consistent with the plan’s assessments regarding connectivity, traffic and general infrastructure in Bloxham. Whereas the CRAITLUS report is essentially a desk-top, tick-box exercise in whether or not the village has certain facilities conferring

sustainability the Neighbourhood Plan takes a hard, well informed look at the capacity and accessibility of those facilities and the realistic feasibility of their improvement. The NPPF has an assumption in favour of sustainable development. This plan adopts a positive approach to development but at the same time assumes that the NPPF emphasis on sustainability is real. History will be the ultimate judge!

[REDACTED]

In my opinion, as a resident of Bloxham, this Bloxham Neighbourhood Development Plan has been developed by the community to ensure that the village retains its character whilst at the same time supporting and endorsing truly sustainable development, linked to the existing village infrastructure and services and the Adopted Plan for Cherwell District Council.

BL1

Response: This policy is in conformity to Policy Villages 2 in CDC's Local Plan Part 1

BL2

Response: this policy conforms with CDC's Local Plan Part 1 Policy Villages 1 C254 and C262. The Policy recognises the role that Bloxham has played in accommodating unplanned development in the past and now seeks recognition of the failing infrastructure to provide services for existing residents.

BL3.

Response: This policy takes its lead from Policy Villages 2 and interprets it within the confines of Bloxham.

BL4

This Policy recognises the existing problems experienced within Bloxham, including the new developments, where either inappropriate or inadequate parking provision has been made and the policy seeks to address those problems.

BL7

Response: This Policy reflects Policy ESD 6, ESD 7 and Policy Villages 2 of CDC's Local Plan Part 1 and seeks to add local weight especially in the area of known flood risk and surface water/ground water flooding. Recent new housing developments within the village are reliant on pumping solutions to manage on-site drainage. Thames Water are in the process of assessing the adequacy of the current sewage system to meet the needs of existing developments. This Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure that any future development is sound and supportable.

BL9

Response: This Policy reflects and gives more local weight in support of CDC's Local Plan Part 1 Policy Villages 2 notably by seeking to enhance the built environment.

BL10

Response: as above, this Policy reflects Policy Villages 2, as well as point B255 and Policy ESD 15 of CDC's Local Plan Part 1.

BL11

Response: This policy is in conformity to B87, Policy ESD15 and Policy Villages 2. This shows the depth of concern that the Community in Bloxham have, regarding further erosion of the rural character of the village by large scale amorphous developments, together with the acknowledged need to preserve wildlife habitats. In point "f" this Policy endorses the draft pre consultation document for Local Plan part 2, in seeking to create new public open space

BL12

Response: This policy is in conformity to C264 and ESD 15 in CDC's Local Plan Part 1, in seeking to protect valued spaces that the village community have identified.

BL17

Response: This Neighbourhood plan seeks to support CDC's Local Plan Part 1 A25, Policy BSC 10; B158; B159.

Full Name: Michael William Davy



I think the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan offers a sustainable way forward for village development.

I would especially like you to note my support for the following:

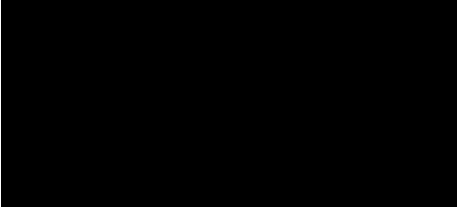
Policy BL2 because the new estates are not of a scale & design in keeping with the size of a rural village or its infrastructure leading to villagers not being able to send their children to the local school & the roads being very busy & in my view over crowded.

Policy BL 10 & B11 because of the new developments the retention of the conservation area is even more important so as to safeguard the essence of the village as a rural place to live & protecting these areas for generations to come.

I would like to be kept informed of the progress of this plan as I see it as essential in maintaining the rural nature of the village.

Michael W. Davy

Phillip Slater



I would like to comment on the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan - I think the plan represents a solid & sustainable plan for the future of our village and a meaningful contribution to the needs of the district and the county housing needs. There are several key policy aspects but the fundamental parts for me cover

Policies BL1 & BL2 - Bloxham has been subjected to uncontrolled & opportunist building projects in the last five years which have strained our sustainability beyond breaking point. Transport, infrastructure & education are all suffering and will only get worse as current building projects progress - this plan recognises those difficulties & offers control of future growth so that the rural nature of the community is protected as far as is possible.

Policies BL10, 11 & 12 are also critical to ensure that we protect the valuable assets that we have today and develop the village around them in such a way that we preserve the conservation area, the views of the Church & School.

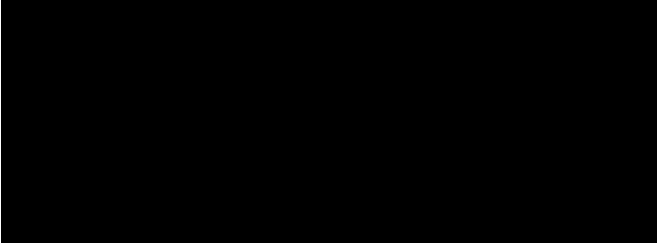
I look forward to seeing the final Cherwell plan reflecting these considerations too

Please keep me informed as this process progresses

regards

Phill Slater

Janis Sorrell



Dear Sirs

I think the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan offers a sustainable way forward for village development. I agree with all the policies listed but I would especially like you to note my support for the following:

Policy BL1 because Bloxham has grown so much in recent years and has almost doubled in size since I moved here in 1972. In particular, the primary school, doctors' surgery and roads cannot take any more pressure.

Policy BL8 because I have been looking to downsize to a smaller house for some time and can find nothing suitable in Bloxham.

I would like to be kept informed of the progress of this plan.

Yours faithfully
Janis Sorrell (Mrs)

Neighbourhood Plan Proposal – Bloxham Parish

Consultation Response Form

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- G** the making of the neighbourhood development plan is in general conformity with the

strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area,

H the making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.

Please include your contact details below

Name

Email/Postal Address

Mrs V Moyses [REDACTED]

Please indicate if you wish to be notified about subsequent progress of the neighbourhood plan, including when the District Council makes a decision about 'making' the plan (under Regulation 19), by marking 'X' in the box below:

Using information contained in the box on Page 1, please indicate which paragraph your representation relates to by marking an 'X' in the appropriate box(es) below:

A **B** **C** **D**

If your representation relates to paragraph A, please identify which of the following your representation relates to by marking 'X' in the appropriate box(es)

E **F** **G** **H**

Please use the following space to write your representation, clearly stating the policy, paragraph or page number you are commenting on. Continue on further sheets, as necessary.

I can't find any chapters or sections in the plan designated by letters of the alphabet. I don't see why I have to tick a box simply in order to make a complaint about something which is NOT in the plan. I do not know where something would be if it HAD been included, but it wasn't, so my tick is irrelevant . You may ignore the Box A. I refer to Theme 4. I have actually read the entire text of the plan, looking for information on recreation spaces. I found reference to sports pitches, but pitches are predominantly and primarily used by boys, mostly for football. It is no good telling me that girls can use the pitches too, but boys always get their way when they want the space. I want the village to do more for girls and to provide more facilities specifically intended for them . "Specifically for girls" means, not just " they can join in if they want to". "They can join in if they want to" always means that girls will be crowded out by boys. And it is all very well saying the village needs better mobile phone coverage – we all know that. What – if anything is being done to get it ?

(continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

Do you have any comments to make on the supporting documents?

The notification letter arrived through my letter box on Jan 9th. Not much time to reply

(continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

Neighbourhood Plan Proposal – Bloxham Parish **Consultation Response Form**

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Please include your contact details below

Name

Email/Postal Address

Mary Groves [REDACTED]

Please indicate if you wish to be notified about subsequent progress of the neighbourhood plan, including when the District Council makes a decision about 'making' the plan (under Regulation 19), by marking 'X' in the box below:

X

Using information contained in the box on Page 1, please indicate which paragraph your representation relates to by marking an 'X' in the appropriate box(es) below:

A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>	C <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>
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If your representation relates to paragraph A, please identify which of the following your representation relates to by marking 'X' in the appropriate box(es)

E <input type="checkbox"/>	F <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	G <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	H <input type="checkbox"/>
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Please use the following space to write your representation, clearly stating the policy, paragraph or page number you are commenting on. Continue on further sheets, as necessary.

<p>Policy BL1 Bloxham has experienced significant growth in recent years. The Neighbourhood Plan acknowledges a further 85 houses to be built on the Milton Road and further small developments, typically comprising 5 or fewer dwellings. The infrastructure in Bloxham has not been improved to match the recent growth in population and, therefore, the above proposal is reasonable.</p> <p>Policy BL4 Parking on pavements is a significant problem in Bloxham, not only in the older conservation area, but also on new estates where insufficient parking to accommodate the needs of modern families and their visitors has been provided. With no comprehensive public transport system in Bloxham and a serious lack of safe cycle ways, families are very dependent on cars, particularly to access work, and shops and leisure in Banbury. Cars parked on pavements in Bloxham pose a significant hazard and it is depressing to witness the lack of thoughtful planning in this regard and imperative that future planning provides space for the necessary car parking. It is has recently been announced that bus services are to be cut, not increased, and there has been no</p>

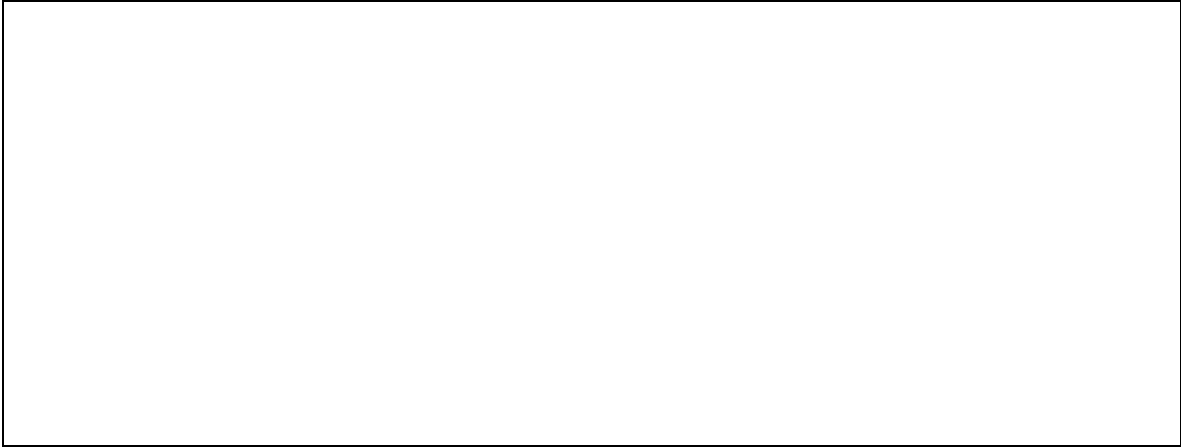
pressure put on developers to pay for safe cycle paths to Banbury. Cars are obviously essential for most people living in Bloxham.

BL9

Drainage can be a significant problem in Bloxham owing to heavy clay and insufficient infrastructure. Fears expressed locally that new houses on the Barford Road would exacerbate the problems with drainage from the neighbouring ditches can now be seen to be justified. It is essential that planning takes local knowledge and experience into account.

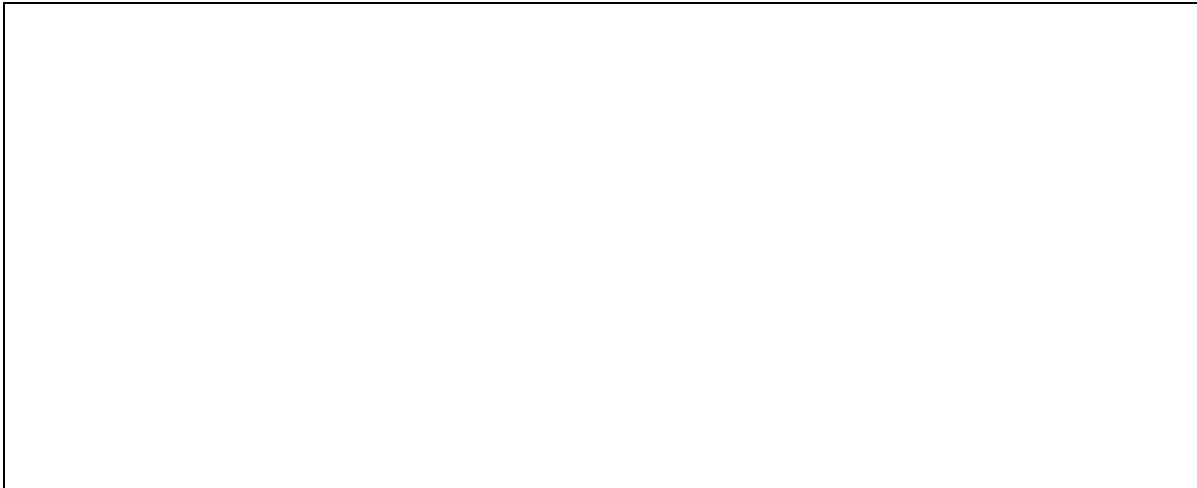
Policy BL12

There are some significant landmarks and views in Bloxham which make the village special. The recently opened Circular Walk includes the wonderful views across Hobb Hill. At the entrance to the main part of Bloxham the playing fields of Bloxham School provide a distinctive view which is well known and appreciated locally. Such views are essential for Bloxham to retain its character and distinctiveness. The Red Lion Garden is the closest that Bloxham has to a village green and it is essential that it is retained for the enjoyment of future generations.



(continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

Do you have any comments to make on the supporting documents?



(continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

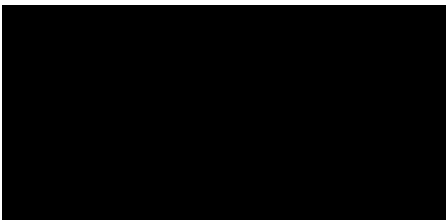
Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing in support of all the policies set out in the above Plan.


I would also add that I think the Red Lion Pub site should be set aside for modest homes for retired people without driving licences, incorporating some parking for carers and visitors. This site is ideal for older persons who can walk/scooter but no longer drive, This would not add to the village or reatil traffic congestion

Kind regards

Beverley Baxendine



Full Name(s): Pat and David Keable



We think the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan offers a sustainable way forward for village development. We would especially like you to note our support for the following:
Policy BL8 because there are a significant number of elderly people living in the village (some for many years) who

wish to downsize to smaller properties, particularly bungalows. Failure to provide these dwellings will force many of us to leave the village.

Policy BL 17-19 because we believe we believe we need better facilities particularly for our young people.

We would like to be kept informed of the progress of this plan.

Pat and David Keable

To whom it may concern.

Please find below my comments on the above subject.

BL2 - I am not against this policy as long as all the comments of the villagers are listen to and the ground topography is taken into account. The village is full of springs and these means that water is always finding a way to come out (e.g Permission to build 3 houses on a plot where there was a bungalow on the main Bloxham Road. This means that the main road becomes wet and freezes in winter, very dangerous.

BL3 - All new development should be able to be reached by foot and have appropriate pavements.

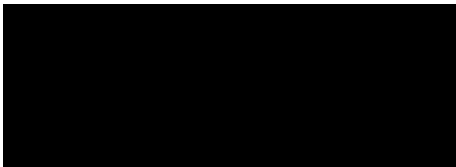
BL4 - Parking becomes a real issue in the village so on-site parking is a must.

BL10 - The Conservation Area needs to be protected, material used to build new dwellings should be in keeping with the rest of of the houses.

BL15 - Improve digital communications (mobile and Broadband) is a must as the village becomes bigger.

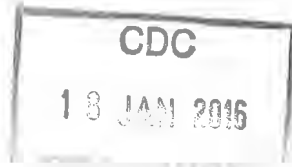
Regards

Therese Janes





Planning Policy
Cherwell District Council
Bodicote House
Banbury OX15 4AA



14th Jan 2016

Dear Sirs,

BLOXHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

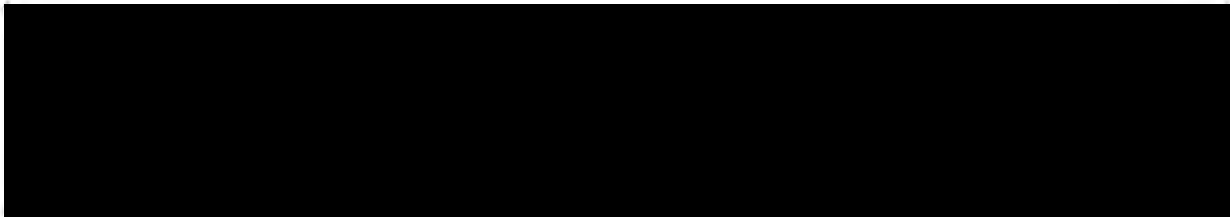
I am writing in support of this plan which has been put together with much work and input from the residents of Bloxham.

I would particularly like to stress my strong support for the item BL9, which asks that new dwellings should not result in a worse outcome for existing residents in matters such as water pressure, traffic, and especially access to in-village schools.

Bloxham has had so many new estates built around it, with more to come, that it has put immense pressure on school places and now means that children living in the village are now unlikely to be offered a place when the time comes for them to join, or for new residents to find places for their children when they buy a house in Bloxham.

I would also strongly support item BL8, which calls for provision for older people to be able to downsize to small and convenient dwellings. There are many retired persons who would be glad to move from large houses to smaller ones, but there is a serious lack of these.

Yours faithfully,



Mrs D P M Spring

Planning Policy
Cherwell District Council
Bodicote House
Banbury OX15 4AA



January 16 2016

Dear Sirs,

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – BLOXHAM

We have been studying the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan and would like to express our wholehearted support for this well-researched and much needed work.

Bloxham has been overwhelmed by the sudden increase in new housing over the past few years, with at least two more estates in the pipeline, putting immense pressure on facilities, not least in respect of the availability of the school places in the village. In this respect we would especially like to emphasise the importance of BL9 in terms of the new dwellings imposing a worse outcome for residents in many aspects.

What the village needs now is time to draw breath, ensure that there are good sporting facilities, parking areas, an undisturbed water supply (there seem to be constant problems with the underground piping), and drainage also remains something that needs attention. The school situation is dire, and the surgery is feeling the strain.

We hope that this well-thought out plan will be well received by planners at all levels and that the concerns expressed by residents will be carefully considered and acted upon.

Yours faithfully,

DAVID GUARD

CARMEN M. GUARD



Neighbourhood Plan Proposal – Bloxham Parish Consultation Response Form

Bloxham Parish Council has submitted its proposed Neighbourhood Plan to Cherwell District Council under Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The proposed Neighbourhood Plan and related documents can be viewed online at www.cherwell.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning/ or as a hard copy at our Bodicote House offices, Banbury OX15 4AA 8.45am – 5.15pm and at Bloxham Mill Business Centre, Barford Road, Bloxham, Banbury, OX15 4FF from 8.30am – 3.45pm Monday – Friday.

Under Regulation 16, we are now required to publicise the Plan and supporting documents for a period of not less than 6 weeks and to invite represents before it is submitted for Examination. The consultation period will run between **Friday 27 November 2015** and **Friday, 22 January 2016**. The statutory period has been extended by two weeks to allow for the holiday period. **Representations received outside this period may not be accepted.**

Representations can be made using this form and should be emailed to planning.policy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk or posted to Planning Policy, Cherwell District Council, Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury OX15 4AA.

Neighbourhood Plans are not examined in the same manner as plans produced by Local Authorities. **Importantly, the Examiner is not to consider any matter other than those in the box below. As such, representations should only relate to such matters.**

When examining the Neighbourhood Plan, the Examiner is required to consider the following:

- A** whether the draft neighbourhood development plan meets the basic conditions (see paragraphs E-H)
- B** whether the draft neighbourhood development plan complies with the provision made by or under sections 38A and 38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
- C** whether the area for any referendum should extend beyond the neighbourhood area to which the draft neighbourhood development plan relates
- D** whether the draft neighbourhood development plan is compatible with the European Convention on Human Rights

The draft neighbourhood development plan meets the basic conditions if:

- E** having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood development plan
- F** the making of the neighbourhood development plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development
- G** the making of the neighbourhood development plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area,
- H** the making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.

Please include your contact details below

Name *Mary + David Goode*

Email/Postal Address



Please indicate if you wish to be notified about subsequent progress of the neighbourhood plan, including when the District Council makes a decision about 'making' the plan (under Regulation 19), by marking 'X' in the box below:

Using information contained in the box on Page 1, please indicate which paragraph your representation relates to by marking an 'X' in the appropriate box(es) below:

A

B

C

D

If your representation relates to paragraph A, please identify which of the following your representation relates to by marking 'X' in the appropriate box(es)

E

F

G

H

Please use the following space to write your representation, clearly stating the policy, paragraph or page number you are commenting on. Continue on further sheets, as necessary.

*Page 29.
B&G.
strongly agree all points
policy on regard for the
amenity of existing
residents.*

Page 33 B L 11

strongly agree a - i
policy contributing to
rural character of village

Page ~~50~~⁴⁵ ~~B~~^{B L 16} Strongly agree

policy to address emerging
need for additional retail

Page 50 B 17 Strongly agree
policy to protect important
recreation spaces

(continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

Do you have any comments to make on the supporting documents?

(continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

My Name is Stephen Phipps of [REDACTED]

My e-mail address is [REDACTED]

I wish to comment on the Plan which has had nearly two years spent on its production with some 80 residents and more involved in the process.

It is a village Plan for the village, which has seen much housing development in recent years and is expecting further developments shortly from agreed planning permissions.

The overall Plan aims to better control what further developments take to place up to 2031, and bearing in mind this rapid expansion of the village in recent years and the further development permissions agreed but not yet built.

The Plan offers a more sustainable way forward for the village and its present and future residents.

The village has and will support the Local Plan on housing numbers and its contribution already is substantial compared to other villages.

The Plan looks to give the village some breathing space on further expansion on the scale it has already seen, but which is not sustainable.

The Policies BL1 to BL19 balance overall and give a clear way forward for future developments and developers and I recommend that the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan be accepted.

Stephen Phipps

Cherwell District Council
Planning Policy Committee.
Bodicote House
P O Box 27
Banbury
OX15 4BH

19th January, 2016

Dear Sirs,

Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan

We would like to express our support for the above plan, and that of the policies included in the above reference document, and ask that they be approved by the planning policy committee.

Our support for the proposed plan is particularly centered on the following policies which recognize that:-

Policy BL1 and Policy BL2 The current village infrastructures (i.e. schools, services, traffic, pedestrian access and drainage) are at their maximum capacity and further development must be curtailed to prevent future overloading.

Policy BL4 All future developments will need to ensure that adequate parking facilities are provided to accommodate the increase in vehicular traffic that will obviously follow.

Policy BL8 The size of homes on new developments take into consideration the needs of both first time buyers and those wishing to downsize.

Policy BL10 Development within the village conservation area be constrained to ensure that it is in keeping with the ambience of the surroundings.

Policy BL11 and Policy BL12 The rural nature of the village is maintained to ensure that the visual aspect of various features and historic structures, i.e. St Mary's Church, Bloxhan School, thatched cottages, etc., are both maintained and respected.

Policy BL17 to Policy BL19 The existing recreational facilities for young children, outside of some of the more recent housing developments, are at best minimal, and in urgent need of improvement. Any additional development should ensure that contributions are made to the existing facilities.

We trust that our comments on the above policies are of interest to you and we ask you to take them into consideration when deliberating the whole plan. For our part we fully support the whole plan.

Yours faithfully,

W L & J F Richardson



Neighbourhood Plan Proposal – Bloxham Parish
Consultation Response Form

Bloxham Parish Council has submitted its proposed Neighbourhood Plan to Cherwell District Council under Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The proposed Neighbourhood Plan and related documents can be viewed online at www.cherwell.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning/ or as a hard copy at our Bodicote House offices, Banbury OX15 4AA 8.30am – 5.00pm and at Bloxham Mill Business Centre, Barford Road, Bloxham, Banbury, OX15 4FF from 8.30am – 3.45pm Monday – Friday.

Under Regulation 16, we are now required to publicise the Plan and supporting documents for a period of not less than 6 weeks and to invite represents before it is submitted for Examination. The consultation period will run between **Friday 27 November 2015** and **Friday, 22 January 2016**. The statutory period has been extended by two weeks to allow for the holiday period. **Representations received outside this period may not be accepted.**

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Neighbourhood Plans are not examined in the same manner as plans produced by Local Authorities. **Importantly, the Examiner is not to consider any matter other than those in the box below. As such, representations should only relate to such matters.**

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- B** whether the draft neighbourhood development plan complies with the provision made by or under sections 38A and 38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
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- G** the making of the neighbourhood development plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area,
- H** the making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.

Please include your contact details below

Name Bloxham School

Email/Postal Address

c/o Rebecca Lock
Fisher German LLP, 50 South Bar, Banbury OX16 9AB
[REDACTED]

Please indicate if you wish to be notified about subsequent progress of the neighbourhood plan, including when the District Council makes a decision about 'making' the plan (under Regulation 19), by marking 'X' in the box below:

Using information contained in the box on Page 1, please indicate which paragraph your representation relates to by marking an 'X' in the appropriate box(es) below:

A

B

C

D

If your representation relates to paragraph A, please identify which of the following your representation relates to by marking 'X' in the appropriate box(es)

E

F

G

H

Please use the following space to write your representation, clearly stating the policy, paragraph or page number you are commenting on. Continue on further sheets, as necessary.

Please see attached document – Bloxham School Consultation Response – Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan

[Empty rectangular box for comments]

(continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

Do you have any comments to make on the supporting documents?

Please see attached document – Bloxham School Consultation Response – Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan

(continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

Response to consultation on the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan

Submitted on behalf of

Bloxham School

21st January 2016

Rebecca Lock MRTPI MRICS

Fisher German LLP

50 South Bar

Banbury

Oxfordshire OX16 9AB

Tel: 01295 226292

Bloxham School Consultation Response – Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan

We make this submission on behalf of the governors and staff of Bloxham School.

Context

Bloxham School is a major employer in the village with 250 employees, of which over 80 live in the village. The school offers employment opportunities for people with a wide range of skills. This employment supports safe, low-carbon travel with many staff choosing to walk to work.

In addition, the school provides wider economic benefits: pupils, parents and staff use the local shops on the High Street and a significant number of retired teachers have chosen to remain in the village, with many active in the local community.

The school makes a significant contribution to community facilities. The swimming pool is open six mornings a week for public use, members of the public can use the fitness suite and squash courts most evenings, and sports facilities are available for use by local clubs when not being used by the school.

This community support extends further. Bloxham School has close links with Bloxham Primary School, supporting teaching and making their facilities available to Bloxham Primary pupils. In the wider community, the school's support for the local area ranges from storing grit and grit spreaders to building links with the village historical society.

The original school building is grade II listed and the older buildings on the main school site are important heritage assets within the village. The school funds the continuing maintenance of these important assets. Over the years, the school has expanded to meet educational needs, whilst also taking into account its sensitive village location.

Response

Our representations relate to Paragraph A of the matters the Examiner is required to consider: *“whether the draft neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions”*.

Specifically, we are concerned that certain policies in the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan (“the Plan”) mean it does not meet the basic conditions listed at Paragraphs E, F and G on the consultation form.

The Neighbourhood Plan designates two sites belonging to Bloxham School, the playing fields to the front of the main school buildings and the playing fields off Courtington Lane, as ‘Key Views’ in the village. We attach a plan outlining these sites at **Appendix 1**.

Policy BL12 of the Plan specifically restrains development on these sites. Development which affects the visual amenity of ‘Key Views’ is specifically prohibited.

For the plan period 2015 to 2031 and beyond, Bloxham School will need to improve its facilities to improve its offering to prospective pupils. This improvement is necessary to stay ahead of its competitors. Failure to continue improving facilities puts the continuing viability of the school at risk, with the ultimate risk that it would close, as is currently happening with many independent schools.

The land to the front of the main buildings is the only undeveloped area on the main school site. This is the only area the school has to extend and develop new school facilities.

We consider the Plan would place considerable restraints on the future development of school facilities on these two sites. This will prevent the continuing growth of the school and its facilities. We consider placing these constraints on the village's major employer does not conform with core aspects of national and local planning policy. We also submit that restraining economic growth in the village means the plan does not support sustainable development. Therefore, we argue this Plan does not meet the following Basic Conditions which it is required to meet:

- Basic Condition E – Conformity with national planning policy
- Basic Condition F – Contribution to achieving sustainable development
- Basic Condition G – Conformity with local planning policy.

Basic Condition E – Conformity with National Planning Policy

This basic condition requires that:

“having regard to national policies and advice contained in the guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood development plan”.

A core principle of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. A key factor in sustainable development is ensuring continuing economic growth in an area to provide employment for local people.

We submit that restraining the growth of the village's major employer prevents the village achieving sustainable development.

We consider this to be inconsistent with specific policies in the National Planning Policy Framework:

- Paragraph 19 states that the planning system should be used to support economic growth rather than prevent it. By constraining the growth of the village's major employer, we submit that the Plan impedes economic growth rather than supporting it
- Paragraph 28 states that the planning system should support economic growth and the development of community facilities in rural areas. By preventing the development of new facilities at Bloxham School, we submit that the Plan does not support the economic growth of the village and prevents the potential provision of new community facilities
- Paragraph 37 emphasises that planning policies should balance land uses in the area and encourage employment which reduces journey lengths. Preventing the growth of the school could be preventing future employment opportunities in the village. Therefore, we consider the plan is not consistent with this policy
- Paragraph 70 requires planning policy to protect community facilities. Constraining the growth of the school puts its continuing viability at risk. If the school were to close, it would result in the loss of all the community benefits it currently provides. Therefore, we consider the Plan to be inconsistent with this policy.
- Paragraph 131 requires that when planning applications are determined, regard is had to the objective of putting heritage assets to use consistent with their conservation and the ability of new development to contribute to local character. The school currently funds the maintenance of this heritage asset. We argue that Policy BL12 of the Neighbourhood Plan conflicts with this policy. Bloxham School puts these important heritage assets to use while ensuring their future protection.

Constraining the growth of the school conflicts with the objective of ensuring heritage assets are put to a use consistent with their conservation.

Basic Condition F – Contribution to achieving sustainable development

This basic condition requires that:

“the making of the neighbourhood development plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development”.

Sustainable development can cover topics such as the environment, the community and the economy.

As described above, we consider the Plan constrains the growth of Bloxham School. The future growth of the school could provide jobs for local people, which could be accessed by low-carbon forms of transport such as walking or cycling. This is demonstrated by the jobs the school currently provides – it employs 80 people who live in the village and many choose to walk to work.

We consider the continuing growth of the school would be a highly sustainable form of economic development. We submit that by directly restraining the growth of a major village employer, the Plan impedes the achievement of sustainable development.

Basic Condition G – Conformity with local planning policy

This basic condition requires that:

“the making of the neighbourhood development plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area”.

Economic growth is a key theme of the Cherwell District Council Local Plan 2011 – 2031 (“the Local Plan”). This is emphasised in Theme One – *Policies for Developing a Sustainable Local Economy*. The Council intends that economic growth should be job-led to support local prosperity. A particular focus is self-sufficiency, ensuring jobs are available in the local area for local people, to reduce travelling distances to work. These intentions are supported by Policy SLE 1, which proposes to support employment development and ensure planning does not compromise businesses’ operational activity.

In rural areas, a limited amount of employment development will be supported, with a focus on developing existing employment sites. This is reinforced by Policy C5, which aims to support rural employment and ensure villages do not become dormitories.

Theme One also states the desire to drive growth by investing in education and increasing jobs in the knowledge sector.

These themes of economic growth run throughout the Local Plan. For example, Strategic Objectives 1 and 2 promote local economic growth and the diversification of the rural economy. The desire for economic growth is strongly supported by the NPPF, with which all local plans must be compatible.

Bloxham School would be able to assist the village in contributing to meeting these objectives. The school provides exactly the type of self-sufficient employment the Local Plan envisages, employing 80 people from the village, many of who walk to work. The future growth of the school would allow for self-sufficient economic growth, providing new jobs in the education sector, a key focal area for Cherwell District Council.

However, we consider the Neighbourhood Plan restricts the future growth of the school. This means the Plan does not meet these key principles of the Local Plan. Therefore, we submit that the Neighbourhood Plan is not consistent with the Local Plan.

In addition, we consider that the Neighbourhood Plan is not consistent with Local Plan policies for education and community facilities.

Policy BSC7 holds that Cherwell District Council ("the Council") will work with schools to ensure the provision of facilities which support education. It expresses a desire to support the growth plans of schools in the district. By constraining the provision of facilities at Bloxham School, we consider the Plan directly conflicts with this policy.

Policy BSC12 states that the Council will encourage provision of community facilities. As the Plan constrains the future growth of Bloxham School, it puts the existing facilities which are available at risk and prevents new facilities being made available in future. Therefore, we consider the Plan directly conflicts with this policy.

Further Comments

We also submit that policy BL12 conflicts with other aspects of the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan.

The Bloxham Vision emphasises maintaining a high quality of economic well-being while respecting the village's rural past.

Constraining the village's major employer puts the maintenance of the village's economic well-being at risk. Bloxham School has demonstrated that it is able to develop while respecting the village's character. For example, the school's recent developments, such as the Technology Centre (1997) and the Library (2006) have both been built sensitively to ensure they fit with the local character and appearance of the village. For this reason, we do not consider policy BL12 to be necessary and we do not consider it to be constructive to economic well-being.

The Plan places considerable weight on ensuring sufficient school places are available in the village. We submit that constraining Bloxham School from growing prevents the future provision of school places in the village. The School has committed to expand its provision by 50 new day places from September 2017, the intention being to provide a more affordable day option that local families may benefit from. Further expansion may be necessary during the period of this Neighbourhood Plan to ensure the School's continued economic viability and constraints on its ability to make reasonable developments may prevent this.

On Page 42 of the Plan, it is stated that there is strong community support for making employment available in the village. We submit that constraining the growth of Bloxham School contradicts this local objective. The introduction of the 50 new day places will provide more local employment opportunities and further expansion would enhance this.

Summary

By restricting development on the two school-owned sites identified in the Neighbourhood Plan, we are concerned that Bloxham School will lose the ability to construct the new facilities required to attract prospective pupils and ensure the school remains competitive in the independent schools' market.

We are concerned that this restriction would put the school's future viability at risk. As the school is a major village employer, and provides a range of additional economic and community benefits, we consider this conflicts with national and local planning policies for economic development and the provision of community facilities. In particular, we believe including policy BL12 prevents sustainable development and so contradicts one of the core principles of the National Planning Policy Framework.

To resolve our concerns, we would ask that the designation of the two school sites as Key Views is removed.

Recent school building projects have demonstrated that the school is sensitive to its environment. We consider there are sufficient safeguards in place to ensure that development on the school's property is sensitive to the character of the local area. Therefore, we do not consider a Neighbourhood Plan which restricts the growth of the village's major employer is in the village's best interests.

21st January 2016

Appendix 1 – Sites outlined as Key Views



Gladman Developments Ltd

Representations on
Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan
2015 - 2031
Submission Version



January 2016

CONTENTS

Executive Summary	1
1 National Planning Policy and Guidance	2
1.1 <i>National Planning Policy Framework</i>	2
2 Conformity with Strategic Priorities.....	4
2.1 <i>Cherwell Local Plan</i>	4
3 Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan.....	6
3.1 <i>Context</i>	6
3.2 <i>Neighbourhood Plan Policies</i>	6
4 Strategic Environmental Assessment/Sustainability Appraisal	10
4.1 <i>Context</i>	10
5 Conclusion.....	11
5.1 <i>Summary</i>	11

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- i. Gladman Developments Ltd (Gladman) specialise in the promotion of strategic land for residential development and associated community infrastructure. From this experience, we understand the need for planning to deliver the homes, jobs and thriving local places that the country needs. Every effort should be made to objectively identify and meet the full housing and economic needs of an area, whilst responding positively to the wider opportunities for growth.
- ii. **This submission provides Gladman's representations** on the submission version of the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan (BNP), under Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
- iii. Before a Neighbourhood Plan can proceed to referendum it must be tested through Independent Examination against the statutory Basic Conditions, which are set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by section 38a of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
- iv. Before the BNP can progress to referendum, the Examiner must conclude that:
 - (a) Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the Neighbourhood Plan.
 - (d) The making of the Neighbourhood Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.
 - (e) The making of the Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area).
 - (f) The making of the Neighbourhood Plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.
- v. Having reviewed the BNP, Gladman are concerned that there have been major flaws throughout the plan's preparation contrary to basic conditions (a), (d) and (e). The plan documentation reveals many gaps in the kind of robust evidence that the PPG expects and which is necessary for a plan that intends to endure for 16 years.
- vi. Gladman submit that there is critical need to review several policies contained in the BNP prior to progressing to independent examination. These will be discussed in greater detail throughout these representations.
- vii. **Gladman take this opportunity to request to be added to the Council's consultation database** and to be kept informed regarding the progression of the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan.

1 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

1.1 National Planning Policy Framework

1.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF/the Framework) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied in respect of plan-making and decision-taking: NPPF paragraphs 1, 6 and 13. In doing so it sets out the requirements for the preparation of neighbourhood plans and the role they must play in meeting the development needs of the local area. The requirements set out in the Framework have now been supplemented by the Neighbourhood Plan section of Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)¹ and allied sections on Viability², Housing Land Availability Assessment³ and Strategic Environmental Assessment⁴. The provisions of the Framework and the PPG are mandatory material considerations for the purposes of basic condition 8(2)(a).

1.1.2 Before a Neighbourhood Plan can proceed to referendum it must be tested against a set of Neighbourhood Plan Basic Conditions, set out in paragraph 8 (2) of Schedule 4b of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). This is also underpinned in PPG at paragraph 065 of the Neighbourhood Planning Chapter, the basic conditions are as follows:

(a) Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the order.

(d) The making of the order contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.

(e) The making of the order is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area).

(f) The making of the order does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.

1.1.3 It is clear from the Framework and PPG that Neighbourhood Plans must conform with national policies (basic condition (a): "appropriateness") and up-to-date strategic policy requirements (basic condition (e)) set out in an adopted Local Plans. Neighbourhood Plans must take a positive approach to facilitate new development, these should not be used as a constraint to restrict growth going forward in the plans strategy. In relation to this Gladman refer to the requirements set out in paragraphs 16 and 184 of the Framework.

1.1.4 Gladman consider that BNP in its current form fails to comply with various key paragraphs of the Framework and PPG as well as failing to meet basic conditions (a), (d) and (e) which will be

¹ <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/neighbourhood-planning/>

² <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/viability-guidance/>

³ <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/housing-and-economic-land-availability-assessment/>

⁴ <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal/>

addressed throughout this representation. If the Parish Council fails to heed this advice and attempts to progress to examination, the BNP should be found to have failed the basic conditions and the Plan will not be able to proceed to referendum.

- 1.1.5 **It is Gladman's view that** the BNP Plan is fundamentally flawed and requires substantial amendment, redrafting and/or the removal of some policies before progressing any further. The policies contained in the BNP do not conform with the requirements of national policy. In particular, the NP may not allocate sufficient sites to assist the Council in meeting its full OAN and does not allow for the flexible use of land. If progressed to examination the BNP may be found inconsistent with basic conditions (a), (d) and (e).

2 CONFORMITY WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

2.1 Cherwell Local Plan

- 2.1.1 The Cherwell Local Plan Part 1 (CLP) was formally adopted by Cherwell District Council (CDC) on 20th July 2015. The CLP provides the overarching spatial strategy for the district to 2031, it should be this document that the BNP seeks to support and meet.
- 2.1.2 The Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2014 identifies an objectively housing need (OAN) of 1,140 dwellings to be delivered to 2031 equating to a total housing need of 22,800 dwellings.
- 2.1.3 **The CLP makes clear at c.261 that there is a need for Cherwell’s villages to sustainably contribute** towards meeting the housing requirements under Policy BSC1. Policy BSC1 seeks to deliver approximately 22,840 dwellings over the plan period. Policy BSC 1 also sets the spatial distribution for the district with the majority of growth located towards the main urban areas of Bicester and **Banbury. The ‘Rest of District’ is required to** deliver approximately 5,392 dwellings over the plan period.
- 2.1.4 **Policy Villages 1 identifies the district’s sustainable villages that are to accommodate ‘minor development’** ‘infilling’ or ‘conversions’. Subsequently Policy Villages 2 identifies a total of 750 dwellings to be delivered across ‘Category A villages’, of which Bloxham is identified as one. This policy does not set housing requirements for each village. This figure should be considered as the minimum level of development required to be delivered in accordance with Central **Government’s** commitment to ‘significantly boost the supply of housing’. This has also been considered in other neighbourhood plan examinations notably the Slaugham examination where the Examiner states:
- ‘Whilst in principle it is useful for a policy of this type to set out a target it is not clear whether the figure is a minimum or maximum and there seems to be some confusion in the plan about this or at least some inconsistency. This is a point made in representations. Given that the strategic objective of the plan refers to **“at least 130”**, I assume it to be a minimum. **If it were to be a maximum this would not allow for the flexibility the Framework seeks in responding to changing conditions.**’*
- 2.1.5 The adopted CLP places a significant emphasis on the delivery of Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUEs) to deliver the Council’s full objectively assessed housing needs. Whilst Gladman recognise the infrastructure benefits associated with such forms of development, they are often subjected to long lead in times, infrastructure requirements and may not deliver at the anticipated rate or scale initially envisaged. In the event that the CLP’s SUEs fail to deliver a significant housing shortfall will soon arise. Therefore, Bloxham identified as one of the most sustainable settlements in the district may be required to accommodate additional housing to meet the district’s full objectively assessed need. The BNP will therefore need to allow for a significant degree of flexibility in order to adapt to adverse changes in the market place.

- 2.1.6 Both the Framework, paragraph 16 and 184 of the PPG, Neighbourhood Planning 070, require that the BNP must be in conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan for the local authority area. Gladman maintain that the correct construction of those paragraphs with the Framework and the PPG is that those local plan policies referred to therein must be extant and up-to-date, following the successful examination of an NPPF-era Local Plan. If the BNP does not seek to support the CLP then it will be found inconsistent with basic conditions (a), (d) and (e).

3 BLOXHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

3.1 Context

3.1.1 These representations are made in response to the current consultation on the submission version of the BNP, under regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

3.2 Neighbourhood Plan Policies

3.2.1 The submission version of the BNP covers the period to 2031 consistent with the adopted CLP plan period. **Whilst the BNP's vision sets out a seemingly positive statement, the use of several policies** within the Plan may have a negative effect on development viability and do not accord with the requirements of national policy.

3.2.2 The BNP seeks to limit the ability of future sustainable growth opportunities from coming forward. It has not sought to positively identify sites for residential development but instead relies on existing planning consents which provide a total of 220 dwellings, of which only 85 dwellings will contribute to the CLP housing requirement.

3.2.3 The Framework requires CDC to deliver its full OAN. The adopted CLP places a significant emphasis on the delivery of a number of Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUEs). **As one of the 'Category A' villages, Bloxham will play a pivotal role in securing the sustainable development required to assist CDC in meeting its full OAN should the Council's SUEs fail to deliver.** Gladman consider that it is **crucial to the plan's** success and ability to meet the basic conditions that it allocates further additional land and allows for a more flexible approach to new housing development is required to ensure the national policy imperative which seeks to **'boost the supply of housing' is achieved.** This in turn will ensure that the BNP assists CDC in demonstrating a flexible and continuously rolling 5 year housing land supply.

3.2.4 The intention put forward by BNP to limit the amount of development to 220 dwellings due to existing education capacity consistent with the requirements of national policy. Instead, the Parish Council should positively seek to work with Oxfordshire County Council to identify and resolve any capacity issues. The existing capacity issues only point to a single point in time, this issue could be resolved by increasing the level of sustainable residential development in the village. This will result in positive effects not only in assisting the Council meet its OAN but will deliver the plans wider objections i.e. financial contributions to education facilities.

3.2.5 Upon reviewing the submission version of the BNP, Gladman submit that several policies in particular require modifications in order to ensure the plan is capable of meeting the basic conditions. In addition, a number of policies proposed are already adequately dealt with by CDC and national policy requirements and do not add any further content on the local plan policies as they will apply in any event. In these instances these policies should be deleted.

3.2.6 Gladman submit that amendments to the following policies are required:

Policy BL2

3.2.7 In addition to the existing outline permission at land south of Milton Road, this policy allows for conversion, infilling and minor development within the existing built up limits. The sustainability of Bloxham's services and facilities may be put in jeopardy in future years of the plan without an increase to the total housing provision. Gladman submit that further significant residential development is required to ensure the viability and vitality of Bloxham continues, to ensure increased patronage to local services and facilities and ensure their longevity.

3.2.8 Further the use of the existing settlement boundary does not allow for the flexible use of land and is therefore in conflict with basic condition (d). The use of a settlement boundary will likely restrict the ability of future sustainable development proposals coming forward. No adequate evidence has been provided to demonstrate that significant levels of infill development will come forward over the plan period. Furthermore, the Basic Conditions Statement notes Bloxham no longer has any available brownfield land, therefore conversions will unlikely occur over the plan period.

3.2.9 The Woodcock Judgment⁵ demonstrates the implications of progressing a neighbourhood plan where there is no Local Plan in place or a 5 year housing land supply. In the event that CDC is unable to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply, then those housing policies contained in the BNP will be found out of date, together with the CLP policies relating to housing. This judgment reinforces the need for the plan to allow for a greater degree of flexibility.

3.2.10 Whilst the allocation of additional sites should have been considered through the BNP, the Local Plan Part 2 will also provide the opportunity to allocate additional sites to meet housing needs. To ensure that this policy is not rendered out of date by s38(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act a more flexible approach is required.

3.2.11 Gladman submit that Policy BL2 should be deleted in its current form as it does not allow for the flexible use of land to provide for situations of undersupply of market housing in the district (resulting from the likely non-delivery of the Council's SUEs) and is therefore inconsistent with basic conditions (a), (d) and (e). The use of a criteria based approach consistent with the requirements of **national policy may be more suitable to achieve the Parish Council's aims** and objectives. Gladman recommend the following wording should be used:

'When considering development proposals, the Parish Council will take a positive approach to new development that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.'

⁵ Woodcock Holdings Ltd vs the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and Mid Sussex District Council [2015] EWHC 1173 (Admin)

Development adjacent to the existing settlement will be permitted provided that the adverse impacts do not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of development.'

Policy BL6

3.2.12 Policy BL6 requires all new housing development to be designed for a maximum of 110 litres per person per day water usage in line with the proposed optional building regulations on water efficiency. Policy BL8 requires at least 20% of open market homes to meet Lifetime Home standards and the ability to adapt to demographic changes.

3.2.1 The written statement to parliament (dated 27th March 2015) makes clear that qualifying bodies preparing neighbourhood plans should not set in their emerging Neighbourhood Plans, any additional local technical standards or requirements relating to the construction, internal layout or performance of new developments, including any policy requiring any level of the Code for Sustainable Homes to be achieved by new development. Furthermore, the written statement also makes clear that the optional new national technical standards should only be undertaken through an emerging Local Plan based on a clear up-to-date assessment of need. Neighbourhood Plans should not be used to apply the new national technical standards. If these policies are progressed they will ultimately affect the viability of delivering sustainable development opportunities coming forward and will likely be found inconsistent with basic conditions (a), (d) and (e).

Policy BL12

3.2.2 This policy relates to important views. The supporting text to this policy does not provide a clear indication of those areas which the Parish Council consider to be important views of the parish. A policy that is not clear and unambiguous is not in accordance with the basic condition (a)⁶⁶.

3.2.3 Gladman submit that substantial modification to Policy BL12 and supporting evidence is required to ensure a decision maker is able to apply this policy consistently and with ease.

3.2.4 Further criteria b (iii) refers to important views from public right of way contained in appendix 5. This appendix is noticeably absent from the consultation documents. The absence of this evidence needs to be addressed and presented for the consultation to be valid and legally compliant. At present, the consultation is being undertaken without crucial evidence to provide an informed response: *R(Moseley) v Haringey LBC* [2014] UKSC 56: the Regulation 16 consultation document does not (as it must do) '*include sufficient reasons for particular proposals to allow those consulted to give intelligent consideration and an intelligent response.*'

Policy BL17

3.2.5 This policy seeks to add further protection to linear corridors and public rights of way which are already afforded protection under existing legislation. This policy should therefore be deleted and the protection of rights of ways will be dealt with by CDC.

⁶⁶ PPG Paragraph 041 Reference ID 41-041-20140306

BL18 and BL19

- 3.2.6 Whilst supporting the intentions of both policies, Gladman question whether these will be delivered without the necessary financial contributions required to ensure their delivery. Gladman submit that additional allocations for residential developments may secure the delivery of the **plan's wider** objectives.

4 STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT/SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

4.1 Context

- 4.1.1 The preparation of Neighbourhood Plans falls under the scope of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SEA Regulations) that require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to be undertaken where a Plan's proposals would be likely to have significant environmental effects. The need for an SEA should be established early in the Neighbourhood Plan preparation process through the completion of a Screening Assessment, ensuring that a Neighbourhood Plan's proposals have been fully considered against all reasonable alternatives where an SEA would be required (PPG ID: 11-037).
- 4.1.2 As set out above to identify whether a draft neighbourhood plan might have significant environmental effects, a screening determination should be undertaken at an early stage in the plan making process⁷. Gladman note that the SEA Screening Report undertaken by CDC was published in September 2015 prior to the submission version of the BNP, contrary to the above.
- 4.1.3 Gladman remind the Steering Group that any failure to comply with the requirements of the SEA Regulations would result in the Neighbourhood Plan being contrary to basic condition (f). Gladman consider that the scale of the population and the geographical extent of the neighbourhood plan area, and the position occupied by Bloxham as a Class A Village within the settlement hierarchy, should have resulted in an SEA being required.
- 4.1.4 Although Neighbourhood Plans do not require a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of their proposals, preparing an SA can help demonstrate how the Neighbourhood Plan will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, a Neighbourhood Plan Basic Condition. Gladman note that the Parish Council have prepared a Sustainability Report and acknowledge that this is not a formal SA.
- 4.1.5 Gladman consider that the Sustainability Report does not effectively demonstrate how the plan will achieve the delivery of sustainability development. It would have been more appropriate if this evidence was extended to a full SA/SEA to demonstrate the Plan's ability to deliver sustainable development. The restrictive use of some policies which set out prescriptive requirements will likely result in the Plan failing to deliver sustainable development and therefore contrary to basic condition (a) and (d). Gladman recommend that the Parish Council revisit this evidence base prior to progressing to examination.

⁷ PPG Paragraph:028 Reference ID 11-028-2015-0209

5 CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary

- 5.1.1 Gladman recognise the role of Neighbourhood Plans as a tool for local people to shape the development of their local community, however it is clear from national guidance that these must be consistent with national policy and the up-to-date strategic requirements of the wider local authority area. If a Neighbourhood Plan does not meet the Basic Conditions there is a real risk that it will fail at Examination.
- 5.1.2 Through this consultation response Gladman have sought to clarify the relationship of the submission version of the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan with the wider development needs and strategic policies of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan.
- 5.1.3 Gladman consider that the use of prescriptive requirements set out in several policies together with the inflexible approach to accommodating any future residential development and will likely result in the plan being found unable to meet the basic conditions, specifically basic conditions (a), (d) and (e).
- 5.1.4 Whilst the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan seeks to deliver housing, it cannot be certain that this level of growth will be sufficient to meet objectively assessed housing needs. Should the Council's strategic sites fail to deliver then Bloxham as a 'Class A Village' will have an important role to play in delivering additional development to assist the Council in meeting its full objectively assessed needs.
- 5.1.5 Furthermore, Gladman are concerned that the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan is not supported sufficiently robust evidence base to justify its requirements regarding what the Parish Council consider to be important views. In this regard, the evidence base supporting this policy is noticeably absent from the consultation documents and the supporting text to this document does not provide sufficient clarity required to ensure a decision maker is able to apply policy consistently and with ease.
- 5.1.6 Gladman recommend that the Examination of the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan is delayed to allow time for the Parish Council to review its policies to ensure they are consistent with national planning policy to ensure the plan provides a greater degree of flexibility and is supported by up-to-date, justified and robust evidence base.

Comments on Policies BL17 and BL12

It has come to our attention that the map of the Bloxham Circular Walk (page 49) has some errors of detail in the area of the permissive path near Nayland Farm.

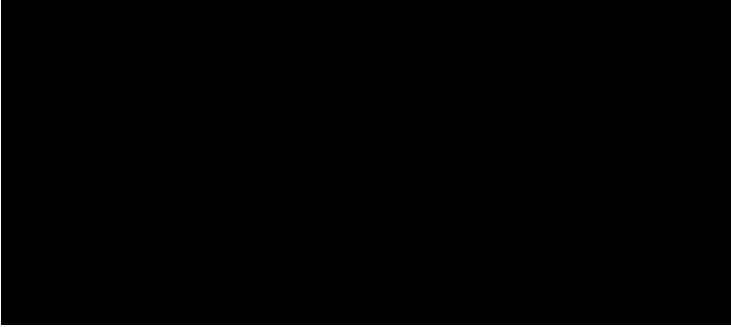
A new map is being prepared and we would seek that, in the interest of accuracy and subject to endorsement by the land agents of the area concerned, a revised map be incorporated into the final adopted version of the Plan.

We also note that Policy BL12 b iii) refers to an Appendix 5. "The views from, and the tranquillity of public rights of way within the parish. See Appendix 5." Appendix 5 did contain the PROW map but this was moved to page 48 in the consultation version. This will need correcting in the final adopted version.

Apologies for these errors.

John Groves (Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Coordinator, 


STEVEN RIDGWAY



I wish to record my support for the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan. In particular I feel that the following policies are of particular importance:

BL1 because it recognises the massive growth over the past 10 - 20 years. Whilst recognising the need for additional housing in Cherwell, Bloxham has had far more than its fair share. This has strained the infrastructure including the drainage, schools, pavements and particularly traffic. The mini roundabout is already recognised as being over capacity.

BL2 because it follows on from BL1 in that future development must be of a minor nature only. It is obvious that the massive developments over the past few years added to those already approved mean that any more large developments cannot be sustainable.

BL11 because very many people do not wish to live in urban areas. Although many people feel more comfortable in a town, those of us who wish to be close to nature, who do not feel at ease in a claustrophobic environment and appreciate the historical importance of village architecture and communities. The country would be much the poorer if all habitats were the homogeneous same, be it village, town or city. This policy also covers topics important to me, namely the use of appropriate designs for new buildings in terms of scale, style, density and materials.

I would like to be informed of the plan progress.

Yours faithfully,

Steve Ridgway

**OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE FOLLOWING
CONSULTATION:**

District: Cherwell

Consultation: Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Submission Document (November 2015)

**This report sets out Oxfordshire County Council's view on the proposed
Neighbourhood Plan for Bloxham (Submission Document November 2015).**

Annexes to the report contain officer advice.

Overall View of Oxfordshire County Council

Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) support the changes made in to the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan in response to OCC's comments dated 19 February 2015. Officers' comments to the latest version of the Plan are set out in Annex 1.

Officer's Name: David Flavin

Officer's Title: Senior Planning Officer

Date: 21 January 2016

ANNEX 1
OFFICER ADVICE

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE FOLLOWING CONSULTATION:

District: Cherwell

Consultation: Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Submission Document (November 2015)

Transport Strategy

Policy on Connectivity

Policy BL3 is considered to be a positive aim; this policy has the potential to assist in seeking developer contributions that, by including the qualifier 'wherever appropriate', are proportionate to the impact of the development proposal.

Parking Standards – minimum/maximum requirements

Bloxham NP, p.23

“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.¹⁷ This plan seeks that new developments offer on-plot parking that is commensurate with the evidenced levels of car ownership¹⁸ rather than the more general Oxon. C.C. parking standards which are, according to the OCC consultation response, only advisory¹⁹.”

It is worth noting that since OCC's response to the previous draft NP, OCC has published subsequent information on its parking standards. The latest information can be found here:

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/roadsandtransport/transportpoliciesandplans/newdevelopments/DesignGuidePublication.pdf>

and here:

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/roadsandtransport/transportpoliciesandplans/newdevelopments/PositionStatement.pdf>

These documents are also attached for reference. In summary, these updated documents state that OCC does not impose minimum or maximum parking standards on residential developments, but rather optimal standards. Oxfordshire County Council's 'Position Statement – On the Application of Contemporary Highway Design Guidance in Oxfordshire' (2015, p.3), states the following:

Parking Standards

21. SDA encourages an approach to provision of parking levels for residential developments that is adequate to serve the aspirations of residents. The NPPF, Other Planning Policies - 3 also requires that parking be adequate to meet perceived needs.

22. The OCC parking standards, adopted in December 2014 are maximum parking standards. The position that will be adopted in the future is to consider these as indicative of expected parking levels only (See Residential Road Design Guide). Parking levels that should be provided will be considered on their individual merits and optimal parking levels may be higher or lower than those suggested in the current parking standards.

23. Optimisation of parking level determination will be justified through the transport assessment process. According to scale of development this exercise may be expected to be contained within a: Design & Access Statement, Transport Statement or a Transport Assessment, as explained below.

With this in mind, OCC would deem it inappropriate for a neighbourhood plan to stipulate its own specific minimum parking standards. Applying the standards described in the passage above also enables an approach that is more responsive to the specific characteristics of any given development proposal. It is also worth noting that the standards in the Bloxham NP, policies BL4 and BL5 (pp.24-25), differ only marginally to our guidance (see table A6.B1, p.64 of OCC's Residential Road Design Guide (2003) - Second Edition (2015)).

Parking Standards – ‘parking courts’ and ‘rear car parking courtyards’

Bloxham NP p.25:

“e. Where on-plot parking spaces are specified in a. to c. the use of parking courts will not be considered an acceptable alternative.”

It is presumed that the resistance to parking courts expressed in policy BL4 (see above) is predicated on the assertion in the Sustainability Report, p.16 that reads:

“d. There is a local view, supported by the police¹⁹, that parking courts encourage crime.”

However, the Secured By Design (SBD) guidance to which this refers does not say that parking courts encourage crime, but rather *rear car parking courtyards* are more vulnerable to crime. OCC therefore recommend that statement ‘e’ in policy BL4 is removed as it is inconsistent with OCC guidance on parking courts in the aforementioned Residential Road Design Guide (2003) - Second Edition (2015). It is worth noting that OCC's guidance (beginning at paragraph 7.42, p.32) echoes SBD's recommendations that parking courts work best when they are overlooked by living rooms or kitchens, thereby discouraging poorly designed rear car parking courtyards.

Policy on live-work developments

The inclusion of the phrase “does not create parking problems” in policy BL14 could be considered ambiguous and may benefit from being more precise. It would be expected that the anticipated parking requirements of a live-work development would be broadly similar to that of normal residential use and therefore OCC's parking standards guidance would sufficiently accommodate any potential impact.

The phrasing of point ‘iv’ could be worded more precisely or removed as it is unclear how this statement could be utilised when taking a decision on a planning application.

Policy on additional retail

The wording of policy BL16 is such that it could be interpreted as being in support of retail as long as a transport statement has been provided. It doesn't say whether the mitigation proposed has to be appropriate or stipulate any required standard of mitigation.

All planning applications that generate a significant amount of movement are required to be accompanied by a Transport Statement (or Transport Assessment for development proposals over a certain size) and it is expected that the impacts highlighted in BL16 would be addressed in such documents. Consequently, this policy might be regarded as superfluous to existing local and national policy.

Officer's Name: Will Pedley

Officer's Title: Transport Planner

Date: 20 January 2016

**OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE FOLLOWING
CONSULTATION:**

District: Cherwell

Consultation: Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Submission Document (November 2015)

Economy and Skills

No Comment

Officer's Name: Dawn Pettis

Officer's Title: Economic Development Strategy Officer

Date: 14 January 2015

**OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE FOLLOWING
CONSULTATION:**

District: Cherwell

Consultation: Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Submission Document (November 2015)

Road Safety

One correction to make to the document is in respect of the comment on page 20 on the Road Safety Foundation report (2015) relating to the A361 between Chipping Norton and Banbury. While this route does have a high rate of accidents resulting in higher severity injuries as identified in the report (although thankfully the rate appears to have fallen in the past year, with no such accidents reported in 2015), only around 10% of the total accidents involved either pedestrians or cyclists, rather than 46% as given in the report.

Officer's Name: Anthony Kirkwood

Officer's Title: Assistant Principal Engineer (Traffic Safety & Accident Prevention)

Date: 15 January 2016

**OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE FOLLOWING
CONSULTATION:**

District: Cherwell

Consultation: Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Submission Document (November 2015)

Extra Care Housing

No further comments

Officer's Name: Nigel Holmes

Officer's Title: Commissioning Manager (Housing)

Date: 23 December 2015

**OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE FOLLOWING
CONSULTATION:**

District: Cherwell

Consultation: Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Submission Document (November 2015)

Education

2.5 The Education Context

Paragraph 2.5.1 refers to new catchment areas for the primary school. There are no current proposals to revise catchments, although this may be considered in the future. However the usual operation of admissions criteria will have the same effect as set out in the document, i.e. children from outside the village would be progressively replaced by the children living closer to the school.

Paragraph 2.5.2 states that Oxfordshire (County Council) sees a likely need for expansion of Warriner School but have no definitive plans available. This is true, but since the Plan was written, feasibility work has commenced on expanding the school.

Officer's Name: Barbara Chillman

Officer's Title: Service Manager – Pupil Place Planning

Date: 04 January 2016

**OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE FOLLOWING
CONSULTATION:**

District: Cherwell

Consultation: Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Submission Document (November 2015)

Fire Service

No comments

Officer's Name: Nathan Travis

Officer's Title: Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Date: 04 January 2016

**OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE FOLLOWING
CONSULTATION:**

District: Cherwell

Consultation: Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Submission Document (November 2015)

Minerals and Waste

No minerals or waste planning policy comments.

Officer's Name: Peter Day

Officer's Title: Minerals & Waste Policy Team Leader

Date: 10 December 2015

**OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE FOLLOWING
CONSULTATION:**

District: Cherwell

Consultation: Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Submission Document (November 2015)

Waste Management

No comments

Officer's Name: Frankie Upton

Officer's Title: Waste Project Manager

Date: 11 December 2015

**OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE FOLLOWING
CONSULTATION:**

District: Cherwell

Consultation: Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Submission Document (November 2015)

Ecology

No further comments.

Officer's Name: Tamsin Atley

Officer's Title: Ecologist Planner

Date: 06 January 2016

**Position Statement –
On the Application of Contemporary Highway Design Guidance in Oxfordshire**

*“Good design is about what humans actually feel and relate to”
Street Design for All (SDA) – An update of national advice and good practice (2014)*

Aims

1. The aim of this *Position Statement* is to clarify the approach to be taken by Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) to current highways design guidance, for the purposes of development control. As such, the *Position Statement* supports sustainable growth in Oxfordshire.
2. Oxfordshire is a County of contrasts, with urban Oxford at the centre, surrounded by a number of towns, set in a predominantly rural environment.
3. This Position Statement applies for the period during, which the County Council’s *Residential Road Design Guide* guidance is being updated. This guidance is published on the OCC website: Transport for new developments¹ (*OCC Residential Road Design Guide*). It will be superseded by the publication of a revised Street & Road Design Guide.

Scope

4. OCC is responsible for all non-trunk roads (Strategic Road Network) in Oxfordshire. This includes all roads in Oxfordshire with the exception of:
 - a. A34
 - b. A43
 - c. M40
 - d. Private Roads

Existing National & Local Guidance

5. The existing guidance, applying to non-trunk roads is contained within²:
 - a. *Manual for Streets* (2007)
 - b. *Manual for Streets 2: Wider Application of the Principles* (2010)
6. The *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges* (DMRB) is a maintained document providing contemporary engineering guidance, ordinarily for the design of trunk roads, and was in place prior to the introduction of *Manual for Streets* (MfS). The DMRB was influential on the standards, within the *OCC Residential Road Design Guide* (2003) however, the principles and ‘person centred’ design philosophy which informed MfS also had an influence on it. The *OCC Residential Road Design Guide*, for example, embraced ‘Homezones’ and ‘people before cars’ matters subsumed into the MfS.

District Design Guidance

7. The Districts have all produced detailed Design Guides, which should be referred to for the distinctiveness they seek to promote:
 - a. *Vale of White Horse DC Design Guide* (March 2014)
 - b. *South Oxfordshire DC Design Guide* (July 2008)
 - c. *Design and Conservation Strategy for Cherwell* (2012-2015)
 - d. *West Oxfordshire DC Design Guide* (December 2013)
 - e. *Oxford Design Review Panel & Oxford City Centre Street Scene Manual*

Geometric Requirements

8. Some of the geometric requirements contained in the *OCC Residential Road Design Guide* are in excess of those in the MfS. However, the special circumstances of Oxfordshire (See §2, above - especially rural locations) dictate that in some circumstances, the standards of the DMRB may be more appropriate than those of the MfS.
9. Visibility splay requirements are one such example, for which three standards apply depending on highway speed (see MfS §2.2 for definition of ‘Streets’ and ‘Roads’):

¹ <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/transport-new-developments>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/manual-for-streets>

**Position Statement –
On the Application of Contemporary Highway Design Guidance in Oxfordshire**

- a. *Manual for Streets* (2007): Cht 7 – for ‘Streets’ under 60kph;
- b. *Manual for Streets 2: Wider Application of the Principles* (2010): Cht. 10 – for ‘Streets’ over 60kph;
- c. The DMRB influenced *OCC Residential Road Design Guide*: Chapter 6 – ‘Roads’.

10. Especially with regard to visibility splays, it is emphasised that both volumes of the MfS, are guidance documents only and that local interpretation is encouraged within MfS. Both volumes of MfS were produced before the adoption of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF - 2012), and therefore, it is emphasised that the policy contained within NPPF takes precedence over the guidance of the MfS.
11. Appropriate visibility splays are calculated according to the physics of stopping sight distances and safe vehicular retardation. Different design guides make differing assumptions regarding the parameters appropriate for this. It is, hereby, emphasised that these recommendations are based on engineering criteria with an objective base relating to performance of car and driver. They are not arbitrary recommendations, therefore, and are highly sensitive to prevailing highway speeds as identified above.

Objections

12. Under the NPPF, the basis for a highways based objection to a planning application is where development is considered: (i) ‘unsustainable’ and / or where (ii) residual cumulative impacts of development are ‘severe’. OCC will interpret ‘unsustainable’ and ‘severe’ in the local context according to the advice contained in this document. Where appropriate, sustainability and geometric requirements are not met; objections will be made on the basis of the NPPF criteria.

Street Design for All (SDA)

13. The approach of MfS, is summarised in the recently published: *Street Design for All (SDA) - An update of national advice and good practice* (2014). This document will be taken as the primary source of approach to development by OCC, produced as it was, following the NPPF and presenting the philosophy of the MfS. Discretion will be used by the Highway Authority where inconsistencies between SDA and *OCC Residential Road Design Guide* occur.
14. To be clear, developers are encouraged to be innovative and obtain advice from both volumes of the MfS 1 & 2 but for the purposes of our consultation responses on planning applications the locally interpreted guidance will be used and the approach of the SDA rather than to the letter of the MfS, although it will be mindful of the MfS.
15. For example, the new thinking on street corner geometry (pp. 19 SDA) is appropriate for urban areas in Oxfordshire but such a design may be inappropriate for rural roads. Another reason for maintaining the standards the *OCC Residential Road Design Guide* in such rural locales is that the safe stopping sight distances for freight and public transport are often in excess of those for cars and recommended in MfS.
16. Both volumes of MfS will be considered as playing a supporting to SDA, in terms of the more detailed advice they provide. In this respect it should be noted that the MfS does not encourage an approach, which is slavish to the letter but one, which is within its spirit. The MfS approach is summarised within SDA. The MfS approach can briefly be characterised as encouraging designers being to incorporate a ‘*sense of place*’ into street-scapes and that ‘movement’ and ‘place’ functions should be optimised to context, taking into account the needs of all street users.
17. SDA encourages a collaborative approach to the street scene, involving as many professional and public voices as possible to influence street design. Such a consultative approach is encouraged in Oxfordshire, especially if initiated at the stage when pre-application advice is being sought.

Pre-application procedure

18. Engagement by developers and their agents, with the pre-application procedure is encouraged by OCC. A Pre-application procedure exists to obtain wide-ranging advice from the Districts but independently highways advice can be obtained. The HA substantive response will consist of a comment on the principle of development. A schedule of charges exists for further more detailed pre-application highways advice [See <http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/newdevelopments>].

**Position Statement –
On the Application of Contemporary Highway Design Guidance in Oxfordshire**

Road Hierarchies

19. A hierarchical approach to road design is discouraged in SDA, drawing only a distinction between ‘streets’ and ‘roads’ with differing degrees of ‘place’ and ‘movement’ characteristics’. For the purposes of certain transport movement functions, such as, public transport and the needs of freight, distributor-style roads may be appropriate.
20. In other locations it may be appropriate that the ‘place’ function predominates and traffic speeds conducive to this should be encouraged through the use of the psychological and physical calming methods contained in M/S.

Parking Standards

21. SDA encourages an approach to provision of parking levels for residential developments that is adequate to serve the aspirations of residents. The NPPF, Other Planning Policies - ³ also requires that parking be adequate to meet perceived needs.
22. The OCC parking standards, adopted in December 2011⁴ are maximum parking standards. The position that will be adopted in the future is to consider these as indicative of expected parking levels only (See *Residential Road Design Guide*). Parking levels that should be provided will be considered on their individual merits and optimal parking levels may be higher or lower than those suggested in the current parking standards.
23. Optimisation of parking level determination will be justified through the transport assessment process. According to scale of development this exercise may be expected to be contained within a: Design & Access Statement, Transport Statement or a Transport Assessment, as explained below.

Transportation Assessment

24. Thresholds for the appropriate type of supporting documentation, an application should be accompanied by, are recommended in: ‘*Travel plans, transport assessments and statements in decision-taking*’⁵. The pre-application process will lead to scoping of the appropriate level of transport assessment.

Future-proofing, Travel Planning & Sustainable Transport

25. The needs of the future should be considered for any development in Oxfordshire. Oxfordshire is undergoing unprecedented levels of development. Where technological solutions and ‘smart thinking’ can overcome the need for residents to concentrate on car-borne traffic then innovative means of achieving this will be encouraged, especially where they are backed with developer contributions. An example, of such an innovation might be car clubs or the provision of real time public transport information to assist with the delivery of a Travel Plan.
26. Walkable neighbourhoods designed around the convenience of the pedestrian and cyclist can help fulfil the ends of sustainable transport.
27. A further example is that estate roads will be expected to be laid out such that the needs of future development are taken into account and evidence based with swept-path analysis. One way of doing this is through the use of turning heads in locations where roads may be extended.

3

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2015-03-25/HCWS488/>

4

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/roadsandtransport/transportpoliciesandplans/newdevelopments/parkingstandardsfornewresidentialdevelopments.pdf>

5

<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/travel-plans-transport-assessments-and-statements-in-decision-taking/>

PREAMBLE

1. Philosophy

- 1.1. *People Before Cars* in the design of layouts for residential developments encapsulates the County Council's main objective for this document, which is to ensure that housing layouts contribute towards encouraging more sustainable travel by minimising the need to use cars particularly for shorter trips to local facilities.
- 1.2. This can be achieved by providing: high quality, safe and direct pedestrian and cycle links to the local facilities. For longer distance trips, where walking and cycling is less likely, it is important that housing layouts provide for access by bus so that people have the option of using public transport.
- 1.3. It embraces **sustainable development** policies contained in both Central (National Planning Policy Framework 2012 - NPPF) and Local Government policies and initiatives and is designed to complement and sit alongside other Design Guidance provided by the Local Planning Authorities in Oxfordshire and the Manual for Streets (See OCC 'Position Statement – On the Application of Contemporary Highway Design Guidance in Oxfordshire' on both volumes of the MfS).
- 1.4. In line with the recommendations of the NPPF, this Guide is designed to avoid the need to make objections to development that may otherwise have a '**severe**' impact and are '**unsustainable**' in nature.
- 1.5. There are specific 'Environmental Guidelines for the Management of Roads in the Chilterns', which apply to the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in Oxfordshire – see: <http://www.chilternsaonb.org/>.
- 1.6. The emphasis for '**people movement**' can best be described by the following:
'hierarchy of significance':
 - i. walking
 - ii. cycling
 - iii. public transport
 - iv. private car usage

This will be applied, particularly bearing in mind the needs of people with sensory or mobility difficulties (The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) & see *Inclusive Mobility* 2002), to achieve safe, convenient and attractive places outside the home that are **sustainable** and economic to provide and maintain.
- 1.7. Every development site is **unique**, and this Guide should enable designers to exploit natural features to the fullest advantage. There are both opportunity and need for the exercise of real design skills, and therefore it is recommended that qualified professional advice is employed in the design of development services.
- 1.8. Whilst, the document includes recommended 'standards' they should **not be considered overly prescriptive** - alternative proposals, which can be shown to satisfy the principles and *Main Objectives* (§2) may well be approved by agreement with the Planning and Highway Authorities.
- 1.9. **Innovation** is to be welcomed, where the principles are clearly demonstrated and achieved - designers should not consider themselves restricted to the 'examples' or 'standards' included in this document.



2. **Main Objectives**

- 2.1. To ensure that housing layouts contribute towards encouraging more sustainable travel by minimising the need to use cars particularly for shorter trips to local facilities.
- 2.2. Provision of quality facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport, particularly bearing in mind users with mobility difficulties, with a view to reducing car usage. However, the need to accommodate vehicle movement and parking will remain and has to be fully considered in the design process.
- 2.3. To help create attractive developments that are enjoyable to live in and safe for all users bearing in mind the '*hierarchy of significance*' (§1.6).
- 2.4. To help create developments that are accessible, legible and convenient to all users, including the Mobility Impaired - includes those with difficulty seeing, hearing, walking, finding their way around, or any combination of all these.
- 2.5. To provide developments designed to emphasise a sense of place and community, with movement networks to enhance these qualities, but with full links with adjacent areas to ensure permeability.
- 2.6. Provision of sufficient non-prescriptive standards to enable more rapid appreciation of the Highway Authority's requirements by developers / Planning Authorities to minimise negotiation times for both layout determination and future adoption.
- 2.7. To secure by design, traffic speeds commensurate with the safety and convenience of all users of the road network. The target speed in such residential areas will be 20mph or less.
- 2.8. To secure an adoptable movement network at a reasonable cost with an extensive design life and low maintenance costs.



3. **Introduction**

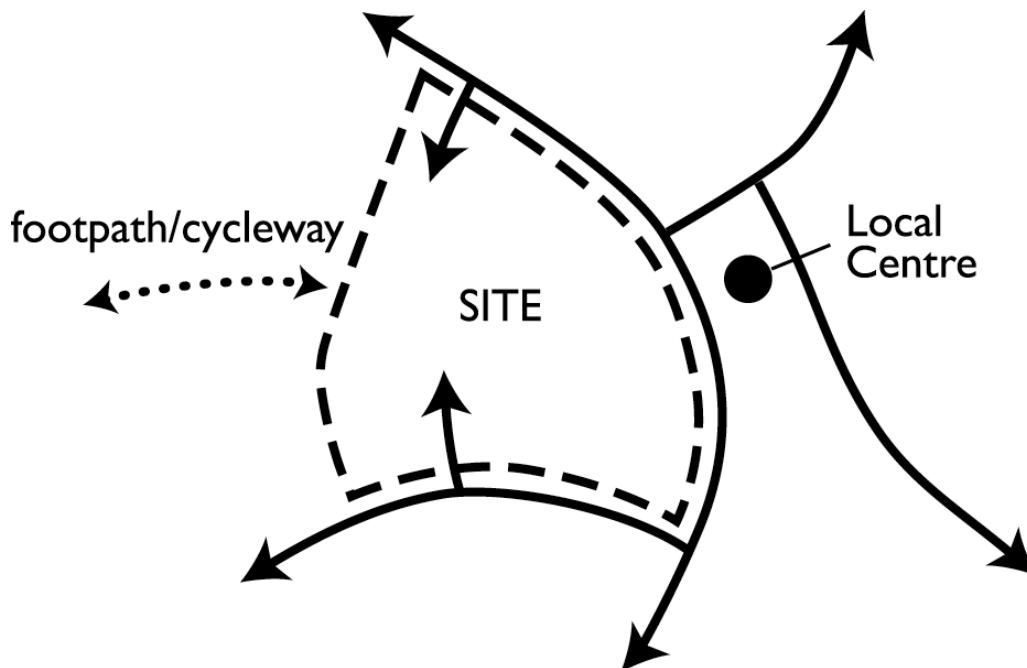
- 3.1. Oxfordshire County Council (as local Highway Authority) has produced this **Second Edition of the Residential Road Design Guide** to aid in understanding the requirements of the Highway Authority for the design of roads, cycle infrastructure, footways etc.
- 3.2. This Design Guide endorses the principles embodied in **Street Design for All** and **Manual for Streets**. Clarity, regarding the Council's attitude to both volumes of the *Manual for Streets* is contained in our Position Statement [[LINK](#)]. This has been informed by the guidance contained in the NPPF.
- 3.3. The Second Edition of the *Residential Road Design Guide* document allows considerable **design flexibility** so it is essential that early consultation with both the Local Planning Authority and the Highway Authority on development proposals is undertaken and that a team approach, involving professionals on both the developers and the Local Authorities sides is used throughout the development process as recommended by the *Manual for Streets*.
- 3.4. The key factors to be taken into account by this 'team' are:
 - i. The nature of the place where development is to occur.
 - ii. How that place relates to its surroundings including movement routes.
 - iii. The framework of development, including the network of spaces and movement patterns.
- 3.5. A **pre-application** process is contained on our website '**Transport for New Developments**' and scoping should be undertaken to determine the extent of supporting documentation considered appropriate for a particular proposed development.
- 3.6. The **movement framework** should ensure that travel by foot, bicycle and public transport have priority, and should take into account:
 - i. Priorities for movement; firstly by foot, also by bicycle, public transport and car.
 - ii. The need of the mobility impaired should receive particular attention.
 - iii. The relationship between movement and all forms of development.
 - iv. The links between new movement routes and existing infrastructure.
- 3.7. As part of the consideration of the **movement network** it is quite possible that requirements for off-site works (e.g. a new junction onto an existing public highway or other transport infrastructure requirements) or indeed contributions for enhancement / provision of public transport may be identified.
- 3.8. In order for these to be formally secured as part of any planning consent ultimately issued, an agreement pursuant to **Section 106** - Town and Country Planning Act 1990 would be required.
- 3.9. In addition to transport related issues such an agreement could also contain other **obligations** of the developer/landowner e.g. education, libraries, contributions, recreational facility provision, future maintenance of public open spaces etc.
- 3.10. The above listing is not any more than for the purposes of example, and bearing in mind the significant cost implications of the obligations for the developer / landowner it is imperative that early consultation enables identification of the requirements at the start in the development process.
- 3.11. Whilst the various following sections of the Guide contain information on standards which the Local Highway Authority consider appropriate, they **should not be slavishly** followed. **Innovation** will be welcomed, where the spirit of the standards are met.



4. **The Movement Framework**

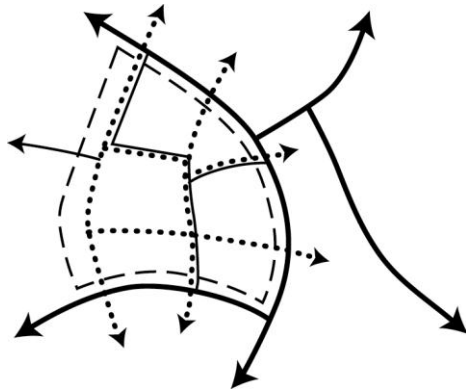
Principles

- 4.1. The Introduction section lays stress on the more sustainable modes of transport and particularly prioritises pedestrian and cycle movement as well as public transport in advance of the needs of the motor car (§1.6).
- 4.2. The need to accommodate vehicle movements and parking will remain, and has to be fully considered in the design process.
- 4.3. A '**Movement Framework**' for new development is that which provides: 'The best way to ensure that travel by foot bicycle and public transport have priority'.
- 4.4. This framework development process is advocated and should take account of (§ 3.6):
 - i. Priorities for movement; firstly by foot, also by bicycle, public transport and car.
 - ii. The needs of the mobility impaired should receive particular attention.
 - iii. The relationship between movement and all forms of development.
 - iv. The links between new movement routes and existing infrastructure.
 - v. Consideration and assessment of the impact the development movements will have on existing infrastructure.
- 4.5. Each of the particular forms of movement will be dealt with in this section in the priority order given above, and principles of good design and practice will be provided for guidance.
- 4.6. The following diagrams illustrate the principles of developing a movement framework:

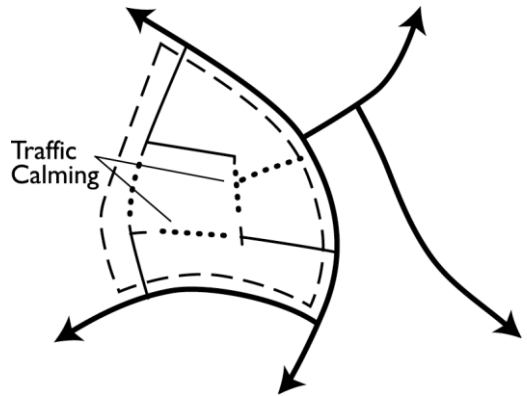


Schematic of New Residential Development Site with Connections to Existing Roads

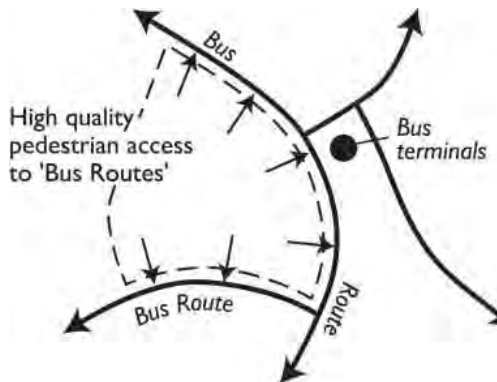
1. Footpath / Cycleway Network



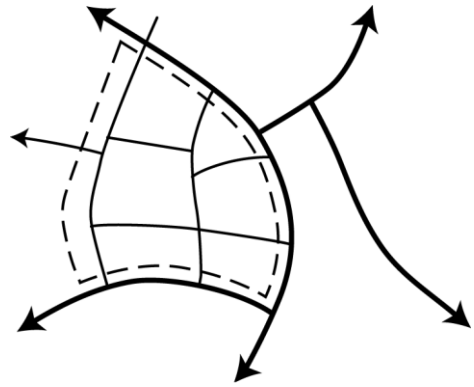
3. Road Network



2. Public Transport Network



4. Complete Movement Network



Walking

- 4.7. Oxfordshire County Council has for many years supported the promotion of walking, as a mode of transport, which is healthy, friendly to the local and global environment, which imposes minimal danger on other road users and which is available to people of all income groups.
- 4.8. National statistics indicate that for short journeys of less than 1.6km (1 mile) walking is the predominant mode of travel. Approximately half of such journeys are under 400m. An important proportion of walking journeys are undertaken by children going to school, which is still the dominant mode in many cases.
- 4.9. The County Council's objectives for this document are to ensure that the needs of pedestrians are fully taken into account in the development control process with a view to increasing the proportion of travel within Oxfordshire is on foot.
- 4.10. These objectives are shared with those outlined in the County Council's Local Transport Plan and Local Strategies. Designers should make themselves familiar with those documents, which will enable them to appreciate how their particular development can 'key into' the overall pedestrian strategy for the County.

Principles for footways / footpaths

- 4.11. Development should be readily permeable, allowing safe, direct and attractive routes for pedestrians, having a clear pattern with distinctive landmarks and with signs displaying the names of all routes including all footpaths and other non-car routes.



- 4.12. Linkages between key areas within and around the development should be encouraged at the outset so that car use should not be generated. The principle of the **walkable neighbourhood** is the key to creating a sociable, sustainable community and a **priority** should be to enable people to have access to local facilities on foot or by bicycle. Ideally, this means a local shop for daily needs within five to eight minutes' walk (400 metres) of home. If possible, there should also be a mixture of shops, businesses and other uses within walking distance.
- 4.13. Pedestrians, in general, prefer to use roads, where the perceived benefits of **personal safety** are greatest. For the most part, therefore, pedestrians will be catered for within the residential roads designed or speed controlled to a maximum of 20mph. Attractive footways will be required alongside link roads and local distributor roads between residential developments whether or not there is a segregated footpath network.
- 4.14. Pedestrian routes should be as direct as possible. Where a **segregated footpath** is provided to create preferential routes, through a residential development or to link to adjacent development areas, they should be as short as possible with good inter-visibility between the ends and be overlooked / open to view.
- 4.15. Routes must be **'user friendly'** in that they should be overlooked by housing and not separated from houses or roads by earth mounds or heavy landscaping, and should encourage social interaction, as well as, provide corridors for movement.
- 4.16. They should be appropriately lit to encourage their use and this applies particularly to strategic routes. This does not apply in **non-lighting areas** or where the rural location dictates lighting would be inappropriate.
- 4.17. Providing **seats** (for at least two people) at 400m intervals along the route will both encourage social interaction and offer rest for the less physically able.
- 4.18. With respect to provision of **street furniture**, particular attention should be paid to the needs of children to have safe and convenient access to schools and play areas.
- 4.19. Positive provision for pedestrians must be made throughout the residential area; by way of footways, footpaths or shared surfaces.
- 4.20. New infrastructure for pedestrians within the site should **link with existing** developments. They might include existing local facilities; such as shops, rail or bus stations, or links to wider strategic networks, such as bridleways or long distance footpath / cycle route systems. It may be appropriate for those local longer distance networks to be connected through the development.
- 4.21. The use of **shared surfaces** should be judicious and take into account safety of users especially those with perceptual impediments.
- 4.22. In general, new footways / footpaths should be provided to the preferred minimum standards recommended by the *Inclusive Mobility* (2002), unless very exceptional physical constraints apply, which are not practically surmountable.
- 4.23. Oxfordshire County Council is committed to the goal of **accessible environments**. Recent legislation (Disability Discrimination Act) has served to reinforce both the moral and legal argument for ensuring that people with disabilities are not disadvantaged as a consequence of the physical environment.

Buildings, spaces and materials all help orientate people on foot.



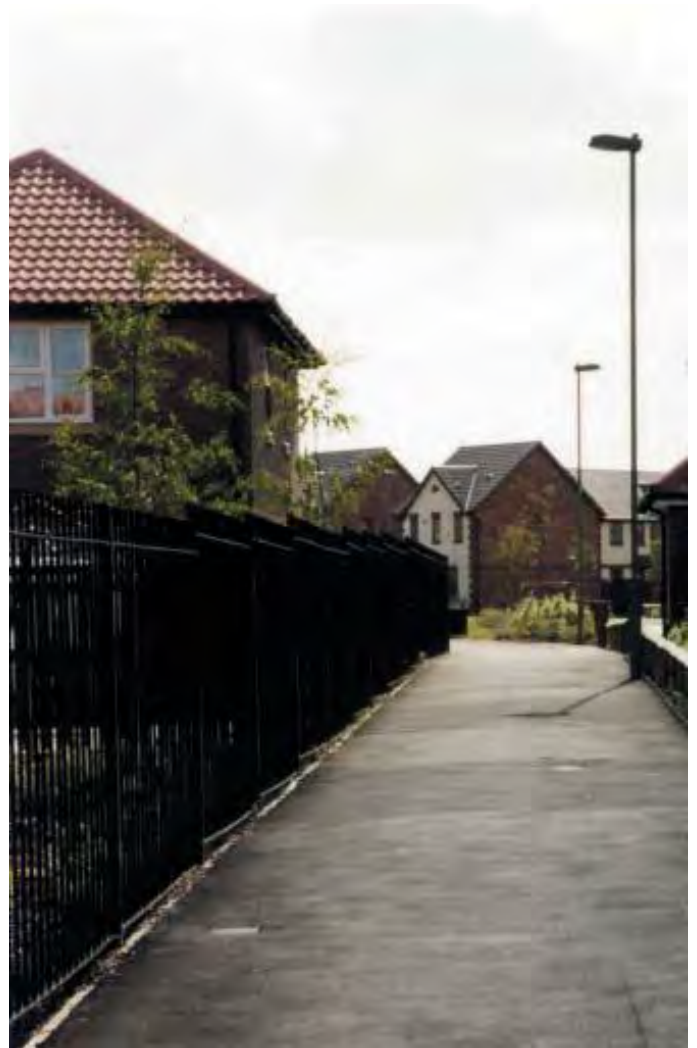
Footpaths should lead where people want to go, rather than follow a preconceived geometry.



Dropped kerbs at crossing places, together with tactile surfaces, should be an integral part of all road and footpath layouts.



Footpaths in new development should be positive, direct and barrier free.



Where space permits, footways can be separated from the road. They should always be overlooked and well connected.



Cycling

- 4.24. Oxfordshire County Council has and continues to support the promotion of cycling. This Design Guide seeks to ensure that development proposals properly cater for the targeted increases in cycle usage within the National Cycling Strategy (NCS). As part of the Local Transport Plan 4 there is a cycling strategy, which should be referred to for the Council's overview.
- 4.25. Cycle routes in developments should meet the same basic criteria of directness, safety, attractiveness, comfort and legibility as pedestrian routes.
- 4.26. Cycle linkages between key areas, within the development and around it should be encouraged at the outset. This is particularly important for school access.
- 4.27. Cyclists generally fall into two categories:
- i. **Confident/experienced cyclists** for whom directness and speed are priorities, and
 - ii. Those who are **less-confident** and experienced who give safety a higher priority, even if that involves a longer (time / distance) journey.
- 4.28. Their needs can be met in different ways:
- i. For **confident** cyclists - Providing straightforward cycle facilities (normally cycle lanes) on main roads together with advance stop lines and coloured surfacing.
 - ii. For **less-confident** - Creating a predominantly minor road or off-road network.
- 4.29. In the context of new residential development the provision of a predominantly minor road or off-road cycle network is likely to be the major task. Provision for cyclists should also be made on the main road network in order to meet the demand for cycle trips from the new development.
- 4.30. Both experienced and novice cyclists, in general, prefer to use roads, where the perceived benefits of personal safety are greatest. For the most part, therefore, cyclists will be catered for on the roads designed or speed controlled to a **maximum of 30mph**. Shared use footways / cycle-ways will be required adjacent to local distributor roads between residential developments, where the speed limit is 40 mph or more. Nonetheless, it should be expected that experienced cyclists will prefer to cycle on the carriageway.
- 4.31. Short links of cycleway between roads will provide **shorter preferential routes** encouraging cycle usage. There should be good inter-visibility between the ends and they should be overlooked / open to view from nearby housing. They should never be separated from houses on roads by earth-mounds or heavy landscaping. They should be lit, particularly where the routes are strategic (except in areas where no lighting is provided for environmental reasons).
- 4.32. Particular attention should be paid to the needs of **children** to have safe and convenient access to schools and play areas.
- 4.33. New **infrastructure for cyclists** within the site should link with existing developments, such as: shops, rail or bus stations, or links to wider strategic networks such as National Cycle routes, bridleways or long distance footpath/cycle route systems. These longer distance networks may need to be connected through the development with appropriate additional **signage** (without creating excessive clutter).
- 4.34. **Segregated footways** and cycle-ways will be more appropriate where more significant traffic routes are part of the development. They should be separated from the carriageway by verges.

- 4.35. In planning for pedestrians and cyclists the Council will be guided by the underlying **principle** that carriageways should be made safe for cycling and pavements should be for pedestrians. However, this does not imply a policy of no new shared-use cycle routes. Indeed in new developments, particularly housing, it may well be appropriate to create shared use facilities, which can achieve the necessary spatial and visibility criteria.
- 4.36. Where **strategic cycle routes** cross roads of category 3 or below, the cycle route will always be given priority and must be signed and accommodated on a raised crossing of the carriageway to act as a **speed restraint** on the road. For crossings of some higher category roads dropped crossings of the footway will be appropriate and staggered barriers provided on the cycle route to ensure that approach speeds are constrained. In other cases the cycle route will need to be given a higher degree of priority, possibly involving signal controlled crossings.
- 4.37. **Cycle parking provision** at both ends of the journey is essential, at the home end, this should be demonstrably provided within the dwelling curtilage, at the destination end it should be provided in accordance with the County Council's **Cycle Parking Standards** (§4.42). It should be sited closer to the entrance of the destination than the car parking, sheltered, lit at night and overlooked for security purposes.

Layout Criteria

- 4.38. The following table gives the normal and absolute minimum widths to be achieved in providing new cycle tracks, or other cycle facilities remote from the carriageway:

Cycle Lane Widths	Normal Minimum		Absolute Minimum	
	(Shared track)		(Shared track)	
UNSEGREGATED FACILITIES	(Shared track)		(Shared track)	
Unbounded*, rural, flows of pedestrians and cycles both below 100p.h.	2.5		1.8	
Unbounded*, urban or with either pedestrian or cycle flows of 100p.h or higher.	3.0		2.0	
SEGREGATED FACILITIES	Pedestrians	Cycles	Pedestrians	Cycles
Unbounded*, “soft” segregating (i.e. white line, colour contrast or surface contrast only), flows of pedestrians and cycles both below 100p.h.	1.5	1.5	1.3	1.5
Unbounded*, “hard” segregation (i.e. verge, up-stand, kerb or barrier), flows of pedestrians and cycles both below 100p.h.	1.5 (2.0 normal)	2.0	1.5	1.5
Unbounded*, soft or hard segregation, flows or pedestrians over 100p.h.	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Unbounded*, soft or hard segregation, flows of cycles over 100p.h.	2.0	3.0	2.0	3.0
* 'Unbounded' means: not enclosed by physical boundaries. This applies except in the case of an up-stand, kerb or barrier, which forms the segregation between a footpath/footway and a cycle track or other cycle facility, an extra 0.25m should be added to the width of any portion of footpath / footway or cycle track (or other cycle facility) for each side of that width, which is bounded by a wall, fence, barrier, or (in the case of a cycle track or other cycle facility) any vertical up-stand of more than 0.1m. Hence, for an unsegregated facility bounded by walls on both sides, it will be necessary to add 0.5m to the relevant widths. Preferred standard will always apply in new developments.				

- 4.39. In all cases where a pedestrian / cycle route meets a highway, footway or another pedestrian/cycle route, **2m x 2m** sight splays are required.
- 4.40. Where a **cycle route crosses** a road type 1 or 2 a dropped kerb and tactile paving is necessary at the road crossing, together with a staggered barrier (or similar) arrangement to persuade cyclists to slow up and dismount if necessary. If peak hour two-way traffic flows exceed moderate (e.g. 500vph) a signal controlled crossing will be necessary. Special arrangements may apply, where the cycle route is part of a strategic route or is of significant importance.
- 4.41. **Oxfordshire County Council is committed to the goal of accessible environments. Recent legislation has served to reinforce both the moral and legal argument for ensuring that people with disabilities are not disadvantaged as a consequence of the physical environment. Developers will be expected to follow the Council's best practice guidance by referring to internal guidance notes and client requirement notes.**

Cycle Parking Standards

- 4.42. The County Council's approved standards for residential development are:

	Cycle Parking Standards	Residential
	Resident	1 bed - 1 space; 2+ beds - 2 spaces.
	Visitor	1 stand per 2 units where more than 4 units.
Notes		
1	Garages should be designed to allow space for car plus storage of cycles in line with the District Council's design guides where appropriate (most specify 6m X 3m).	
2	1 stand = 2 spaces: The number of stands to be provided from the calculations to be rounded upwards. The preferred stand is of the 'Sheffield' type.	
3	All cycle parking facilities to be secure and located in convenient positions.	
4	Oxford City Council has a separate standard to reflect high cycle usage in the city.	
5	Residential visitor parking should be provided as communal parking at convenient and appropriate locations throughout the development.	

- 4.43. The County Council encourages the use of covered facilities for long-stay / staff cycle parking.

Public Transport

- 4.44. Minimising the use of the private car is central to Oxfordshire County Council's transport policies. Provision of **quality bus services** is fundamental to this, particularly for trips that cannot reasonably be undertaken on foot or by bicycle. The Council is committed to the development of a countywide network of high quality, high frequency **Premium Bus Routes**.
- 4.45. This network will be supplemented by a pattern of services linking larger centres of population and providing interchange with the Premium Routes, these operating at generally hourly frequency during the working day.

- 4.46. In the more rural areas of the County, the pattern of service provision is likely to be more diverse, but will feed into the Premium Route and lower frequency services at a number of interchanges.
- 4.47. All new residential development will be expected to make an **appropriate contribution** to the development of the countywide bus network, both through the physical infrastructure – e.g. highway measures and bus stop infrastructure - and through service provision.
- 4.48. There is a presumption that no development involving more than **50 Dwellings** will be approved unless it can be served by at least an hourly daytime bus service. In the context of this Guide, it should be noted that bus services could be operated by a variety of vehicles, including **minibuses and taxi-buses**.
- 4.49. It is essential that the availability of bus services should be discussed at the very earliest stages of a development, and it will be essential that developers should discuss with bus operators and Oxfordshire County Council Public Transport Development Team the type and extent of service that can be provided. The County Council can supply information on the location of Premium Routes and the hourly second-tier service networks already agreed for development.
- 4.50. If the residential development can be served by one of these routes, the developer will be expected to make an appropriate contribution to the development of this route. If it is not located on any such route, the developer will be expected to ensure that an appropriate bus service is introduced and operated specifically to serve their development.
- 4.51. As the availability and **routing of bus services** will be an important consideration in designing the layout of the road network within the site (and potentially beyond) an early appreciation of the proposed service is essential. Since 4,000 people are normally needed to support the costs of just one additional bus, developers should normally assume that the service to their development will need to serve other places too. Therefore they must:
- i. Consider how existing routes might be amended or extended to provide an attractive service to their development (without withdrawing services from existing users of the route or significantly increasing their journey times). This may require new road links or other works, e.g. bus only links.
 - ii. Ensure that the road layout will permit easy extension of the service to other places beyond the development in due course.
- 4.52. **Bus services** must be fast and direct to be attractive. A route for buses, through a significant development must, therefore, be provided, which serves all of the housing without doubling back or making a significant deviation from a straight line. Where there is a possibility, now or in the future, of traffic queues along the bus route - for example where traffic from the development joins the existing road network - appropriate priorities or alternative bus-only links should be provided.
- 4.53. As a general rule, the route for buses should be shorter than the equivalent route for general traffic; it should never be longer.
- 4.54. To ensure that all houses in the development are within 400m of a bus stop, it will generally be desirable to route buses through the middle of the development. Bus routes on peripheral roads are undesirable, since this halves the catchment population and makes viability difficult to achieve. Consideration should be given in laying out the development to provide easy access to buses; for example by increasing density closer to bus stops and by focusing the **walking network** on bus stops.

- 4.55. Any **shops** and other facilities intended to have a purely local catchment need not normally be accessed by bus, and therefore need not necessarily be located adjacent to the bus route; however, adjacent bus stops are necessary for any facility, such as a doctor's surgery, that is expected to serve a wider catchment area.
- 4.56. **Small developments** - or larger developments whilst only part-completed - may be wholly within 400 metres of an existing off-site bus route. In such cases, it is preferable to serve the site from the existing route rather than a diversion which adds to journey time for existing bus users. In such cases, a direct high quality pedestrian route from the development to bus stop will be needed, plus additions to facilities – including, possibly a pedestrian crossing and shelter - at the stop itself. A subsidy for maintaining or enhancing the bus service may also be required from the developer.
- 4.57. It is absolutely vital that a bus service should be available within the development at the **very earliest possible stage** within the construction phase of the development in order that the potential for generating the 'habit' of using public transport can be realised. The bus service must be in place before 50 dwellings are occupied, but will need to be planned well before this.
- 4.58. Stops should normally be **equipped** with a suitable shelter, seats, post with flag, information board, timetable case and litterbin, all to the satisfaction of the Highway Authority. Shelters will normally be lit and equipped with a real-time information display, as required by the Highway Authority.
- 4.59. Safe and convenient locations for passengers to cross the road must be provided adjacent to each stop. An adequate height of kerbing will be generally required at the stop, to provide level access boarding on to the vehicle.
- 4.60. The layout of development roads should be designed to facilitate efficient bus operation at all stages of the development. This may include bus only links, bus gates and other bus priority measures as appropriate. Bus boarders or kerb build-outs designed to block the road for cars when the bus is present may also be an appropriate element of a traffic calming regime and to assist passenger boarding. There should be a presumption against any traffic calming involving vertical deflections on any prospective bus route. In general, bus laybys are not acceptable.
- 4.61. Generally the provision of a bus service at the very early stages of development will involve **subsidy** for the service for which the developer will bear financial responsibility. The developer must also ensure the provision of a smooth running surface and indemnify the bus operator prior to adoption of the road. A usable route for buses would need to be in place at an early stage of construction and maintained throughout the construction period.
- 4.62. **Bus stops** on opposite sides should be staggered tail to tail subject to other visibility and road safety considerations and proximity to domestic property and windows.
- 4.63. Generally, bus routes require a **minimum carriageway width** of 6.5 metres. However, some reduction in width, for example over a short distance, may be permissible in special circumstances.
- 4.64. Where there is an expectation that bus services may terminate or vehicles may need to layover between services, appropriate standing space - (possibly in a lay-by) - and sufficient space allowing vehicles to turn safely will be required.
- Road Network Principles**
- 4.65. As a pre-requisite to design of any road network it is essential that advice is taken on matters related to:



- i. Provision for services - from local offices of the public utilities and telecommunications industries;
 - ii. The provision of public transport services - from the Public Transport Group and bus operators;
 - iii. Crime prevention measures - from local police crime prevention or architectural liaison officer (**PALO**);
 - iv. The appropriate use of trees and shrubs - from sources such as landscape architects etc., including relevant officers at both the Highway Authority and Local Planning Authority;
 - v. Access for emergency services - police, fire service and ambulance services.
- 4.66. To achieve the benefit of **permeability**, there should be a tendency to construct networks from linked roads rather than *cul de sac*, which should be limited in number and restricted to those parts of a site, which cannot be otherwise served.
- 4.67. Within new residential areas, vehicular movement should be safe, convenient, secure and pleasant - but vehicular access must be provided in a way that is consistent with an attractive environment and the needs of pedestrians and cyclists who share the same space, 20 mph or less, will be the design speed in these areas.
- 4.68. **Through-traffic** should be excluded from residential areas by design, and the layout and attractiveness of the overall environment should be such as, to discourage the use of the car for local trips and encourage walking and cycling.
- 4.69. To achieve these aims, the environmental requirements of the living space, which should be defined by the basic layout of spaces at the **Development Brief / framework** stage, should determine the width and desired speed and hence the alignment of the road.
- 4.70. In essence this means that the character and environmental qualities of the space take precedence over the speed and volume of traffic to be carried by the road serving it.
- 4.71. The management of traffic speed and movement in residential areas in this way should ensure a corresponding benefit to **safety** and thus enhance environmental quality for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 4.72. In order to achieve these objectives it is suggested that all new residential developments should be divided into elements of no more than **700 dwellings**.
- 4.73. Each of these elements, and any new development of less than 700 dwellings, can then be served by roads with a design speed of 30 kph (20 mph) or less.
- 4.74. Within such areas there will be parts of the **residential network** where it is desirable to ensure traffic speeds at very low levels. In such areas shared use surfaces incorporating access ways may be used with a design speed of 30 kph (20 mph).
- 4.75. Residential networks should be designed with the objective that it is not necessary to drive more than a quarter of a mile (400m) through the network before reaching a higher capacity road offering a more direct route out. In addition the network should ensure that no part is more than 1 km from a 30 mph (50 kph) link road, which connects groups of 700 dwelling residential areas (see diagrams below).
- 4.76. In order to restrict speed it is preferable to use changes of horizontal alignment (i.e. bends), rather than physical obstruction, such as speed humps, chicanes etc., which should only be used where straight sections of road are required for urban design reasons.
- 4.77. The following **Road Types** table and descriptions contain a number of adoptable road types, which comply with the objectives outlined above - however, it is open to



applicants/designers to propose other solutions which achieve the same purposes, which will be considered on their merits.

- 4.78. Within larger residential areas non-residential uses e.g. schools, churches, shops, Community Halls and small businesses may be located within a 20mph (30kph) zone - they must be served by a type 3 road as above.
- 4.79. Where businesses are of a size serviced regularly by vehicles >7.5T e.g. a supermarket, then service access must be from a type 2 road. (A vehicle exceeding 7.5T must carry an HGV plate).
- 4.80. **Schools** should not be located on a *cul-de-sac* road, and as discussed in earlier advice high quality pedestrian and cycle access to schools is vital. The level of car parking provision at the school should also have regard to any additional uses to which the buildings might be put e.g. evening events, sports facility usage etc.
- 4.81. **Parking for normal school day use** should be for operational use only and not available for parents bringing children to and from school, although the possible effects of parents dropping off and picking up children should be part of the design consideration.
- 4.82. **Dual use of hard surfaced areas**, such as playground for parking at evening/weekends could offer an appropriate solution. The ability to secure off road parking for at least one 50-seater coach should (if possible) be secured at the school site along with secure cycle parking (§4.42).



TECHNICAL

5. Road Types

- 5.1. The following table outlines some different road types within residential developments, their characteristics and where they should be used. This list is not exhaustive and innovation is encouraged.
- 5.2. If necessary further information is available on request regarding these suggested road types. See next Chapter for some further information on road alignments etc.

Road Description	Max. recommended Number of Dwellings*	Design Speed	Carriageway & Footway Details**	Description and Comments
Local Distributor	n/a	50kph (30mph)	7.3m 2 X 2m footways	Multipurpose local road, generally forming part of local County network. Collected frontage access in forward gear only.
Link Road	n/a	50kph (30mph)	6.75m 2 X 2m footways	Links residential elements and accommodates regular non-residential uses. Frontage access in forward gear only. Min 3m verges required.
Major Access Road	700 400 link or loop 200 cul-de-sac	30kph (20mph)	6.75m 5.5m 2 X 1.8 footways.	Direct access in or out of a residential area may serve non-residential uses regularly accessed by vehicles <7.5T (a plated HGV). If a bus route 6.75m carriageway required.
Minor Access Road	200 link or loop 100 cul-de-sac	30kph (20mph)	5m (5.5m for first 12m) 2 X 1.8m footways.	No access restrictions. Special surface finish.
Access Way	50 link or loop 25 cul-de-sac	30kph (20mph)	4.8m 2 X 1.5m.	No access restrictions. Special surface finish.
Access Lane	50 link or loop 25 cul-de-sac	30kph (20mph)	6.0 m overall 4.2m vehicle 1.8m pedestrian over- runnable or 2 x 1m where kerb height is < 25mm.	Specifically designed for rural access. Pedestrian margin over- runnable.
Mews	25 cul-de-sac	30kph (20mph)	6.0m overall 4.8 vehicle tracked route. Pedestrian safe area to be considered by design	Urban form. Special surface finish. Special junction criterion.
Residential Square	Defined by space enclosed	As host road	4.8m tracked vehicle way.	Urban form. Ramped approaches to tabled area. Special surface finish. Central feature for driver orientation.

* Number of residential units is guidance only as to hierarchy road hierarchy. Other factors may produce a demand for a higher category street.

** The widths given are minimums for the road description and additional width may be required for adoptable roads.

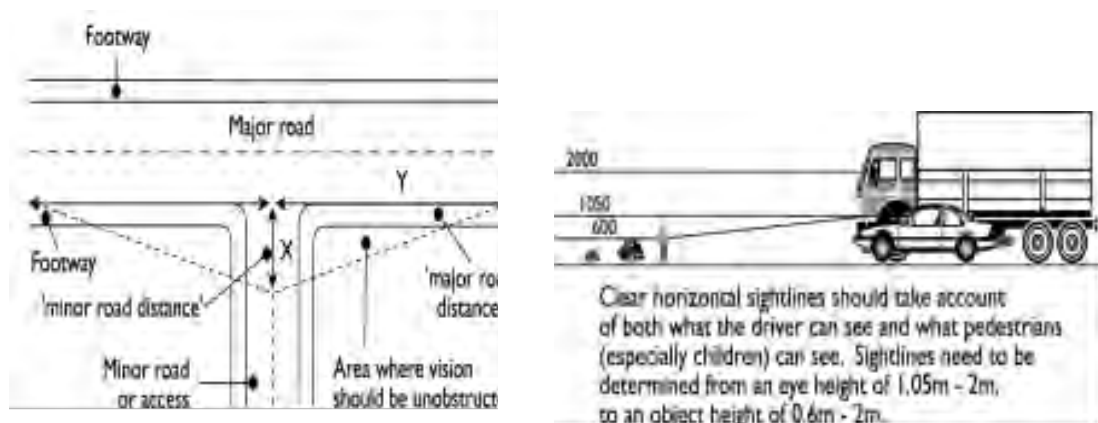
6. Technical Support Data

Junction Design and Sight Lines

- 6.1. Street junctions, within a residential development should be considered as integral part of the overall layout, requiring careful consideration.
- 6.2. One of the main requirements of a street junction, within a residential development, is to provide for pedestrian crossing on a direct desire line. This requires either:
 - i. The junction radii should be kept to a minimum (1.0m max radius). Large vehicles will have to use the offside running lane to complete the left turn without the rear wheels mounting the kerb. Vehicle tracking drawings should be provided to ensure this is possible. The small kerb radius at the junction has several advantages. In addition to providing for direct pedestrian crossing, vehicle speeds are reduced to 10 mph - 15 mph which reduces the likelihood of vehicle- cycle conflicts.Or
 - ii. Larger radii may be used for the junction but the footways are built out at the corners. These junctions should be combined with a speed table at the junction. The actual treatment of junctions will be on a case by case assessment that best suits the overall design of the development. However, in all cases tactile paving should be provided to assist the blind and partially sighted.
- 6.3. Generally, overrun areas should be avoided, although there may be occasions when these are acceptable. Bringing the carriageway up flush with the footway level at the junction at busy crossings should be considered at all junctions as it implies priority to pedestrians.

Visibility at Junctions

- 6.4. Visibility at junctions is defined by means of the 'X'-distance and 'Y'-distance shown on the following diagram.
- 6.5. The sightlines should take account of what the driver can see and what pedestrians (particularly children) can see – hence they should be determined from a drivers eye height of 1.05-2.0m and an object height of 0.6-2m.



- 6.6. An 'X'-distance of 2.4m is normally required but in certain circumstances (e.g. lightly trafficked, slow speed street) 2.0m may be acceptable. Agreement should be sought with the Highway Authority at an early stage for this dispensation.

6.7. Speed surveys should be carried out to determine actual road speeds rather than posted Speed Limit Orders. The following table provides the default required sightlines unless the standards of other guidance can be shown to be appropriate to context.

Table of Required Sightline ('Y')-Distance for Speed on Through Road

Kph	30	40	50	60	70	85	100	120
Mph	19	25	31	37	43	53	62	75
SSD (m)	33	45	70	90	120	160	215	295

Speed Restraint and Forward Visibility

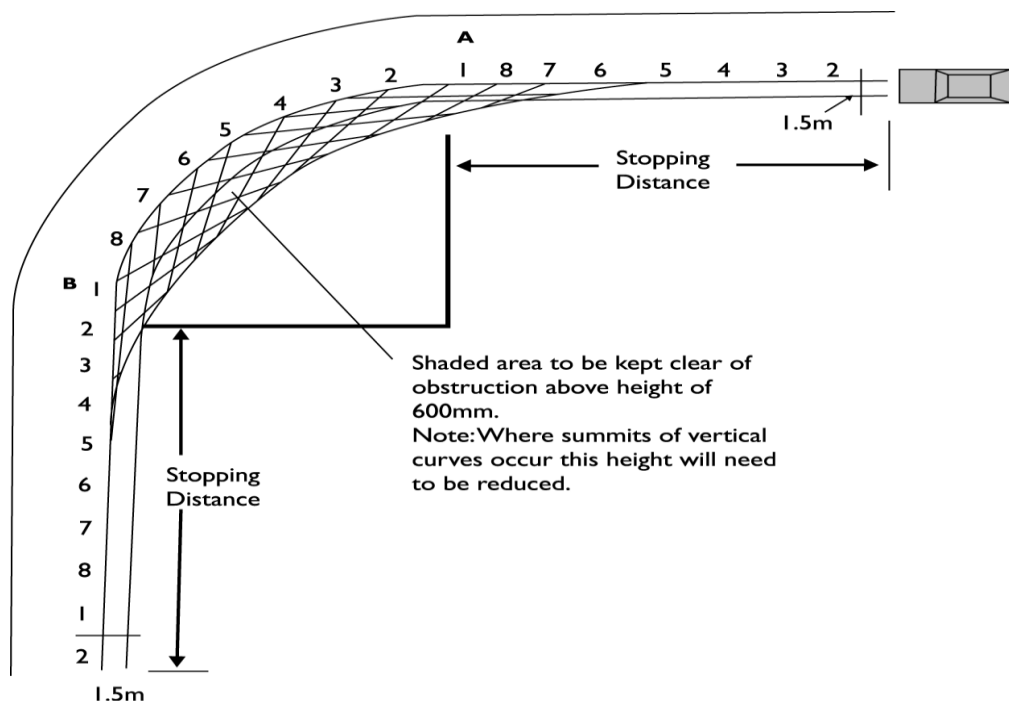
6.8. One of the key design aims should be to reduce speeds within the development to 20mph. Generally speed can be restrained by limiting straight or uninterrupted lengths of street to less than 70m. Other features which can be introduced to control speeds are listed below:

- i. Physical features, involving vertical or horizontal deflection. However, speed humps should be considered only as a last resort and other measures should be given preference.
- ii. Changes in priority at junctions can help to produce a reduction in speed and roundabouts are particularly effective in this respect.
- iii. Street dimensions. In addition, to the width between buildings influencing driver speed, keeping lengths of street between junctions short should also be a key design element.
- iv. Limiting forward visibility has a major influence on speed – refer to table below.
- v. Providing appropriate street features such as on street parking, obstructions in the street, edge marking that visually narrow the carriageway and changes in texture or colour can be part of the tool box of measures. All these features give a psychological message, which encourages drivers to reduce their speed.

6.9. Limiting forward visibility should be used to control speeds within the development and this should be given priority in formulating layouts. The following table gives the forward stopping sight distance required for given speeds.

Table of Required Forward Visibility Distance for Speed on Through Road

Kph	16	20	24	25	30	32	40	45	48	50	60
Mph	10	12	15	16	19	20	25	28	30	31	37
SSD (m)	9	12	15	16	20	22	31	36	40	43	56



- 6.10. All new residential developments containing an adoptable highway network will be expected to form part of a 20mph (30kph) zone. Residential developments, which have streets not offered for adoption, will not be excepted from the imposition of the principles outlined in this document.
- 6.11. Speed restraint measures should be used throughout the 20mph zone and no warning signs are required within the zone. Signs (in accordance with Traffic Advisory Leaflet 2/93) and an entrance gateway are, however, required to indicate to drivers that they are entering the zone.
- 6.12. It is essential that the designer appreciates that speed restraint is not just a matter of using the engineering features, described in this section. A driver's perception of a safe speed is also materially affected by the spacing, form and proximity of the buildings served by the road, in addition to the surface materials used and the effective use of hard and soft landscaping. A composite design will be called for, which must be agreed at an early stage by both Planning and Highway Authorities.

Number of Access points

- 6.13. A minimum of two access points from the surrounding highway network should be provided where the number of dwellings exceeds 500 units.

Emergency Access

- 6.14. If more than 150 dwellings and less than 500 dwellings are served by a single access an emergency access should be provided. This may take the form of an uprated cycle track or a reinforced grass area. The details must be agreed with the Highway Authority.

Access for Servicing

- 6.15. Refuse vehicles must be able to reach refuse collection within 25m for single domestic refuse bin or 5m for larger communal (shared) bins. Developers proposals should show the location of the refuse storage and ensure by means of vehicle tracking plots that refuse vehicles can access the location without reversing.
- 6.16. It is common in recently built developments to see refuse bins left on street mainly because there is no suitable place within the cartilage of the property to store them. Developers should therefore give consideration where residents will store bins and avoid the need to keep bins on street for convenience.

Access for Fire Tenders

- 6.17. Building Regulations require access for fire tenders to a point no further than 45m from all parts of the ground floor of any residential building. Any road or private drive being part of that access must be no less than 3.7m wide between kerbs (3.1m minimum for a gateway or similar short narrowing), and should have a minimum centre line radius of 6.6m (or 7.8 between walls) and headroom of 3.7m.
- 6.18. The access (including manholes etc.) should have a carrying capacity of a 12.5 tonne vehicle (bridges etc. should have a minimum carrying capacity of 17 tonnes).
- 6.19. A cul-de-sac longer than 20m must have a turning area suitable to enable a fire tender to carry-out a three point turn.
- 6.20. Where there are flats of more than four storeys there are additional access requirements, about which, the local Building Control Authority / Building Regulations should be consulted.



Gateways

- 6.21. A gateway feature is required at each entrance to a 20mph zone - its main purpose is to provide a visual indication to drivers that they are entering a special area, where they must act to control their speed and give greater priority to more vulnerable road users.
- 6.22. The gateway feature, may consist of a 'pinch point' of buildings or walls at the entrance or of a physical gateway structure, either arching across the road or a pair of substantial piers close to the carriageway.
- 6.23. The footway may pass through the gateway, though preferably it should go round it, so as not to dilute the 'narrowing effect' being sought.
- 6.24. Physical gateway structures should be designed to withstand vehicular impact and should provide a headroom to be agreed with the Highway Authority / Planning Authority representatives (a headroom of 4.2m is the minimum likely to be required). The developer will be required to accompany his design submission for the gateway with an independent **road safety audit**.
- 6.25. Structures over the highway need to be licensed, and this issue should be discussed with the Highway Authority representatives at an early stage in the gateway design.
- 6.26. Formal arrangements will need to be made for the future maintenance of the gateway structure. In the event that the developer / purchaser wishes to pass that liability to a public authority, then, dependent upon the form of the gateway, it may be that District, Town or Parish Council or the Highway Authority could adopt - but in each of the above options a commuted maintenance sum will be required.



Changes in Horizontal Alignment

- 6.27. These should be generally be tighter than the minimum centre line radius specified below, down to a minimum centre line bend radius of 7.5m. The deflection angle should be greater than 45° and a mountable shoulder may be required to enable larger vehicles to overrun, although this should be avoided if possible.

C/Way width (m)	Minimum CL Radius (m)
5.0-6.75	20
4.1-4.8	13.6

Carriageway Widening on Curves

6.28. As a general guide, it is suggested that carriageway widening is normally needed to the following extent on bends curving through more than 10 degrees along roads serving over 25 dwellings

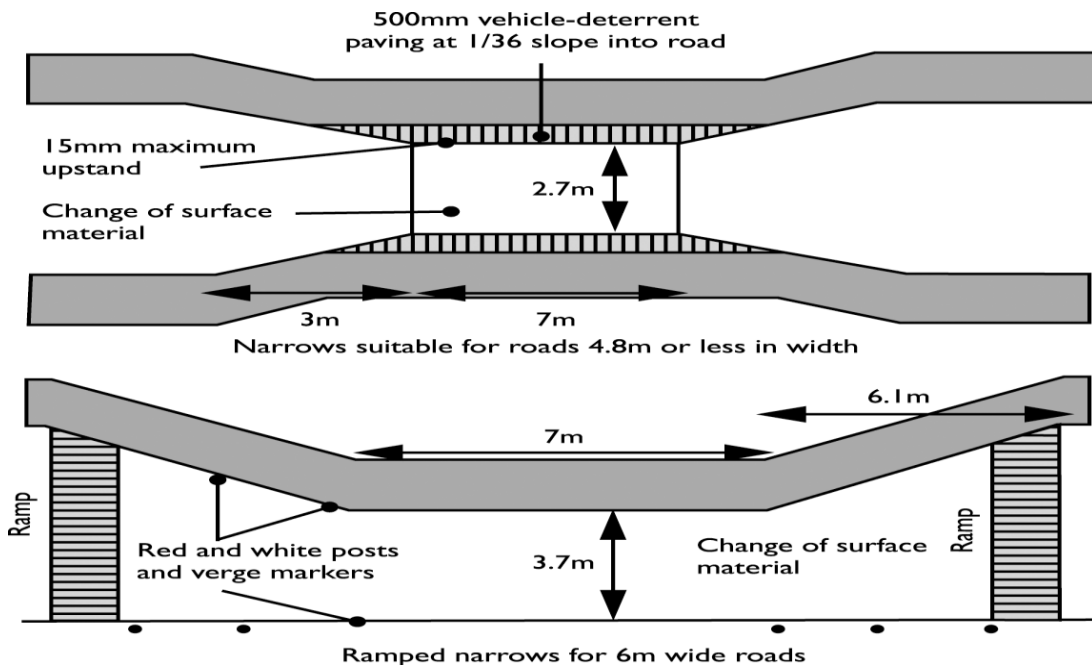
Centre line radius (m)	20	30	40	50	60
Min. widening (m)	0.60	0.40	0.35	0.20	0.15

6.29. However, the need for widening may vary according to the amount of traffic on the road and may also be influenced by the amount of forward visibility provided between passing places on each side of the bend.

6.30. On very lightly trafficked roads, the chances of two large service vehicles, such as pantechnicons or buses needing to pass on the bend must be sufficiently remote to make widening unnecessary. Similarly, where adequate forward visibility is provided between oncoming vehicles it will be possible for large vehicles to wait until the bend is clear and to use part of the opposite lane when turning. Even with a 15 m outer curve radius a pantechnicon can turn on a 5.5 m carriageway without any widening and without using the whole of the carriageway width.

Changes in Horizontal Alignment - Narrowings

6.31. Drivers will wait for oncoming traffic to pass at narrowing of the carriageway to 2.7m over a length not exceeding 7 metres. A 500mm wide mountable shoulder either side will enable service vehicles to negotiate this layout. This type of measure is not appropriate for shared surfaces. Mountable shoulders should always be designed with slope and surface finish to discourage parking on them. This form of speed constraint is also suitable as an element of the measures, with a raised table at footway/cycleway crossings of a carriageway.



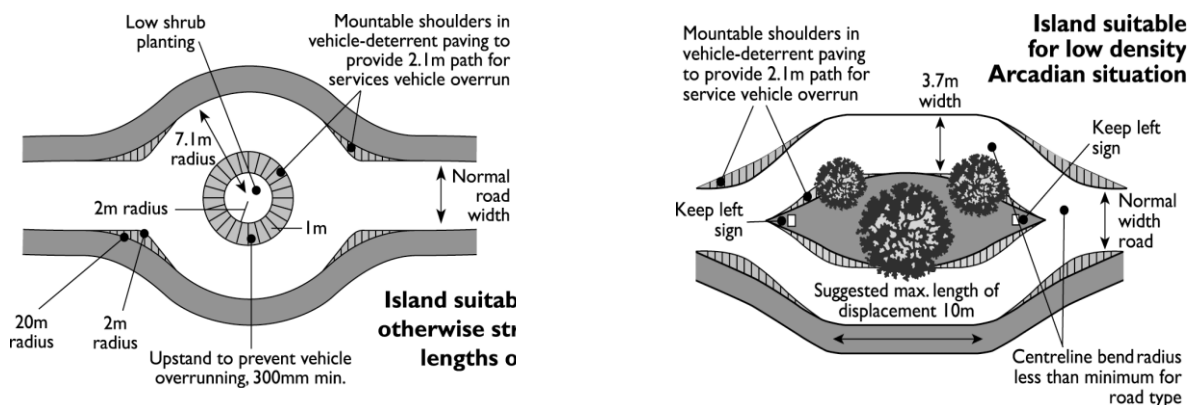


Changes in Horizontal Alignment – Chicanes

- 6.32. To achieve effective restraint the lateral displacement of the running lane must be at least 2m over a length no greater than 10m. The carriageway width at entrance and exit of the chicane may be reduced to 2m, but a mountable shoulder may be necessary to provide a 3.1m wide path for service vehicles. This measure is not suitable for shared surfaces.

Changes in Horizontal Alignment – Islands

- 6.33. Whilst the island may be any shape subject to the minimum dimensions given in the diagrams below, a lateral displacement of the running lane by at least 2m must be achieved. Mountable shoulders may be used to enable the passage of service vehicles, but the centre of the island should not be over-runnable by any type of vehicle. This layout type is not suitable for shared surfaces.
- 6.34. N.B For islands to accommodate tree planting a minimum width of 3m will be required.



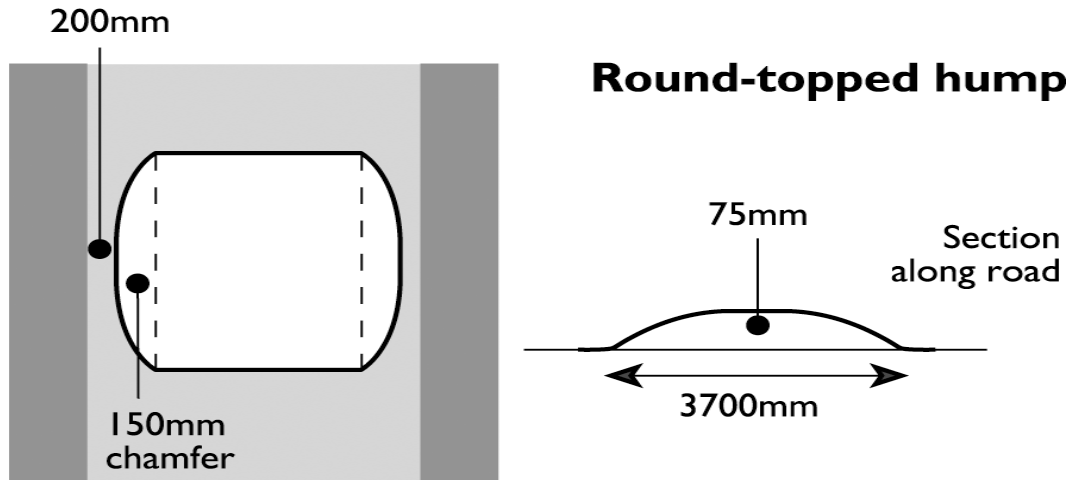
Road Markings

- 6.35. Centre line markings are not required in new developments and there is some evidence that the lack of them helps reduce vehicle speeds. There is also normally no requirement for other road markings, within the development, except at the access junctions onto the

existing highway network. The developer should confirm with the Highway Authority at an early stage where road markings are required.

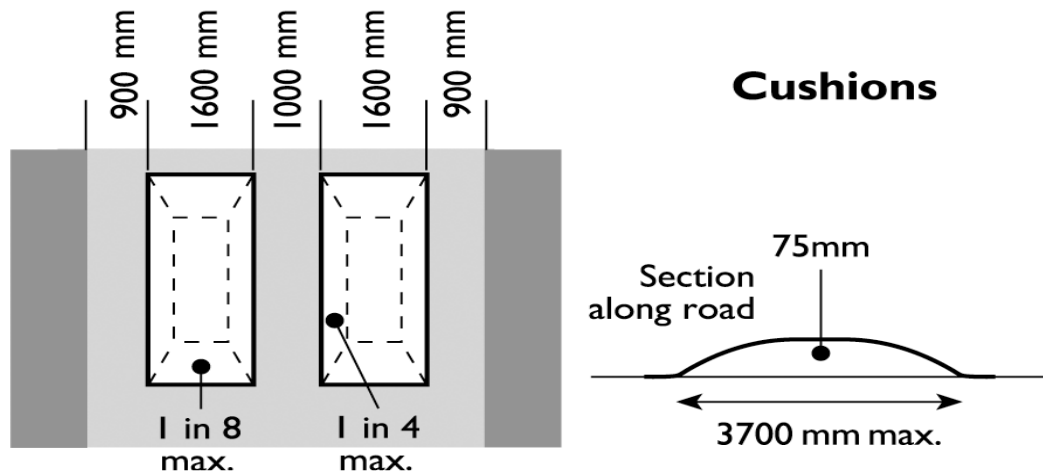
Changes in Vertical Alignment - Humps

- 6.36. Round topped humps should be 75mm high and no longer than 3.7m. They are not appropriate for shared surfaces, nor generally with carriageway widths of 6.0m or greater.



Changes in Vertical Alignment – Cushions

- 6.37. Where the carriageway width is 6.0m or more and is likely to be used as a 'bus route', and will also carry emergency services, speed cushions should, therefore, be used rather than humps.

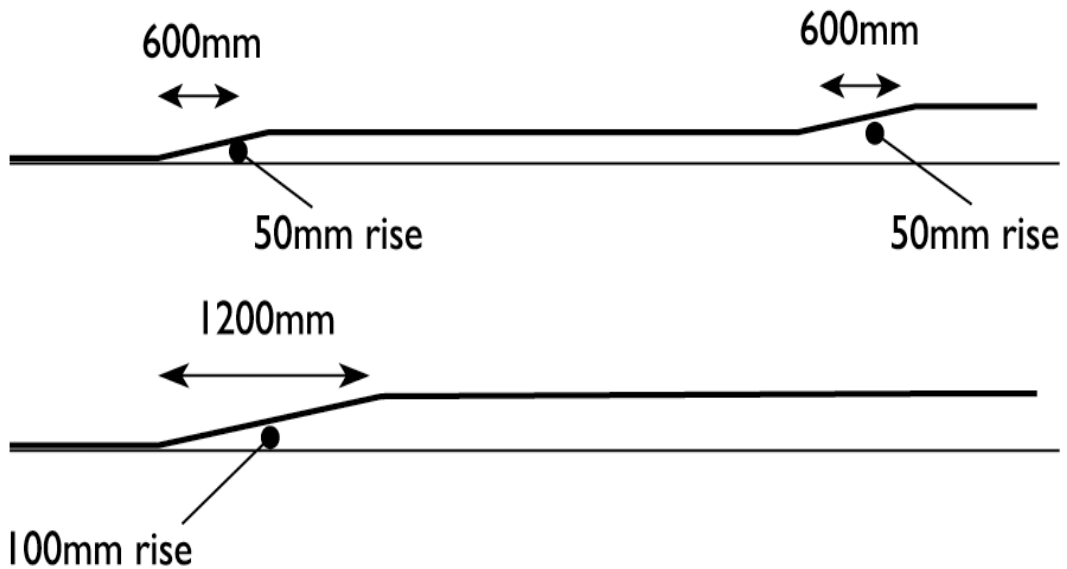


- 6.38. They are specially designed to allow the wheels of buses and wide wheelbase vehicles to pass either side of the raised area – but cars have to negotiate the humps. They should be constructed in pairs to the dimensions given in the diagram below.

Changes in Vertical Alignment – Ramps

- 6.39. Single ramps with a rise of 100mm over 1200mm or successive ramps of 50mm rise over 600mm are particularly appropriate at the entrance to shared surfaces or within them.

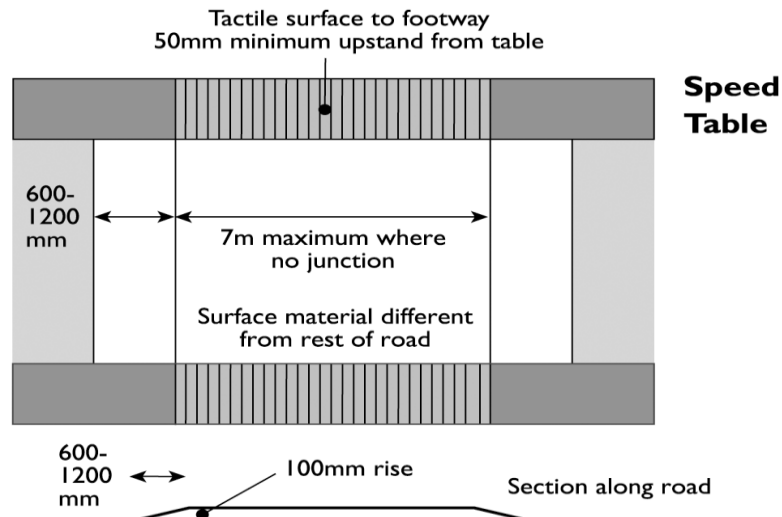
Successive 50mm ramps for shared surfaces



Single 100mm ramp for shared surfaces

Changes in Vertical Alignment - Speed Tables

- 6.40. Whilst, this particular layout is seen as a 'last resort' for solely speed restraint purposes, it is however, particularly appropriate to serve as a means of highlighting a crossing of the carriageway by a cycle and/or pedestrian route. They will need to be 'reinforced' with other hard and/or soft landscaping features and with appropriate signing where the pedestrians/cyclists have 'right of way' (the preferred solution).
- 6.41. A raised table of maximum length 7m (when not at a junction) may be formed by approach ramps rising over a minimum length of 1500mm. If provided on a 'bus route' the rise should not exceed 75mm provided on a gradient of 1 in 15, and the raised platform should be no shorter than 6m - generally a sequence of speed tables on a bus route will not be acceptable. Tactile surfaces should demarcate carriageway and footway for the benefit of the visually impaired.



Changes in Vertical Alignment - Table Junction

- 6.42. A road junction may be treated as a raised table approached by ramps as described in 'Speed Tables' above - tactile surfaces should demarcate carriageway and footway too.

Changes in Vertical Alignment - Shared Surfaces

- 6.43. Where a residential square forms a feature along a conventional road, its approaches should be ramped as described under 'Speed Tables' so that the whole shared surface becomes a raised plateau. The vehicle way should be demarcated by channels, rows of setts and the different paving colour of the perimeter footway will be sufficient for the visually impaired.

Complementary Measures

- 6.44. The use of these measures should be discussed at an early stage with the Planning and Highway Authorities as they will have an impact on the design layout, character and visual appearance of a scheme. In some instances they may not be deemed appropriate for more aesthetic design reasons.

Complementary Measures – Buildings

- 6.45. Buildings may be used to form an end-stop to a straight stretch of road, or be angled indicating a change of direction.

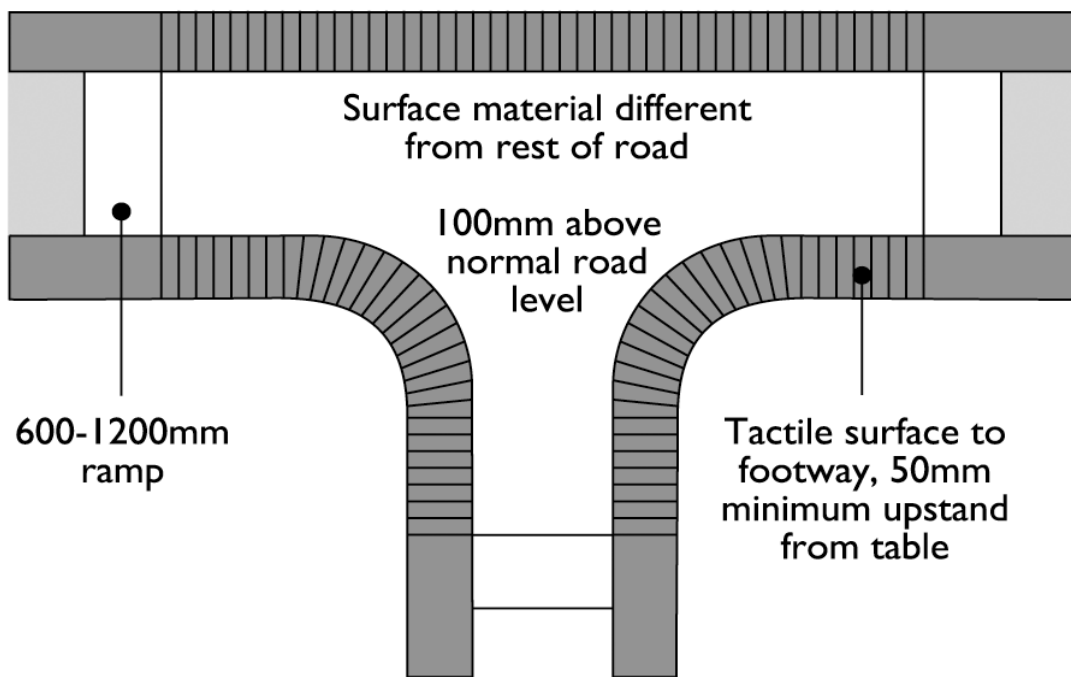


Table Junction

Complementary Measures - Width and Alignment

- 6.46. In addition to the measures described under changes in Horizontal Alignment above, general variation in the width and alignment of the carriageway can make the driver feel less secure and less able to increase speed. The intention should be to make the driver feel that he is in 'a place' rather than 'on a road'.

Miscellaneous Design Features

Turning Areas

- 6.47. Well-connected streets generally, do not require turning areas but where there are *culs-de-sac* a turning area will be required. Consideration will need to be given to the effect of vehicles parking in such an area negating its function. This could be overcome by providing adequate parking elsewhere or incorporating parking into the turning area itself. There is no prescribed shape for the turning area but vehicle tracking plots will be required to ensure that vehicles can use it.

Vertical Clearance

- 6.48. In general a vertical clearance of 5.0m is required over the full carriageway width and a 500mm margin at either side. If the carriageway has a cross-fall of greater than 2.5% then the 'low side' margin should be increased to 610mm.

Horizontal Clearances

- 6.49. A horizontal clearance from the carriageway edge of 500mm shall be maintained to all structures/signs/street furniture etc. This shall be increased to 610mm on the low side if the carriageway has a cross-fall > 2.5%.

Gradients / Vertical Curve

- 6.50. Where a change in gradient occurs, vertical curves will be required at both summits and valleys for driving comfort, and at summits to ensure forward visibility to the following standards, measured from a drivers eye height of 1.05m and object height of 600mm:-
20mph (30kph) zones : 25m.

Culs-de-sac and Potential for Future Development

- 6.51. Where a cul-de-sac abuts an area, which can be foreseen as a site for future development, the *cul-de-sac* (and if necessary the network serving it) should be designed to be capable of serving the future dwelling numbers.

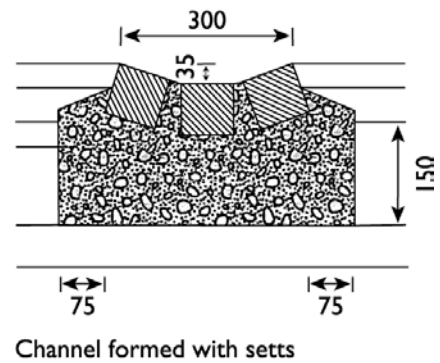
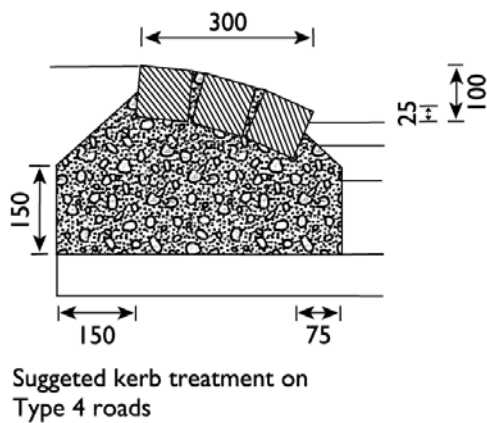
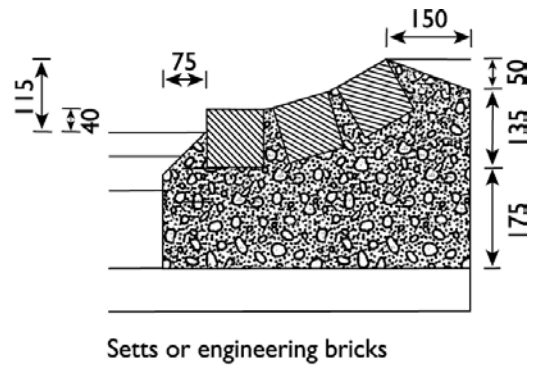
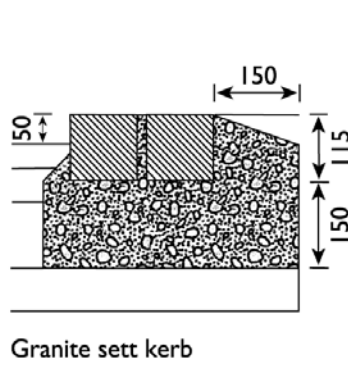
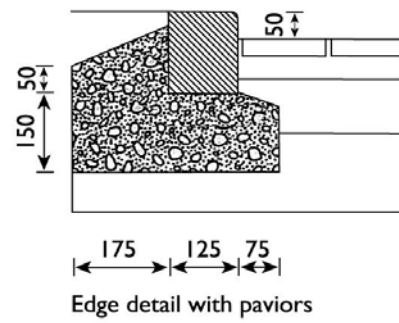
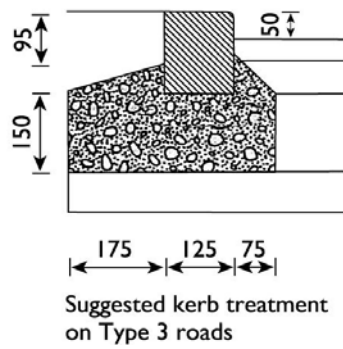
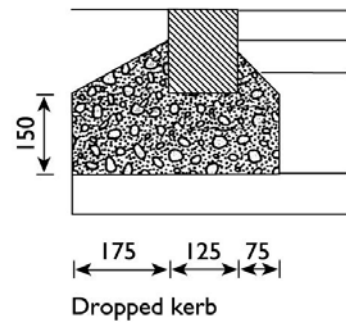
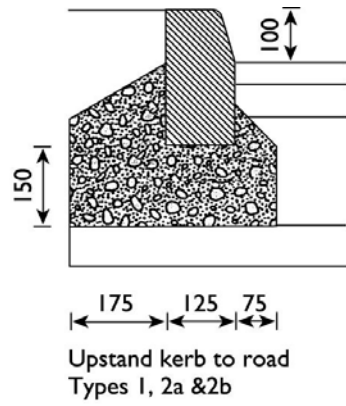
Bollards

- 6.52. Bollards used to protect buildings and demarcate footways etc. in parking squares should be approximately 1.2m high.
- 6.53. The materials and pattern, on any individual site, should be discussed with the Local Planning Authority and Highway Authority representatives as material / colour / pattern pallets will differ District, by District and even village to village.
- 6.54. Collapsible bollards will be required in certain locations, such as pedestrian/cycle links for maintenance purposes and emergency access.

Kerbs

- 6.55. The design of kerbs, channels etc. should complement the design speed and character of the road. Precise details of materials options, form and colours appear in the specification included in this document and consultation will be needed with the Local Planning Authority and Highway Authority representatives to define what is appropriate on any individual site.
- 6.56. The following diagrams illustrate some standard details of constructions, whatever kerb detail is selected; at least half of the height of the module should be below ground level in order to prevent displacement by traffic over-riding.





All dimensions in mm

PARKING

7. Parking & Parking Standards

- 7.1. It is now generally accepted that, while constraining parking provision at the journey destination (such as town centres) limits private vehicle trips, it is not necessarily the case at the journey origin (residential properties).
- 7.2. Residents will own cars and if necessary park them on streets where there are no parking controls. In doing so it often causes conflict and access problems. In recent years there has been a growing feeling that there is insufficient parking provided in new residential developments.
- 7.3. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF - 2012) Other Planning Policies: Parking states that adequate parking should be provided: “*both in new residential developments and around our town centres and high streets*”...“*the Government abolished national maximum parking standards in 2011*”.
- 7.4. NPPF: Other Planning Policies goes on to say: “*Parking standards are covered in paragraph 39 of the [NPPF]... The following text now needs to be read alongside that paragraph:*

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 to manage their local road network.”

- 7.5. Oxfordshire has locations, where management of the local road network are necessary. The OCC *Position Statement – on the Application of Contemporary Highway Design Guidance in Oxfordshire* makes clear that parking will be considered on its merits according to appraisal of supporting documentation submitted with applications. Such documentation includes: Design and Access Statements (D&AS), Transport Statements (TS) and Transport Assessments (TA).
- 7.6. An example of a special case relating to parking is **Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO)** in Oxford (**Appendix 6**) and other Oxfordshire urban centres. The frontages of such buildings often have on-street parking for, at most, two cars and yet have a demand for well in excess of this as a consequence of being HMO.
- 7.7. The cumulative effect of this, where there are many HMOs in one street, can be to cause an excess of parking demand and potentially obstruction of the highway. To avoid this situation, objections to HMO conversion will be made, where it is felt that a compelling justification is found to need to manage parking in such contexts.
- 7.8. In other circumstances the following parking standards will, be used, as guidance only, for larger developments. Actual parking levels will be expected to be justified, as laid out in supporting documentation with planning applications, such as D&AS, TS and TA.

Parking Standards

- 7.9. Recommendations for parking levels for the different Districts are included in **Appendix 6**. These provide for recommendations for allocated and unallocated, as well as for visitors and operational needs. The element of unallocated parking is recommended to maximise flexibility and economy of land use. In some circumstances, parking can be accommodated entirely without allocated spaces.



- 7.10. **Allocated spaces** can be within the curtilage of a house, a private space within a parking court conveyed specifically to a flat or house, or a group of spaces owned by a third party where the spaces are leased to individuals.
- 7.11. **Unallocated spaces** are those, which can be generally used by anyone and where possible they should generally be provided off-street in parking courts. In this case it is strongly recommended that they are controlled by a third party, such as a management company on behalf of those who use the spaces. This way, whilst not being allocated to a specific property, they can be assigned to particular groups of houses or flats.
- 7.12. Parking spaces on a private road generally cannot be allocated to specific residents and the Highway Authority will ensure that suitable control and maintenance of the road is provided for, through the planning process.
- 7.13. On-street parking (whether adopted or private) can be controlled by Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) to restrict vehicle type and or length of time of use, although this is not a preferred solution on new estates. If the surrounding area suffers parking problems then other means of controlling parking should be considered. Developers are encouraged to design the road and housing layout to create an effective self-controlling arrangement to reduce the need for traffic regulation orders.
- 7.14. The provision of **car clubs** within new developments can be part of an overall package of measures to reduce car ownership. A variation in parking standards may be appropriate where car clubs are introduced and secured for the long term.
- 7.15. When areas within residential development are being considered as ‘**car free**’ or where reductions in car parking provision beyond levels required in these recommendations then the implications and remedies must be addressed in the Transport Assessment and Travel Plans, which will accompany the planning application. Care must be taken to ensure that cars are not parked on surrounding roads causing problems to existing residents or for highway safety.
- 7.16. When car parking spaces are being reduced to very low levels then consideration must be given to allow some spaces for people with **mobility difficulties**.
- 7.17. Parking for private, shared ownership and **rented dwellings** should be to the same standard with no identifiable distinction between the different tenures. This has the advantage that should tenures change there are unlikely to be parking difficulties.
- Parking Design Considerations**
- 7.18. The placing of parking spaces, within new residential areas, should be considered as an essential part of achieving a high quality urban design.
- 7.19. Developers are encouraged to design developments such that the carriageway widths, the road width and location of parking, both on and off street, avoid irresponsible parking and allow access for public service and emergency vehicles.



Parking Space Dimensions

7.20. The following tables show the minimum space sizes acceptable:

Perpendicular (e.g. driveways and parking courts)	Length (m)	Width (m)
Space for people with mobility difficulties	5.5	2.9 +
Standard space (unobstructed)	5.0	2.5
Standard space (obstructed on one side)	5.0	2.7
Standard space (obstructed on both sides, includes car ports and under-crofts)	5.0	2.9
Inside garage	6.0	3.0

Parallel (e.g. adjacent to streets and driveways)	Length (m)	Width (m)
Space for people with mobility difficulties	6.5	2.9 + 1.0
Standard space	6.0	2.5

Echelon Parking	Permitted overhang (m)	Length (m)	Width (m)
60°	0.1	5.6	As above
45°	0.2	5.3	As above
30°	0.1	4.7	As above

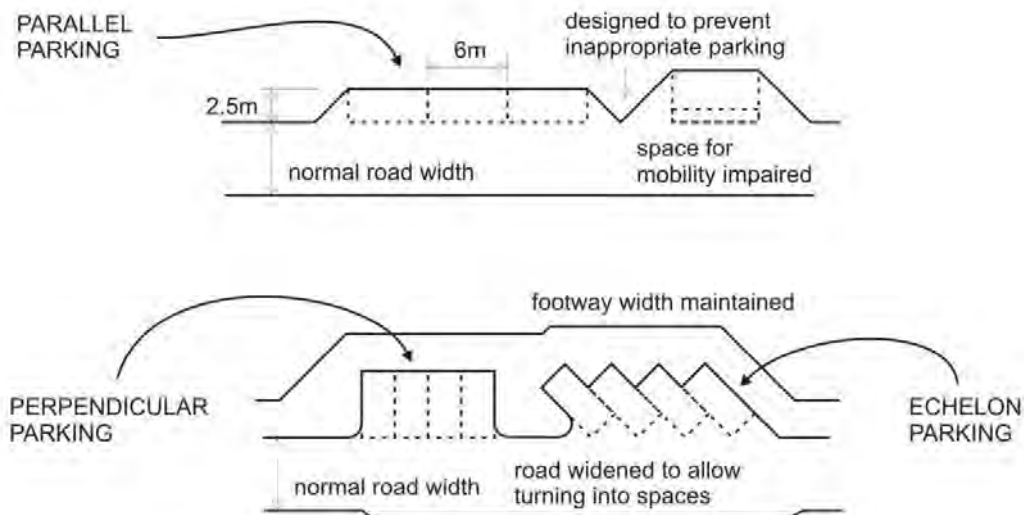
Parking for People with Impaired Mobility

- 7.21. Consideration must be given in the design to the provision and location of spaces for impaired mobility people (Blue Badge Holders). Generally, the spaces should be within the curtilage of the property and have level access to the main pedestrian access. At the least, these parking spaces must be within 50m of the dwelling entrance (Blue Badge Holder estimated range).
- 7.22. Where developers are proposing to build flats with unallocated off-street parking and the level of mobility impaired residents is unknown then at least 5% of spaces should be designed and allocated for their use. They should be located near to the main pedestrian access to the building and have level access. Reference should be made to Department for Transport's *Inclusive Mobility* (2002) standards.
- 7.23. The bay should be marked with a British Standard Disabled Symbol to conform to BS 8300:2009. Further guidance can be obtained from Department for Transport Traffic Advisory leaflet 05/05.
- 7.24. Buildings specifically for the elderly or mobility-impaired people should comply with the relevant higher specific requirements and standards (as shown in the parking space dimension tables above).

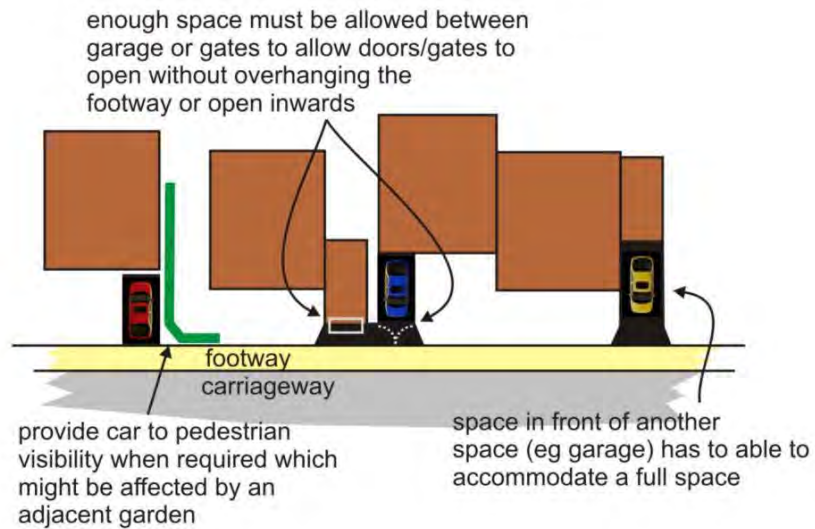
Parking Space Layouts

- 7.25. A vehicle / pedestrian sight splay of 2m x 2m (back of highway to side of driveway) will normally be required where the parking space abuts the back of footway or highway boundary.
- 7.26. Parking bays, which are side-by-side allow car doors to be opened partly into the adjacent bay. Where parking spaces are adjacent to structures adequate room for pedestrian movement should be provided on one or both sides accordingly.

- 7.27. Tandem (in line) parking is inconvenient and generally must be avoided where possible, as both spaces are rarely used. It should not be used off-site, however, it may be appropriate on-plot if an additional vehicle parking on the highway would not have unacceptable consequences.
- 7.28. Where parking is to be provided on-street, parking bays adjacent to the general carriageway may be appropriate in certain cases but it should be broken up in maximum groups of about 4 spaces. This not only limits the visual impact but allows kerb build-outs to be provided for pedestrians to cross the street with minimum sight line obstruction.
- 7.29. Where lay-by parking is provided on street it should be constructed to carriageway standards. The parking bay should be differentiated from the carriageway preferably by change of surface treatment.
- 7.30. An indication of how parking spaces relate to the street are shown in the following figures:



- 7.31. Always sufficient space must be allowed to achieve a safe and appropriate approach for vehicles into a car parking space. A width of 6.0m to swing into a parking space and 7.3m to get into a garage must be provided for.
- 7.32. Where garages or gates into parking areas are constructed less than 5.0m from the back of the highway, a set-back from the back of the highway should be either 0.5m to allow for 'up and over' garage doors (0.0m if roller shutter or similar) or greater than 5.5m to allow for car parking in front of the garage or gates. Care should be taken as to where this approach is applied. On busier streets space should be allowed to provide space for a vehicle to rest temporarily whilst the gates or doors are being opened or closed.
- 7.33. Set out below are examples of off-street parking layout in relation to the footway. This arrangement will be required especially, where the footway and carriageway is to be adopted by the Highway Authority.



- 7.34. Variation to the above may be acceptable in certain circumstances but the onus is on the developer to provide supporting evidence.

Garages

- 7.35. Most family cars are about 2.0m wide and a minimum clearance of at least 0.5m each side is required to open car doors on both the driver and passenger side. An average car length is about 4.5m.
- 7.36. Research has indicated that about 50% of garages in Oxfordshire are not used for parking of vehicles but are used for storage or other purposes. This may be due to garage sizes being too small to accommodate most family cars and for storing bicycles and other domestic goods. To allow for some storage and/or cycle parking the garage size should reflect this (see Parking Space Dimensions above). Garages below these dimensions will not be counted as a parking space.
- 7.37. Where a garage is counted as a parking space it will be normal practice to place a planning condition to ensure its continued use for that purpose.
- 7.38. The garage doors must not open onto or over the adopted highway area, and vehicle/pedestrian sight splays apply as for the parking spaces.
- 7.39. Garage courts require a minimum of 7.3m between garage fronts. Adequate drainage must be provided for the paving in front of the garages.
- 7.40. The minimum entrance widths and headroom to garage courts are the same as for parking courts (shown below).

Car ports and Under-croft Parking

- 7.41. Car ports and under-croft parking areas are less likely to be used for purposes other than parking a vehicle. Car ports 5.0m long by 2.9m wide and greater will count as a parking space.



Parking Courts

- 7.42. Rear parking courts can reduce the visual intrusion of cars. But there are disadvantages including inefficient use of land, reduced garden sizes and loss of security and privacy to the rear of the home. *Car parking What Works Where* by English Partnerships states:
- “The recent fashion for placing parking spaces behind buildings has led to many schemes around the country being blighted by cars parked to the front of the house where there is no space designed to accommodate them.”*
- 7.43. Careful consideration therefore needs to be given to the location and design of parking courts to minimise any adverse impact. A balance needs to be struck between on-street and on-plot parking.
- 7.44. Parking courts work best when they:
- i. Have no more than about 10 spaces
 - ii. Have single point of access to the highway
 - iii. Are overlooked by living rooms or kitchens
 - iv. Have adequate lighting
 - v. Have boundary treatments to allow overlooking and avoid blank walls
 - vi. Have direct access to dwellings
 - vii. Are high quality in design terms - materials, planting etc
 - viii. Are located in accessible areas
 - ix. Have sense of place
 - x. Feel secure to users.
- 7.45. The entrance to parking courts should generally be a minimum width of 3.0m for up to 9 parking spaces and 4.1m wide for 10 or more spaces. Where the entrance to a parking area is built over, the headroom should be a minimum of 2.5m. Separate building regulations may apply where fire tender or emergency access is specifically required.
- 7.46. Parking squares in the appropriate setting can also be used as an alternative form of providing parking provision. Designs using ‘Shared Surface’ principles provide the opportunity to integrate parking within the street. However, Shared Surfaces need careful consideration to ensure parking does not occur outside designated parking areas, thereby, causing road safety problems and impairing the overall amenity of the development.
- 7.47. Shared Surfaces should generally be 6.0m wide for reasons of accommodating services, visual narrowing can be deployed to maintain low vehicular speeds.
- 7.48. Designers should be aware that on-street parking may cause problems for vehicles manoeuvring on the street, particularly where the carriageway width has been reduced as part of the overall design. The effect and implications of on-street parking must be considered in the layout design.
- Minimising Parking on the Footway**
- 7.49. Unplanned parking on roads and footways which causes obstruction to the passage of pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles (including service vehicles) tends to take place where planned parking provision is inadequate or less convenient. Adherence to the policies in this document should prevent this, but where less convenient forms of parking (tandem on-plot and rear parking courts) are proposed, developers will need to demonstrate that unacceptable, unplanned parking will not occur. Careful consideration will need to be given to road widths and designs that deter inappropriate parking.
- 7.50. Wide areas of footway or open space may also be attractive for casual parking. Bollards, planters or other street furniture can assist in the definition of parking areas and be used to indicate where people should park. However a compromise needs to be reached to avoid street clutter.



STREETSCAPE

8. Services

- 8.1. The provision of public utilities services is an essential part of any development. The lay-out, economical installation and future maintenance of service apparatus must be considered in the design of an estate.

DEVELOPERS MUST ESTABLISH LIAISON WITH PUBLIC UTILITIES AS PART OF THE INITIAL DESIGN PROCESS.

Routeing of Services

- 8.2. **Public Utilities** have rights to lay apparatus in public highways and other public land. The New Roads and Street Works Act and other specific enactments stipulate these rights. Public Utilities prefer to maintain their rights by laying their services in land adopted by the Highway or local authority.
- 8.3. However, the highway and local authorities are not able to bear the cost of **maintaining** land solely to provide a service or public utilities and developers should cater for service space needs in highways, highway verges and other land acceptable to the highway or local authority.
- 8.4. **The highway authority** will adopt by agreement carriageways, footways, footpaths and verges, which are essentially or prospectively a public highway. This includes any length of street, highway, road, lane, footway, alley, passage, square, court, verge or piece of land, which satisfies the requirements of these standards.
- 8.5. The local authority may adopt by agreement public open space amenity and play areas, certain footpaths, linear parks, land laid out as a way and such other areas acceptable to them. The local authority are the 'Street Managers' of these areas within the terms of the 'New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 Section 48, 49(4)'.
- 8.6. If the adopted highway or public open spaces are insufficient for public utilities needs then developers must provide service routes with secure easements. It is the responsibility of the developer to agree easements with the public utilities concerned.
- 8.7. When selecting routes for services dual mains should normally be used to obviate the need for branch crossings, which weaken the carriageway structure. It is the developers' responsibility to provide ducts, as necessary in positions required by the public utilities and to mark temporarily the location of the ducts for easy access during construction, where crossing cannot be considered.
- 8.8. It is preferable for services to be laid in amenity areas, footpaths or service strips to minimise installation, repair costs and disruption. However, if no other route is possible then services may be sited in the carriageway.
- 8.9. In the case of shared surfaces where there is no footway care needs to be taken to group services so that excavation for maintenance does not block the street. Where a delineated pedestrian margin is provided, this is the correct location for underground services.
- 8.10. The National Joint Utilities Groups (NJUG's) publication: *NJUG Guidelines on the Positioning of Underground Apparatus for New Development Sites*, 2007 indicates the manner, in which, services can be accommodated in footways of 2m width – see: <http://www.njug.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/V2-New-Development-Sites-Issue-4-29-10-2013.pdf>.

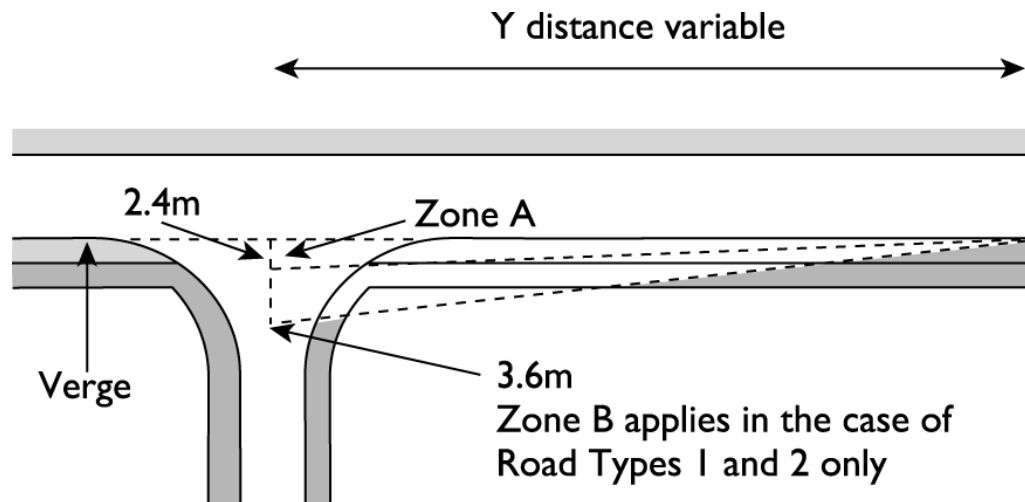
Co-ordination

- 8.11. The estate layout must reconcile the sometimes conflicting requirements of highway authority, public utilities and local authority always bearing in mind that the main objective of these standards is to create a better housing environment.
- 8.12. The emphasis on tight bends in road alignments to reduce speed, make roads safer and improve appearance, may conflict with the radii of pipework. Undulating mounding or banks in landscaped areas could cause problems since most services prefer to be at a consistent depth, therefore verges to contain services should ideally be level with the adjacent kerb.
- 8.13. Trees and shrubs in close proximity to public utilities' services should be avoided since their roots will cause damage and the trees, themselves will be damaged by access excavation - services should be at least 3 metres from new tree planting and outside the canopy of existing trees.
- 8.14. In addition, the layouts of the several services must be coordinated; the joint trench principle is an ideal, which is not often practicable. However, care must be taken to ensure that services do not conflict. Developers must provide the public utilities with their proposals at the earliest possible stage and designers must consider services as a basic design element.



9. Landscaping

- 9.1. Before applying for planning permission the wishes of the **Local Planning Authority (LPA)** with regard to landscape design and retention of existing landscape features should be ascertained. It is essential that an accurate tree and hedgerow survey be carried out in order to plot the position and condition of these features. The survey should include details of species, heights, condition, spread of the canopy and girth of all trees. Girth to be measured at a height of 1.0m above ground level.
- 9.2. The **retention** of landscape features of amenity value must be taken into account and therefore the preliminary design of residential access roads, footpaths and cycle-ways to serve the development should, as far as possible, be sympathetic with the LPA's wishes - for example if a visibility splay requires removal of a tree worthy of retention then the access should be re-sited if a safe alternative is available (although relaxation of the design standards set out in the road type descriptions may not always be possible).
- 9.3. **In residential areas the Highway Authority will normally only adopt the paved surfaces (carriageway, footways, footpaths and cycle-ways), and/or 3 metre verges either side which are essential to the functioning of the highway - this will include visibility splays.**
- 9.4. Planting within visibility splays should follow the principles set out in the following diagram and table.



Planting

Zone A

- Existing Trees Normally no trees permitted. However in exceptional cases trees may be retained. The final decision is to be made on site in consultation with the local highway and planning authorities.
- New Trees No trees permitted.
- Ground Cover Permitted providing the plants do not generally exceed 600mm in height when mature.

Zone B

- Existing Trees Trees may be retained. The final decision is to be made on site in consultation with the local highway and planning authorities.
- New Trees Trees may be permitted. The precise location will be agreed with the highway authority.
- Ground Cover As for Zone A.

- 9.5. All **new trees** should be of slender girth when mature and the trunk should be clear of side shoots/branches etc. to a height of 1.8m.



- 9.6. Grass may be used in visibility splays subject to the size of the area and a satisfactory layout for future maintenance.
- 9.7. Within forward visibility splays, ground cover to a height of 600mm is acceptable as an alternative to grass. Trees may be allowed in such areas subject to on site agreement with the Highway Authority.
- 9.8. Such planting will be the subject of a commuted lump sum for the future maintenance of the planted areas. Details of this payment will be provided by the Engineer after approval of any planting scheme.
- 9.9. See **Appendix 4**, for a schedule of suitable trees and shrubs for planting in the highway.
- 9.10. It is most important to design landscaped areas in such a way as to reduce to a minimum future maintenance costs. Designs should be simple and should avoid the use of small and isolated shrub beds, grass areas and split ownerships.
- 9.11. Where a higher standard of landscape design and maintenance is desirable (such as amenity grass cutting), the developer will need to reach agreement with the District Council for the area, to make provision for maintenance to such higher standards.
- 9.12. In all instances there will be a requirement for the developer to pay a commuted sum to cover future maintenance costs.

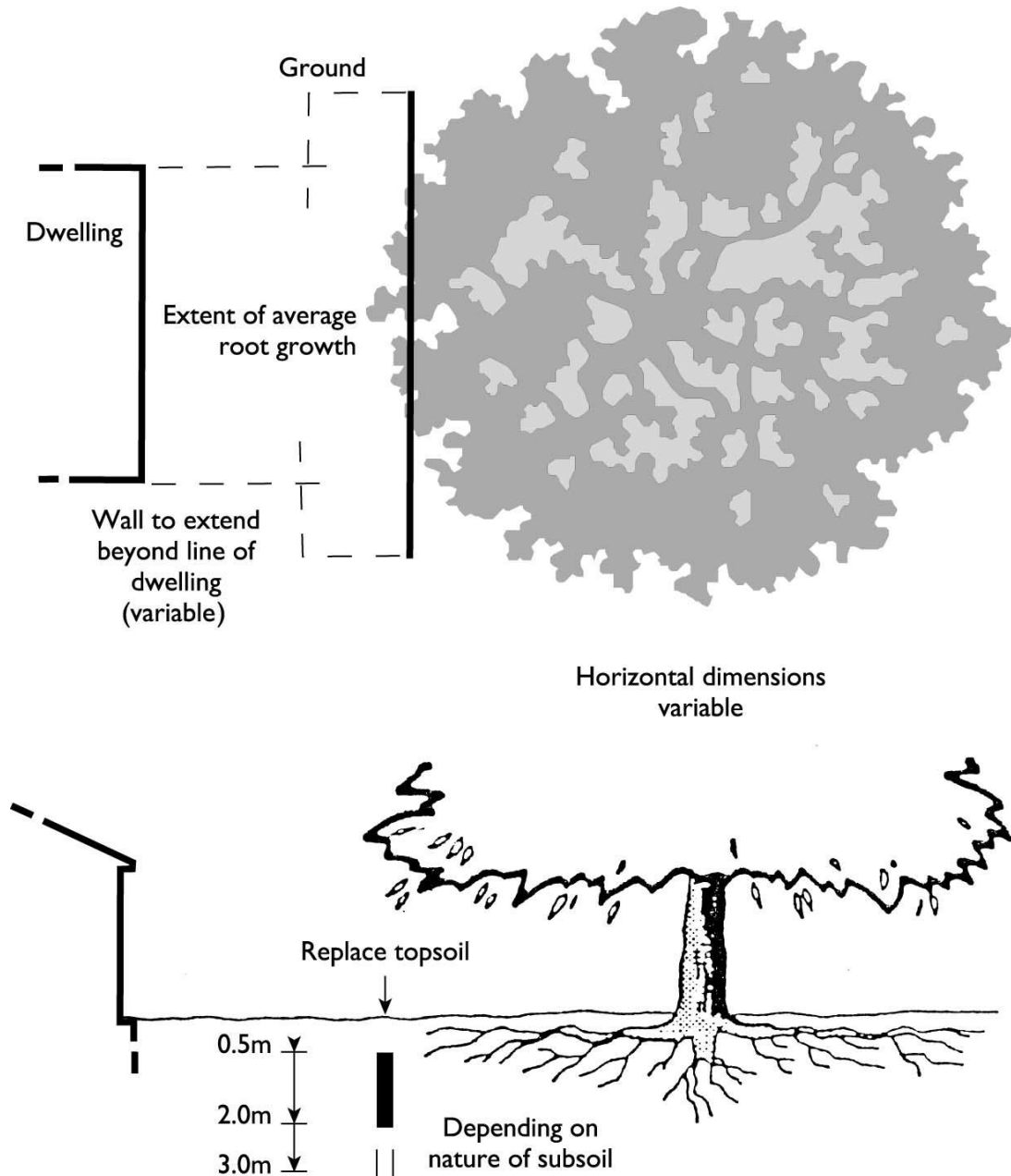
Retention of Existing Trees

- 9.13. The protection and preservation of trees should be one of the major factors taken into consideration when designing a layout, the development being carefully sited to retain as many of these as possible.
- 9.14. In deciding which trees will be retained, it is essential to consider their compatibility with the development - for example, it is not always the largest trees which are most suitable for retention - they can be less adaptable to change in site conditions, and the length of their useful life may often be less than that of some smaller, less impressive ones. Some trees with poisonous fruits or exceptionally large leaves might be undesirable in certain situations. Also, certain apparently sound trees can on further expert inspection prove to be potentially dangerous.
- 9.15. The minimum clearance between any existing tree and the edge of carriageway to new road construction shall be 1.0 metre. However, the Highway Authority reserves the right to refuse to allow retention where the tree would obstruct visibility, where root growth could damage carriageway or footway construction or drains, where the natural tree canopy could obstruct the passage of vehicles, or visibility impaired people, or where there is a tendency to branch fall which could cause damage to vehicles.
- 9.16. Retention of existing trees within potential highway will be subject to their having sufficient future life expectancy and could involve the payment of a commuted sum to cover future maintenance costs. The County Council's Landscape and Environment Officer should be consulted in all such cases.

Root Protection & Ground Wall Arrangements

- 9.17. Ground walls should be provided where a building is within a distance, less than twice the potential tree canopy of any tree.

- 9.18. Any queries regarding root protection for buildings should be referred to the relevant District Council's Tree Officers. For advice on root protection for verges/footways and carriageways/structures refer to the County Council's Landscape and Environment Officer.
- 9.19. Notes: Depth of wall below surface to be determined by the composition of the sub-soil. Width of trench and thickness of wall should be that of the narrowest available excavator bucket. The length of wall depends upon the width of the property to be produced and the location of the tree. If situated towards a corner, the wall may be angular in plan. The distance of the wall from the property depends upon the space available and the location of drains, services, etc., and it is best sited just beyond the range of feeder roots or the edge of the canopy overhang.



- 9.20. All landscaping proposals in potentially adoptable highway **MUST** be approved by the County Council's Landscape and Environment Officer

10. **Conservation Areas**

- 10.1. The Highways Authority will actively pursue and consider special treatment in and around conservation areas.
- 10.2. The duty placed on Local Planning Authorities to preserve or enhance the special character or appearance of conservation areas means that the necessity to "conserve" and enhance the character of the buildings in conservation areas is implicit in any new development within or adjacent to a conservation area. In such development special attention should be paid not only to the compatibility of new buildings with old but also to the scale and variety of spaces, which the buildings create.
- 10.3. Materials and details vary from place to place and these are elements of the character worthy of preservation. Designs should try to reflect traditional treatment in their proposals.
- 10.4. In order to achieve sympathy with developments related to conservation areas, the following non-standard proposals may be approved by the Highway Authority.
 - i. Reduced road widths over short distances
 - ii. Wider roads
 - iii. Reduced centre-line and junction kerb radii
 - iv. Reduced visibility splay requirements
 - v. Variation of footway/footpath widths
 - vi. Varied surface treatments and use of non-standard materials in both carriageways and
 - vii. footway/footpaths (see **Appendix 5**)
 - viii. Non-standard kerb details, e.g. stepped footpaths etc.
 - ix. Street lighting using wall brackets mounted on buildings etc.
 - x. Reduced x height signage.
- 10.5. Each conservation area has its own special character or appearance so proposals for special treatment must be considered individually, and will only be approved after consultation with both the Highway and Planning Authorities.

ADOPTIONS & THE HIGHWAYS ACT

11. Preamble to Adoptions

- 11.1. This section outlines our procedure for the transfer of responsibility for maintaining new residential roads to us from the developer. It also outlines the need for **Health and Safety** requirements during construction. Additional information regarding procedures is given in Chapter 14.
- 11.2. This preamble contains useful information regarding the Advance Payment Code, Section 38 Agreements, along with a notice on Health and Safety at Work.
- 11.3. This document should be read in conjunction with the following:
- i. The rest of this Residential Road Design Guide.
 - ii. The Code of Practice for opening and Reinstatement of Trenches.
 - iii. Section 38 Agreement.

Drainage

- 11.4. The requirements of the drainage authorities in respect of public foul and surface water sewers do not fall within the scope of this document and should be ascertained from the Water Utilities. See **Appendix 1**.
- 11.5. Developers should, therefore, contact the County Council or, on all matters related to Section 38 designs, specifications and negotiation. Preferably contact should be made during the planning process so allowing work to commence without delay following planning approval.
- 11.6. The County Council or must be informed before any work is started. Preferably contact should be made during the securing of planning permission so allowing site works to commence without delay, see OCC Website for contact details.
- 11.7. Highway maintenance in the County is dealt with by the County Council through its Area Engineers. Licences and notices for work to be carried out within highway limits can be obtained from or sent to the Area Office. See OCC Website for contact details.
- 11.8. The consent of the Highway Authority is necessary before any work or erection is commenced within, under or over an adopted highway. For all publicly maintainable highways, the Highway Authority's requirements for road openings and trench reinstatement shall apply. The appropriate S38 Engineer must be consulted regarding requirements.

Reinstatements

- 11.9. The Developer will be held responsible for reinstating road markings and all openings and carried out as a consequence of the works in the proposed highway, until such a time as the estate roads are adopted. The Developer of a prospectively maintainable highway shall notify the various utilities of their intention to elect to do the permanent reinstatement of the street which shall be carried out in accordance with the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 'Specification for the Reinstatement of Openings in Highways'.
- 11.10. Any contractor or other individual etc. working either on, under, over or adjacent to the highway must indemnify the County Council against all losses and claims for injuries or damage to any person or property whatsoever which may arise out of or in consequence of the work in question.
- 11.11. All persons, companies wishing to undertake such work must demonstrate to the Highway Authority that adequate PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE, with a minimum level of cover of £5m, is in force.



- Health and Safety at Work - Important Notice to all Developers and their Contractors**
- 11.12. A file must be produced as part of all Section 38 and 278 projects to keep information, likely to be significant for health and safety of future works need to be moulded.

Contents of the Health and Safety File

- 11.13. When putting together the Health and Safety file, you should consider including information about each of the following. The level of detail should allow the likely risk to be identified and addressed by those carrying out the work.
- i. A brief description of the works carried out
 - ii. Any residual hazards which remain and how they have been dealt with (e.g. surveys or other information concerning asbestos; contaminated land; water bearing strata; buried services etc.)
 - iii. Structural principles (e.g. bracing, sources of substantial stored energy, including pre or post tensioned members and safe working loads)
 - iv. Hazardous materials used (e.g. lead paint, pesticides, special coatings that need to be burnt off etc.)
 - v. Information regarding the removal or dismantling of installed plant and equipment (e.g. any special arrangements for lifting, order or other special instructions for dismantling etc.)
 - vi. Operational and maintenance manuals for any plant to be adopted to include Health and Safety information for cleaning (e.g. the means of safe access)
 - vii. The nature, location and markings of significant services, including underground cables, gas supply equipment, fire lighting services etc.
 - viii. Construction methods and materials if different from design
 - ix. Electronic copies of drawings used for construction
 - x. As constructed drawings (see As Constructed Drawings information sheet)
- 11.14. Health and Safety Files are to be sent electronically. This can be in CD form or via email/drop box.

Advance Payments Code - Highways Act 1980 Section 219-20

- 11.15. These sections of the Highways Act set out the payments to be made by owners of land on which new buildings are constructed, in respect of street works, and the fines that could be levied should any works be carried out in contravention of Clause 219.1 of the Act.
- 11.16. The Highway Authority and its agents will apply these sections of the Act, note should therefore be taken of Clause 11.21 Procedure below.

Definition of 'Private Street'

- 11.17. Section 203 of the Highways Act 1980 defines a private street. Briefly this is a street not being a highway maintainable at the public expense and includes, for the purpose of the advance payments code any land shown as a proposed street on plans deposited either under building regulations or for planning permission.

Procedure

- 11.18. Within six weeks of building regulations permission being granted or acceptance of initial notice by the District Council, the County Council or the District Council acting on behalf of the County Council will serve a notice specifying the amount to be deposited or secured in respect of the street works charges for those dwellings for which permission has been granted. This figure will include charges for the provision of street lighting if appropriate, and is based on average cost figures supplied by the Highway Authority, which include service costs.
- 11.19. If the Highway Authority or its agents has served a notice, no work may be performed to erect the building (including foundations) until the sum specified in the notice has been deposited or otherwise secured to the satisfaction of the County Council or its agents.

Road Making Agreement

- 11.20. It is usual for Estate Developers to discharge their obligations under the Advance Payments Code by completing a Road Making Agreement with the County Council or their Agent Authority under the provisions of Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980. Even though it is proposed to complete such an agreement, it is still an offence to commence building works (including foundations) before the Agreement is sealed by both Developer and Bondsman. A Developer who wishes to start building before the Agreement is sealed should either:
- i. Obtain a temporary bond from his Surety Company and lodge this with the Council before commencing building works.
 - ii. Deposit cash with the Council for those dwellings upon which he proposes to start work.
- 11.21. Where a notice has been served requiring deposits or security for road-works it is an **offence** to commence building works before the sum specified in the notice has been deposited or secured to the County Council's satisfaction and the owner of the land and any persons undertaking the work will be liable to a fine for each offence. Work carried out on different buildings will constitute a separate offence as will work carried out on the same building at different times.

Notes on Highways Act 1980 Section 38 (Road Agreements) - Procedure

- 11.22. Where an Estate Developer wishes to complete an Agreement for the site, under the provisions of Section 38 of the Highways Act, 1980 and when detailed planning consent has been granted, he should apply to the County Council or appropriate District Council (see contact details at Appendix 7) AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
- 11.23. The Section 38 Agreement will not cover foul sewers or grassed or planted amenity areas outside the highway. These may be the subject of separate Agreements about, which the District Councils should be consulted.

Application for Section 38 Agreement: SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- 11.24. If you are intending to submit an application for a S38 Agreement you will need to make sure the following items and information is supplied in the submission, if any of the items or information are not been supplied then the submission will not be allocated to an officer.
- i. A cheque made payable to OCC for £1,500.00
 - ii. Name and address of Developer
 - iii. Name and address of anybody else with an interest in the land
 - iv. Name and address of Developer's Solicitor
 - v. Name and address of proposed Bondsman
 - vi. Copy of the Land Registry title for the development area
 - vii. Copy of the planning approval (if planning approval has not been granted we will not be able to start the submission)
 - viii. Estimated cost of the works including services
 - ix. Estimated start date and programme to complete the works
 - x. Noise survey (see attached noise survey requirements)
 - xi. Stage 1 and 2 Road Safety Audit

Technical Submissions Section 38

- 11.25. One copy of each drawing to be provided in paper form as part of the submission)
- i. Location plan
 - ii. General arrangement drawing
 - iii. A3 layout drawing at 1:1250 scale (required for land registry searches) with proposed adoption area outlined in red
 - iv. Adoptions layout drawing with adoption areas coloured up as follows:
 - a. Brown – roads
 - b. Grey – footway
 - c. Green – grass and landscaping
 - d. Blue – highway drainage (any easement for highway drainage to be coloured yellow)



- e. Pink – works in the existing highway
 - v. Construction details drawing
 - vi. Cross sections drawing
 - vii. Longitudinal sections drawing
 - viii. Levels and Contours drawing for junctions
 - ix. Layout drawing showing all drainage and services strips
 - x. Drainage calculations and schedule
 - xi. Drainage construction details drawing
 - xii. Service layout drawing
 - xiii. Landscaping drawing
 - xiv. A copy of the proposed layout at 1:1250 scale
 - xv. Site and ground investigation reports
- 11.26. All drawings are required to be supplied on a disc
- 11.27. Our inspection fees are 9% of the total cost of the works – the £1,500 requested above is deducted from the 9% and is not additional.
- 11.28. Please Note – a Legal Cost undertaking will be required for the agreement, this is in addition to the inspection fees identified above.

Traffic Signs, Road Markings and Street Lighting

- 11.29. The County Council provides a comprehensive design service for these facilities and will deal directly with developers who seek to use this service. Early contact should be made to start this process. The County Council will make a charge for this service.
- 11.30. In the event you wish to carry out the design yourself (or via your consultant) then again contact should be made as above who will provide further specification details. (See also Street Lighting Design Requirements in **Appendix 2**).

Structures

- 11.31. Where the Developer is to erect any structure, other than manholes, inspection chambers, soak-aways, headwalls and similar items, as part of the works, or where any structure is adjacent to an existing or proposed public highway and either supports or in any way affects the safety of users of the highway, all such structures shall be approved by the Highway Authority.

Culverts and Simple bridges

- 11.32. Details regarding culverts and simple bridges etc., can be found in Appendix 3 of this document.

As Constructed Drawings

- 11.33. On completion of the development, prior to adoption, the Developer shall supply the Engineer with 2 copies of 'As Constructed' layout drawings of the development, or if available, a digital copy along with the Health and Safety file.

Section 278 SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- 11.34. If you are intending to submit drawings to conform to the Standard Conditions of a Section 278 Agreement you will need to ensure the following items and information is included in the submission.
- i. A cheque made payable to OCC for £1,500.00
 - ii. Name & address of Developer
 - iii. Name & address of anybody else with an interest in the land
 - iv. Name & address of Developer's Solicitor
 - v. Copy of the planning application or approval
 - vi. Estimated cost of the works including services
 - vii. Estimated start date and time to complete the works

- viii. Location plan
- ix. A program of the works
- x. A copy of the landscaping drawing
- xi. A copy of the proposed layout at 1:1250 scale
- xii. Six copies of the Works drawing – a drawing showing the area of the works, outlined in red
- xiii. Six copies of the Land dedication drawing – the area of land outside the existing Highway that will be dedicated (colored pink)
- xiv. Two copies of the Safety Audit (usually stage 2 with a technical submission)

Technical Submissions S278

- 11.35. Two copies of each of the following:
 - i. Typical cross sections
 - ii. Longitudinal sections
 - iii. Contoured drawing for junctions
 - iv. Layout drawing showing all drainage and services strips
 - v. Typical drainage details
 - vi. Noise survey may be required (see information sheet on Noise)

- 11.36. All drawings, should also be supplied on a CD-ROM disc.

- 11.37. Our inspection fees are 9% of the total cost of the works – the £1,500 requested above is deducted from the 9% and is not additional.

- 11.38. Please Note – a Legal cost undertaking will be required for the agreement, this is in addition to the inspection fees identified above.



12. **Conditions for Section 38 Highway Works**

12.1. This section outlines the conditions of contract for works, which involve transfer of responsibility for roads in residential development from the developer to the County Council.

12.2. **Definitions and Preliminaries**

- i. The 'Engineer' means the Director of Environmental Services, Oxfordshire County Council, or its agent.
- ii. The 'Engineer's Representative' means a person being the assistant of the Engineer appointed from time to time to perform the function set forth in Clause 2.
- iii. The 'Developer' means the person or persons, firm or company whose proposals for the development and construction on the site have been approved by the Planning Authority, and shall include his agents, assigns and successors.
- iv. The 'Works' means the work to be constructed, completed and maintained in accordance with the Conditions, Drawings and Specification.
- v. The 'Specification' means the specification attached hereto.
- vi. The 'Design' means the design drawings prepared by the Developer and submitted to and approved by the Engineer in writing or incorporated into the Section 38 Agreement.
- vii. The 'Site' means the lands and other places on under in or through which the Works are to be executed.

Engineer's Representative

12.3. The functions of the Engineer's representative are to watch and inspect the construction completion and maintenance of the Works. He shall have no authority to relieve the Developer of his duties or obligations.

Approved Drawings

12.4. The Developer must provide the Engineer with such copies of the Drawings prior to commencement of the Works as are required in Clause 11.28 of the preamble of this document.

Altered or Amended Drawings

12.5. Any subsequent alterations to the design shall be submitted in writing to the Engineer for his approval. The written consent of the Engineer must be obtained before any such alterations are incorporated in the Works. The Developer must deposit with the Engineer such copies of the altered or amended drawings as are requested.

Copy of Drawings and Specification to be Kept on Site

12.6. One copy of the Drawings, Conditions and Specification shall be kept on the site and the same shall at all reasonable times be available for inspection and use by the Engineer's Representative.

Work to be to satisfaction of Engineer

12.7. The Developer shall construct, complete and maintain the Works in strict accordance with the Drawings and Specification to the satisfaction of the Engineer, and shall comply with and adhere strictly to the Engineer's instructions and directions on any matter connected therewith. The Developer shall take instructions and directions only from the Engineer or the Engineer's Representative.

Supervision of Works

12.8. The Developer shall give or provide all necessary supervision during the execution of the Works and as long thereafter as the Engineer may consider necessary. Such supervision shall be given by sufficient persons having adequate knowledge of the operations to be carried out as may be requisite for the satisfactory construction of the Works.



Developer's Agent

- 12.9. The Developer or his authorised agent or representative shall be in full charge of the Works and shall receive on behalf of the Developer directions and instructions from the Engineer or the Engineer's Representative.

Setting Out

- 12.10. The Developer shall be responsible for the true and proper setting out of the Works and for the correctness of the position levels, dimensions and alignments of all parts of the Works. If any error shall appear or arise in the position levels dimensions or alignment of any part of the Works the Developer shall at his own cost rectify such error to the satisfaction of the Engineer. The Developer shall afford the Engineer every facility for checking the setting out but shall not be relieved of any of his responsibility for the correctness thereof.

Safety

- 12.11. The Developer shall throughout the progress of the Works provide and maintain, at his own cost all lights, guards, fencing, warning signs and watching where and when necessary or required by the Engineer or by any competent statutory or other authority for the protection of the Works or for the safety of the public or others. Explosives may only be used on the site if the written consent of the Engineer is secured.

Notices to Local and Statutory Authorities

- 12.12. The Developer shall ascertain and conform in all respects with the provisions to give notices and pay all fees required to be given or paid by any Act of Parliament and the Regulations and Bye-Laws of any local or other statutory authority in relation to the execution of the Works. Where any part of the Works will be constructed under, over or adjacent to any Public or Private Services which do not require diversion realignment or disturbance in any way connected with the execution of the Works, these shall be located and temporarily supported to the satisfaction of the persons, local or statutory authority, concerned.

Damage to Highways Property etc.

- 12.13. The Developer shall be responsible for any damage, which may arise out of, or in consequence of the construction and maintenance of the Works and all costs related thereto. The making good shall be to the satisfaction of the Engineer, person, local or statutory authority concerned. For the purposes of Section 59 of the Highways Act 1980, construction traffic will be classed as 'Extraordinary Traffic' on public highways. Prior to works commencing on site, photographs shall be taken by the Developer in the presence of the Engineer showing the conditions of the public highway adjacent to the site and a schedule of defects agreed.

Manhole covers, hydrants valve boxes etc.

- 12.14. Manhole covers, hydrants, valve boxes and similar apparatus must be raised or lowered as necessary to suit the levels of the new work. This work to be to the satisfaction of the Engineer, local or statutory authority concerned.

Interference with Traffic and Adjoining Properties

- 12.15. All operations necessary for the execution of the Works shall be carried out so as not to interfere unnecessarily or improperly with the public convenience or the access to or use or occupation of public roads and footpaths or to or of the properties affected by or adjacent to the Works.

Clearance of Site on Completion

- 12.16. On completion of the Works the Developer shall clear away and remove from the Site all constructional plant, surplus material and rubbish of any kind and leave the whole Site clean and in a workmanlike condition to the satisfaction of the Engineer. All surplus waste material



and rubbish removed from the site shall be disposed of in a tip licensed by the Waste Disposal Authority for the disposal of construction waste.

Quality of Workmanship and Materials

- 12.17. All materials and workmanship shall be in accordance with the Specification and Engineer's instructions and shall be subjected to such tests as the Engineer may direct at the place of manufacture or fabrication or on the Site or at the Highways Laboratory or other such NAMAS approved laboratory at the Developers own cost. The Developer shall provide such assistance, instruments, machines, labour and materials as are normally required for examining, measuring and testing any work and the quality weight or quantity of materials used and shall supply samples of materials before incorporation in the Works for testing as may be selected and required by the Engineer.

Access to Site

- 12.18. The Engineer and any person authorised by him shall at all times have access to the Works and to the site and to all workshops and places where work is being prepared or from where materials manufactured articles and machinery are being obtained for the Works and the Developer shall afford every facility for and every assistance in obtaining such access.

Examination of Work Before Covering Up

- 12.19. No work shall be covered up or put out of view without the approval of the Engineer and the Developer shall afford full opportunity for the Engineer to examine and measure any work which is about to be covered up or put out of view and to examine foundations before permanent work is placed thereon. The Contractor shall give two clear days' notice to the Engineer when such work is ready for examination.

Uncovering and Making Openings

- 12.20. The Developer shall uncover any part or parts of the Works or make openings in or through the same as the Engineer may from time to time direct provided such direction is not unreasonable and shall reinstate and make good such part or parts to the satisfaction of the Engineer all at his own cost.

Removal of Improper Work and Materials

- 12.21. The Engineer shall during the excavation and maintenance of the Works have power to order the removal from Site of any materials which in the opinion of the Engineer are not in accordance with the Specification, the substitution of proper and suitable materials and the removal and proper re-execution of any work which in respect of materials or workmanship is not in the opinion of the Engineer in accordance with the Specification.

Notice of Commencement of Works and Specific Operations

- 12.22. The Developer shall give a minimum of 14 days' notice in writing to the Engineer that the Works are to be commenced. After commencement of the Works, should no work be carried out for more than 7 days, the Developer shall give a minimum of 48 hours' notice in writing to the Engineer of the intended recommencement. In addition, the Developer shall give 48 hours verbal notice to the Engineer of his intention to carry out the following operations, to facilitate sampling of materials - laying sub-base, road base, binder course, kerbs, laying highway drains and surface course.

Entrance Bell-mouth to be Completed

- 12.23. Before any construction work is commenced on site, the junction of any new estate road with the existing highway is to be completed up to binder course level, including footways and any necessary clearance of hedgerows etc., to provide the vision splays required by the planning consent.



Occupation

- 12.24. Before occupation of any dwelling where a service verge is provided in place of a footway, the verge shall be turfed and any highway boundary marker blocks required by the Engineer shall be placed in position.

Completion of Works

- 12.25. On completion of the Works, including street lighting, the Developer shall request that the Engineer certifies in writing that the Works are complete to his satisfaction.

Period of Maintenance

- 12.26. For a period of 12 months from the date on which the Engineer certifies in writing that the Works are complete, the Developer shall execute all work necessary to maintain the Works in good repair including sweeping, cleansing and street lighting and execute all repairs as directed from time to time by the Engineer. All costs incurred shall be at the Developer's expense. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the lighting authority shall be responsible for the routine inspection of street lighting and the energy costs incurred shall be at the lighting authority's expense.

Reinstatement of Surfaces

- 12.27. Where the surface of any carriageway, footway, verge or turfed area of any kind has been disturbed during the execution or maintenance of the Works the same shall be fully reinstated with similar materials in such widths and thickness as the Engineer and person/persons of local authority concerned shall require.

Variations

- 12.28. The Engineer shall have power to order any variation to any part of the Works that may in his opinion be necessary for the completion of the Works. Such variations may include additions, omissions, substitutions, alterations, changes in quality from character, kind position dimension level or line and changes in the specified sequence method or timing of construction.

Urgent Repairs

- 12.29. If by any reason during the execution of the Works or the period of Maintenance any remedial or other work shall in the opinion of the Engineer, be urgently necessary and the Developer is unable or unwilling at once to do such work, the Engineer may by his own or other workmen do such work as the Engineer considers necessary. All costs and charges properly incurred by the Engineer in so doing shall on demand be paid by the Developer to the Engineer.

Adoption

- 12.30. Provided always the Developer shall carry out all such works of repair amendment reconstruction rectification and make good any such defects, imperfections, shrinkages and other faults as the Engineer considers necessary. The Engineer towards the end of the maintenance period shall arrange for an inspection of the works to be carried out. This inspection shall be attended by the Engineer, the Developer and a member of the Highway Authority headquarters staff.

Emergency Services

- 12.31. The Developer shall provide and maintain access throughout the site of the Works for Emergency Services and shall provide facilities and assistance during an emergency. Fire hydrants, valves, surface boxes and indicator posts shall at no time be covered or obscured by materials or excavated spoil.



Water Supply

- 12.32. The Developer shall supply and maintain for all purposes an adequate water supply and shall make arrangements with and comply with the requirement of the appropriate Water Utilities.

Storage of Materials

- 12.33. Materials for use, on the Site, shall not be stored on the carriageway and turning spaces shall not be obstructed by materials or mixing plant. No mortar or concrete shall be mixed on any carriageway or footway surface or washed down any gully.

Trees and Shrubs

- 12.34. Trees, shrubs and ground cover planting within the highway verges and vision splays will only be permitted after written approval of the Engineer. Such planting will be the subject of a commuted lump sum for the future maintenance of the planted area. Details of the payment will be provided when requested. **Appendix 4** of the Guide gives a schedule of suitable trees and shrubs acceptable to the Highway Authority.



13. **The Adoption of Highways, Public Open Spaces and Parking Spaces**

Adoption of Highways

- 13.1. Developers should consult the relevant officer at an early stage, as appropriate in the planning negotiations. The Drainage Authorities' requirements in respect of public foul and surface water sewers do not fall within the scope of this document and should be ascertained from the Water Authority. Where non highway sewers are positioned within the highway, the relevant agreement with the water authority must be entered into before adoption of the road can occur
- 13.2. The Advance Payments Code (APC) of the Highways Act 1980 (Section 219 - 225) is in force in the County. The effect of the Code is to require financial security from the developer to offset the frontager's liability for private street works. This security may be in the form of a cash deposit or a bond under Section 38 of the Act.
- 13.3. It is intended that roads, footpaths and cycle-ways forming the primary means of access to all housing developments should become publicly maintainable highways upon satisfactory completion of the works. It is therefore expected that developers will make an agreement with the Council under Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980.
- 13.4. In the event that the Developer wishes for his estate roads to remain private this information should be given to the Highways Authority representatives during the securing of planning permission. In order to secure exemption from the APC procedure a 'Private Road Agreement' must be entered into with the Highway Authority to protect the interests of prospective frontagers.
- 13.5. In deciding which areas are to become publicly maintainable highways, the following general principles will be adhered to:
- i. All roads and footpaths, which are necessary for public access are adoptable (unnecessary duplication of paths should be avoided).
 - ii. Visibility splays in full and verges up to 3.0 metres in width, contiguous with carriageways and necessary for the proper and safe use of the highways are adoptable. (Any planting in such areas is subject to Highway Authority approval).
 - iii. Separation areas between carriageways and footways, where required, up to 3 metres width, are adoptable.
 - iv. Lay-bys and turning areas are adoptable (not private driveways or garage courts), and casual parking areas contiguous with the highway (by agreement).
 - v. Highway drainage - see "Highway Drainage" and "Highway Drainage – Design Guide" at **Appendix 1** for further information.
 - vi. Items of sculpture and other features will be permitted within the highway subject to the written approval of the Director of Environmental Services. Maintenance liability may be vested with the appropriate District or Town/Parish Council or the County Council - but in each case a commuted payment to cover the cost of future maintenance will be required. The Highway Authority will need to approve all features involving planting/landscaping.

Public Open Space

- 13.6. Amenity areas, play space and landscaped areas may be adopted by the District Council, Town or Parish Council as appropriate, the developer should contact the District Engineer or Technical Officer at an early stage to enable arrangements for any such adoption to be finalised during the planning process.
- 13.7. Areas of soft landscaping, other than as specified in 2 above, are not acceptable for adoption as highway.



Parking Places

- 13.8. Private parking provision must be met other than on the highway. Parking spaces provided in lieu of garages or private drives for the regular parking of residents' cars, which are integrated with the carriageway can be adopted subject to a commuted lump sum payment for future maintenance.
- 13.9. The developer should endeavour to provide parking spaces or garages within the curtilage of the site where possible.
- 13.10. Communal visitors parking spaces adjacent to and contiguous with the highway and which are clearly not for regular use of any specific dwelling may be adopted by the Highway Authority by agreement. These parking areas will incur additional maintenance contributions.

Signs

- 13.11. The developer will be responsible for providing traffic signs (regulatory and informatory), road name plates and carriageway markings in accordance with the current Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions and the details set out below. Road name plates will incorporate traffic regulations fig. 816.1 (*cul-de-sac* sign, where appropriate) modified to the size of road plate. The District Councils are the street naming/numbering Authority and they should be consulted re: road name-plates.
- 13.12. Where the proposed development involves the formation of a new junction with an existing highway the signing proposals for the new development will be deemed to include all those signs and carriageway markings necessary to guide traffic to and from the development *via* the new junction arrangements.
- 13.13. The design of signing schemes for all new development may be carried out at the developer's expense by the Director of Environmental Services as part of the Section 38 agreement or alternative procedures.

Street Lighting

- 13.14. Street lighting where required, will in most cases be adopted by the Highway Authority or Parish Council and schemes may be designed by the Director of Environmental Services, at the developer's expense as part of the Section 38 agreement or alternative procedures.
- 13.15. See preamble to Specification and 'Street Lighting Design Requirement's in **Appendix 2** and also the 'Procedures' section for further information.

Other Street Furniture

- 13.16. All other street furniture and signs such as pedestrian barriers, bollards and the like which are required by the Highway Authority must be indicated on submitted plans and early advice should be sought from the Highway Authority on the detailed specification requirements for street furniture.
- 13.17. In all cases the actual layout of the development and its projected usage will determine the detailed lighting and signing.



14. **Development Management Processes**

Development Briefs

- 14.1. When **appropriate** and more generally for larger developments, guidance on highway and transport matters may be included in a **development brief**.
- 14.2. The matters covered may include:
- i. The identification of any committed local highway or public transport schemes, which it may be appropriate to take into account;
 - ii. The general form of the roads infrastructure and site access arrangements;
 - iii. Any required capacity or safety improvements to the local highway network;
 - iv. The public transport requirements;
 - v. The facilities required for pedestrians, cyclists and the mobility impaired, and
 - vi. The requirements for public rights of way crossing or abutting the site.

Pre-Planning Application Discussion

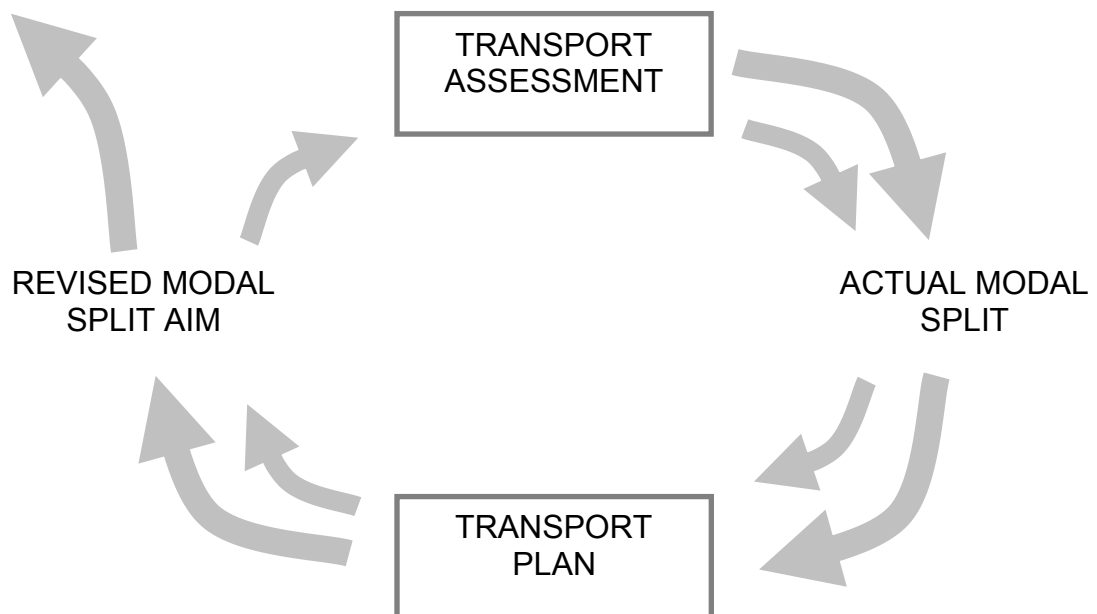
- 14.3. Applicants and developers are encouraged to seek advice, about the implications of their proposals for transport purposes, from the Highway and Local Planning Authorities prior to submitting a planning application for a new development.
- 14.4. At the present time, the County Council provides Transport advice to all of the District Councils and developers within Oxfordshire either through Area Liaison Officers based in the County Council's Area Offices or from the Transport Development Control Group based at Speedwell House, Speedwell Street, Oxford.
- 14.5. When pre-submission advice is offered or given, then this will generally be on a 'without prejudice' basis, and it may be necessary to review advice as development proposals are advanced, or when national or other local guidance is reviewed.
- 14.6. When pre-submission advice is offered or given in the form of estimated costs for highway improvements to enable developments to proceed, then, again, this will be on a 'without prejudice' basis, and it is a matter for the applicant or developer to independently verify any such estimates and subsequently agree any revisions with the relevant authority.

Formal Consultations

- 14.7. Most planning applications for the developments covered by this guidance will be submitted to the City Council or the relevant District Council, as the Local Planning Authority. There may be, however, a few occasions where an application is required to be submitted to the County Council as Planning Authority (e.g. applications for the extraction of minerals and the deposition of materials).
- 14.8. Depending on the scale of the proposal, the Local Planning Authority will consult the County Council as Highway Authority.
- 14.9. In order that Transport advice may be given within the Statutory periods, defined in the General Development Order, applications for outline and full planning consent must include: A site plan to a minimum scale of 1:2,500, which should show:
- i. The positions of all adjacent properties;
 - ii. The locations of the public highways from which the site is accessed or is proposed to be accessed, and all other highways, including public rights of way, which might be affected by the proposal;
 - iii. The land to which the application relates edged in red, and
 - iv. Any land within the same ownership edged blue.



- 14.10. The following should also be submitted, where matters relating to access are not being reserved at outline stage:
The extent and feasibility of site access proposals, including plans showing any necessary highway improvements and the impact these will have on the existing environment. The layout should be drawn, at a scale of not less than 1:1250 and should be accompanied by a longitudinal scale.
- 14.11. Applications, including or submitted for the approval of engineering details should include a block plan to a scale of not less than 1:500 and plans showing the following details:
- i. The existing ground form, trees, hedges and other natural or man-made features of the site and immediate surroundings;
 - ii. The position, width and geometric layout of all existing accesses;
 - iii. The position, width and gradient of all proposed accesses to the site and associated works within the limits of or affecting the public highway;
 - iv. The layout and vertical alignment of all new estate roads, surface water and foul drainage systems and their outfalls;
 - v. The identification by notation of all roads, where a shared pedestrian and vehicle surface is to be provided, or any road, which is proposed as a designated bus route;
 - vi. The locations and extent of all landscaping;
 - vii. The locations of all other features such as bus stops, shelters and other street furniture, and
 - viii. Proposals for any utility sub-stations or other major apparatus installation.
- 14.12. The details required for new estate roads are likely to include:
- i. Longitudinal sections of new highways to a minimum horizontal scale of 1:500 and minimum vertical scale of 1:50, and cross sections, usually at every 15 metres, to a minimum scale of 1:1,000.
 - ii. The sections should show: the existing ground levels; proposed road levels; metrage and the full level and gradient details of proposed surface water and foul sewers.
- 14.13. **The following procedural issues are particularly important.** The Local Planning Authority must be kept informed about the progress of all negotiations between the developer and the Highway Authority regarding the resolution of any highway issues and any revisions to proposals resulting from such negotiations should be formally submitted to the Local Planning Authority as amended plans or additional information. The Highway Authority should be formally consulted with regard to any amended drawings or additional information affecting highway proposals even when the highway or transport impact is reduced from that, which was originally proposed by such amendments. Public participation and comment are important aspects of the planning system and, when appropriate, the Highway Authority will provide relevant highway and transport advice to the Local Planning Authority on matters that may arise from such participation or comment.
- Transport Statements, Travel Plan Statements, Transport Assessments & Travel Plans**
- 14.14. Relevant Transport Statement and Travel Statement or Transport Assessment and Travel Plan will be required to accompany planning applications (See Section on Website).
- 14.15. Applicants are advised that the submission of complete and accurate information will enable the matters relating to highways and transport to be dealt with expeditiously. Particular attention is, therefore, drawn to the guidance about Transport Assessments and Travel Plans, which will often be material to the planning considerations.



Contributions (section 106 of Town and Country Planning Act)

- 14.16. For the sake of clarification a contribution can mean a 100% contribution. Where other developments are dependent on a traffic management scheme being implemented or public transport being provided, then normally contributions will be apportioned equitably or proportionally. In some circumstances, contributions will be required in advance of the date of commencement of a development.
- 14.17. Through the formal consultation process the effect of a proposed development is assessed and the result will be used in determining the mitigation works, which are required to initially allow the development to be accommodated. However additional contributions may be required towards the wider provision of transportation improvements.
- 14.18. Appropriate funding will be secured by way of agreements, made under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for the following:
- i. Any combination of transport scheme, initiative, or improvement which is either results in physical network changes or public service improvements,
 - ii. Implementing traffic management schemes including traffic calming along the existing highway;
 - iii. Undertaking traffic studies;
 - iv. The provision of public transport in the area affected by the proposed development and/or to serve the proposed development directly;
 - v. Improving accessibility by alternative modes of travel;
 - vi. Securing safer routes to schools;
 - vii. Implementation of travel plans;
 - viii. Contributions towards other justified highway and transport facilities which may need to be considered for inclusion from time to time, and
 - ix. Environmental mitigation measures arising from highway and transport requirements.

- 14.19. In some instances, the terms of a Section 106 agreement may result in the developer needing to enter into a separate Section 278 Highway Works or Section 184 agreement (Highways Act 1980) in order to advance a specific highway improvement or improvements at a particular time. The range of improvements may not only relate to traffic capacity and safety improvements but might also include for such things as the strengthening of access routes or the upgrading of existing highway drainage systems.

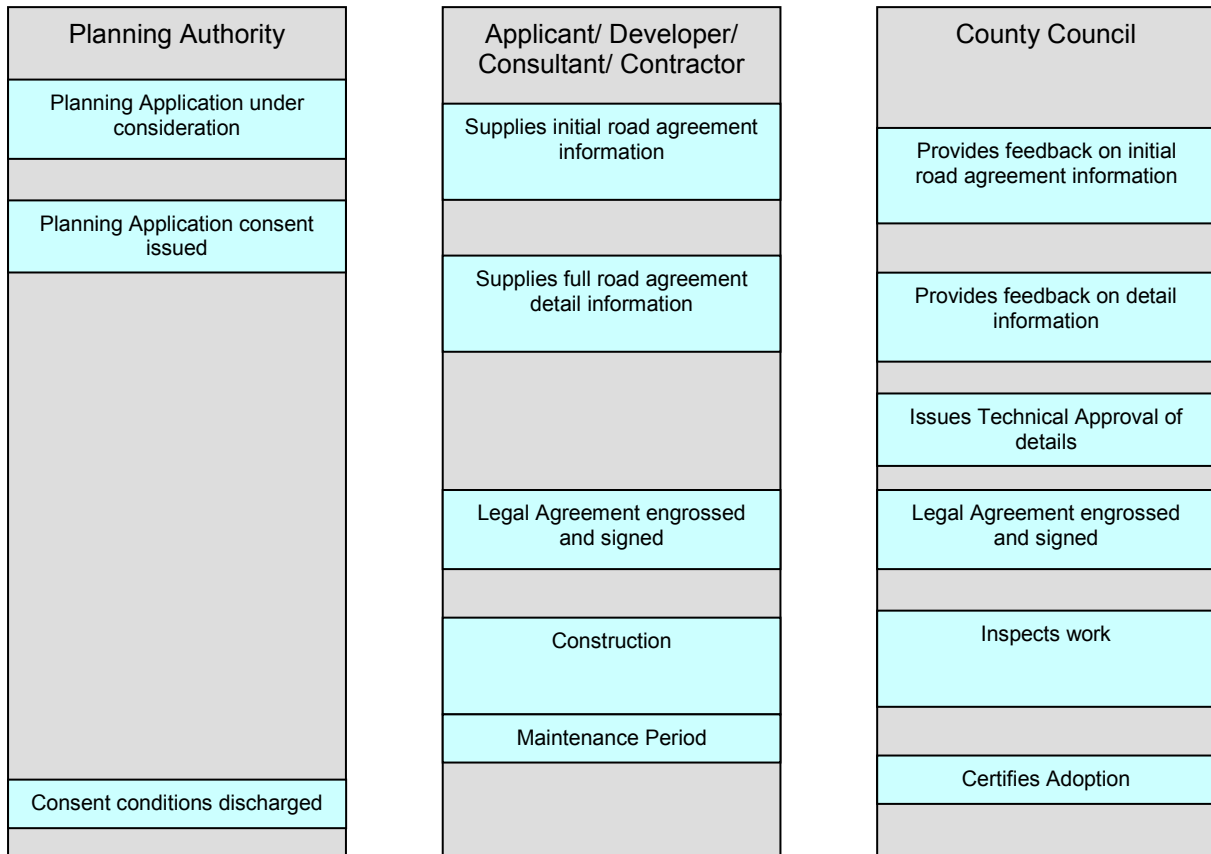
Highway Processes - Overview

- 14.20. Developers are advised that, whilst seeking planning consent or very soon after getting consent that contact is made with the County Council to establish the relevant procedures with respect of Advance Payment Codes, Private Road Agreements, and road agreements under sections 38 and 278 of the Highway Act.
- 14.21. When highways are constructed, as part of new developments, they can either become highway maintained at public expense or remain as private streets on completion of the works. Section 203 of the Highways Act 1980 defines a private street. This is a street not being a highway maintainable at the public expense and includes, for the purpose of the Advance Payments Code any land shown as a proposed street on plans deposited either under building regulations or for planning permission.
- 14.22. The Highway Authority has powers to ensure that all roads, both those intended to remain private and those intended to become adopted, are constructed to an appropriate standard under Section 219 of the Highways Act relating to Advance Payment Code. The Private Street Works part of the Highways Act very occasionally may be used by the Highway Authority to carry out works in private streets.
- 14.23. If the developer wishes the roads to be taken into Public Highway and maintained as such the Highway Authority has powers to adopt the roads as public highway under Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980. Where the developer wishes the roads to remain private the Highway Authority requires the developer to enter into a Private Road Agreement.
- 14.24. The Highway Authority (or its agent) is the only body with powers to carry out works on the public highway other than public utility companies who have separate powers. Where works are required on an existing highway the developer must enter into a legal agreement under section 278 of the 1980 Highways Act to allow the works to be undertaken.
- 14.25. Where an agreement under Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980 for the adoption of roads is being entered into, then Section 184 clauses will be included to cover the construction of the bell-mouth access or accesses within the public highway. If more extensive works are required within the existing public highway then a separate Section 278 Highway Works Agreement will be required.
- 14.26. The developer is responsible for the design and construction of highway works related to the development, subject to the necessary approvals and agreements. The Highway Authority must approve the design and construction details and be allowed to inspect the works, as they proceed. On satisfactory completion the Highway Authority will adopt the areas subject to the agreement. It should be noted that there is a charge for the work involved by the County Council in checking and approving plans, and inspecting the works during construction.
- 14.27. The following elements are not included in the road agreements:
- i. Foul water sewers and drains: refer to the local sewerage water disposal authority
 - ii. Some storm water sewers or drains which carry water other than water from the highway: refer to the local sewerage water disposal authority
 - iii. Grassed, landscaped, amenity or play areas not required for the provision of the highway area: refer to adjacent land owners or District Council



- 14.28. A fee is charged for the creation of the road agreements depending on the form of agreement. It may include the costs for administrating the agreement, legal charges, scheme design, technical approval, site inspection, safety audit, tendering and tender analyses, certification of works etc. and commuted sum payments for additional future additional maintenance costs.

Chart 1: General Road Agreement Swim-lines



Advance Payments Code

- 14.29. The Advance Payment Code procedure will be followed irrespective of the developers stated intentions regarding adoption or otherwise. Where a notice has been served requiring deposits or security for road works it is an offence to commence building works before the sum specified in the notice has been deposited or secured to the County Council's satisfaction. Also the owner of the land and any persons undertaking the work will be liable to a fine for each offence. Work carried out on different buildings will constitute a separate offence as will work carried out on the same building at different times.
- 14.30. The Advance Payments Code of the Highways Act 1980 (Section 219 - 225) is applied. The effect of the Code is to require financial security from the developer to offset the frontager's liability for private street works if required. This security may be in the form of a cash deposit or a bond. The County Council may call upon the security to complete the works if the developer defaults on his obligations.
- 14.31. It is intended that roads, footways, footpaths and cycle-ways forming the primary means of access to all housing developments should become publicly maintainable highways upon

satisfactory completion of the works. The primary method for achieving this is by the applicant or developer entering into an agreement with the Council under Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980.

- 14.32. Within six weeks of building regulations permission being granted or acceptance of initial notice by the District Council, the County Council or the District Council acting on behalf of the County Council will serve a notice specifying the amount to be deposited or secured in respect of the street works charges for those dwellings for which permission has been granted. This figure will include charges for the provision of street lighting and drainage if appropriate, and is based on average cost figures supplied by the Highway Authority, which include service and administrative costs.
- 14.33. If the Highway Authority has served a notice, no work may be performed to erect the building (including foundations) until the security specified in the notice has been deposited or otherwise secured to the satisfaction of the County Council.

Private Road Agreements

- 14.34. In the event that the Developer wishes for the estate roads to remain private this information should be given to the Highways Authority representatives during the securing of planning permission. A 'Private Road Agreement' must be entered into with the Highway Authority to protect the interests of prospective frontagers. The agreement ensures that works are designed to an appropriate standard and secures monitoring of construction by the Local Highway Authority. A 'Private Road Agreement' will have the effect of providing an exemption under the terms of the Advanced Payment Code and hence a security will not be required.

Private Street Works Code

- 14.35. Under Section 203, Private Street Works Code, for the purposes of the Advance Payments Code, only those buildings which are proposed to be occupied shall be subject to the code. The code applies to any private access, street or road which serves commercial or domestic buildings and is not built to the Highway Authority's standards and specifications and hence is applied to build the access, street or road to its standards and specifications.
- 14.36. The Council as Highway Authority may invoke a Private Street Works action. However if an Advance Payments Code deposit exists then the majority of the frontagers can invoke a Private Street Works action. Actions under this legislation tend to be very lengthy and more expensive than other means of achieving the same result.
- 14.37. The Highway Authority wholly prefers to use all other means of creating new roads and streets by using road agreements under section 38 of the Highways Act.

Adoption of New Roads (agreement under section 38 of Highways Act)

- 14.38. Construction work for work potentially subject to a section 38 agreement should not be commenced until the content of the layout, design and specifications have been approved by the Council. Starting will be at the total risk of the developer. It is also recommended that the agreement is signed before works commence on the road works.
- 14.39. The Council will resist the carrying out of inspections of the works potentially subject to a section 38 agreement in the absence of real intent of the developer entering into that agreement. This intent is measured by the payment of the appropriate fees and the progress of producing technical drawings and specifications of the works.
- 14.40. The section 38 agreement cannot be signed until all relevant approvals have been issued by the Council, all appropriate security has been arranged, all fees paid, and technical approval granted.



- 14.41. When a developer expresses a wish to enter into an agreement under section 38 of the Highways Act, it is still an offence to commence building works (including foundations) when the Advance Payments Code applies unless an appropriate security has been arranged. The signing of an agreement under section 38 of the Highways Act is an automatic exemption under the Advance Payments Code. The security arranged under the latter may be transferred however due to the vagaries of cost differences the value of the security can change.
- 14.42. The technical details and specifications must comply with all parts of the Council's design criteria and specifications. Drawing and details are submitted for approval by the Council. The agreement cannot be signed until all relevant approvals have been issued by the Council.
- 14.43. Working on existing highway (agreement under section 278, and notices under section 184 of the Highways Act).
- 14.44. Construction work will not be commenced until the section 278 agreement has been signed.
- 14.45. The agreement cannot be signed until all relevant approvals have been issued by the Council, all appropriate security has been arranged, all fees paid, and technical approval granted.
- 14.46. Improvements that will have a significant effect on the day-to-day operation of the public highway during, or subsequent to the construction of the works, will normally be subject to an Agreement made under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980. Examples of this might be the construction of a roundabout or right turn lane junction, or the installation of traffic signal control at a junction.
- 14.47. Improvements that will not have a significant effect on the day-to-day operation of the public highway will normally incorporate procedures under Section 184 of the Highways Act 1980 where an access to the site is required to be constructed or improved. An example of this might be the construction or improvement of a footway along an existing road leading to the site.
- 14.48. The technical details and specifications must comply with all parts of the Council's design criteria and specifications. Drawing and details are submitted for approval by the Council.

Technical Approval (road agreements)

- 14.49. The construction and specification detail of all road agreements require technical approval by the Council in order for the agreement to be signed.
- 14.50. The technical audit is carried out on:
- i. Drawings (layout, design, geometry, signs, lines, and street furniture)
 - ii. Specifications (construction, materials and finishes)
 - iii. Signals (function, timing, specification and construction)
 - iv. Safety Audit
 - v. Traffic Regulation Orders
 - vi. Surface water disposal (design, construction, specifications, and easements)

Safety Audit & Quality Audits

- 14.51. The County Council applies a Safety Audit process to the design and construction processes for all new roads and changes to existing roads.
- 14.52. The Quality Audit approach is also encouraged.



- 14.53. The Road Traffic Act 1988 requires a Local Authority to take such measures as appear to the Authority to be appropriate to reduce the possibilities of accidents when new roads or changes to existing road layouts come into use. The purpose of a Safety Audit is, therefore, to ensure that highway schemes will operate as safely as practicable by the systematic checking against safety standards and for other potential hazards from the perspective of all road users including pedestrians, cyclists, the mobility impaired, and drivers.
- 14.54. **Stage 1 or Preliminary Safety Audit:** an overall audit on the general basic concepts of the proposals applied during the planning application stage.
- 14.55. **Stage 2:** a detail audit of the full technical construction and layout detail. Usually applied as part of the Technical Audit stage but can be required by the Council at the planning application stage.
- 14.56. **Stage 3:** an audit of the substantially complete works before the maintenance period commences. Any changes or recommendations will be carried out as part of the remedial works list and will have to be satisfactorily completed before adoption is declared.
- 14.57. **Stage 4:** an audit of the substantially complete works, under operational conditions applied immediately before adoption is declared.
- 14.58. The applicant or developer is to be responsible for the commissioning and consequent costs of all Safety Audits. All Safety Audits must be undertaken by an accredited Safety Audit team which is independent from the designers and approvers. The team must be technically competent, having specific experience and training in accident remedial work. CVs of all audit team members should be attached to every Safety Audit, and the Highway Authority reserve the right to refuse an audit carried out by a team in which a member does not conform to the qualification criteria.
- 14.59. All issues or potential risks, which are identified by the safety audit process must be addressed and rectified by the Developer. Where a Safety Audit identifies a departure from standards or another safety problem, and whether or not a suggested solution is proposed, the applicant or developer may request an exemption certificate. If a request for an exemption is agreed to then the formal certification will be issued by the Council as Highway Authority.

Traffic Regulation Orders

- 14.60. Planning conditions may, from time to time, be attached to consents requiring particular traffic management measures to be implemented prior to the commencement or occupation of the development. Such conditions are attached when the orders are required as a control or safety feature.
- 14.61. The provision of traffic regulation orders occurs by an independent statutory process. The County Council is unable to guarantee that any order will be confirmed once it has been advertised, especially if strong technical objections are raised. Hence the Council has to be sure that the Local Planning Authority is able to impose the relevant condition in the knowledge that there will be a reasonable prospect of it being implemented. To this end the applicant should undertake preliminary consultations with the Highway Authority; the police and emergency services, the relevant City, District, Town or Parish Councils, public transport operators, motorist organisations and other representative bodies which the County may advise as being appropriate. In the case when the traffic regulation is required on the grounds of maintaining safety then every attempt will be made by the Council to secure the order.



Securities, Inspections and Certification (road agreements)

- 14.62. A security is always required to accompany agreements under sections 38 and 278 of the Highways Act. The security is either a Bond or cash deposit.
- 14.63. Inspections are carried out by the Council, under the terms of the road agreements to ensure that the approved details are provided.
- 14.64. Any construction work, which does not comply with the approved details has to be rectified as set out by the terms of the agreement.
- 14.65. At certain stages of the construction the security is reduced to reflect the work satisfactorily completed.

Highway Structures

- 14.66. Where proposed new road works or changes to existing roads includes the erection of any structure, other than manholes, inspection chambers, soak-aways, headwalls and similar items, as part of the works, or where any structure is adjacent to an existing or proposed public highway and either supports or in any way affects the safety of users of the highway, all such structures shall be given approval by the Highway Authority as part of the Technical Audit.



APPENDICES

A1. Highway Drainage

- A1.1 A satisfactory system of drainage must be provided for the collection and disposal of surface water from all areas to be adopted by the Highway Authority in the development area.
- A1.2 It is absolutely essential that the means of disposal of surface water be investigated with the Highway Authority at the preliminary stage of all development schemes. It cannot be assumed that permission will automatically be granted by the Highway Authority for connection to the existing highway drainage system within adjacent maintained roads.
- A1.3 The developer is required to make adequate and satisfactory outfall arrangements for his development in accordance with this Appendix.
- A1.4 This Authority endorses, indeed encourages, the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, and by way of examples as to the flexibility of approach the following are considered suitable as potential outfalls for a highway drainage system:
- i. Watercourses
 - ii. Soakaways/soakage trenches
 - iii. Swales/basins
 - iv. Existing highway drains
 - v. Existing public surface water sewers
- A1.5 All of the above systems require the written approval of the Highway Authority at an early stage, and for some a commuted sum to cover future maintenance of the system will be required. Details can be secured from the Group Engineer, Bridges (Highway Management).
- [Contents \(pdf format, 36Kb\)](#)
 - [References \(pdf format, 21Kb\)](#)

Appendices

- A - [Rainfall intensity chart \(pdf format, 13.5Kb\)](#)
- B - [Calculation of Run-off from Catchment Areas \(pdf format, 230Kb\)](#)
- C - [Determination of Soakaway Capacity \(pdf format, 13Kb\)](#)
- D - [Approved small Oil Interceptor HSD/5/425 \(pdf format, 1.55Mb\)](#)
- E - [Positioning of Soakaways and Soakage Trenches \(pdf format, 338Kb\)](#)
- F - [Environmental Agency, Special Requirements \(pdf format, 26Kb\)](#)
- G - [Application for Consent for Works affecting \(pdf format, 34Kb\)](#)
[Watercourses and/or Flood Defences \(Form No. FDI\) \(pdf format, 34Kb\)](#)
- H - [Environmental Agency - Policy Regarding Culverts \(pdf format, 128Kb\)](#)

Drawings

- [HSD/5/320e - Catchpits: Design Group C2 \(pdf format, 636Kb\)](#)
- [HSD/5/345ex - Catchpits: Design Group C5 \(pdf format, 692Kb\)](#)
- [HSD/5/365e - Soakaways: Design Group S1 - S5 \(pdf format, 664Kb\)](#)
- [HSD/5/425 - Oil Interceptor \(pdf format, 1.55Mb\)](#)
- [HSD/5/460e - Gullies: Design Group G2 \(pdf format, 511Kb\)](#)
- [HSD/5/475e - Gullies: Design Group G4 \(pdf format, 560Kb\)](#)
- [HSD/5/510e - Gullies: Design Group G9 \(pdf format, 554Kb\)](#)
- [HSD/5/530c - Headwall: Type 1 \(pdf format, 542Kb\)](#)
- [HSD/5/535b - Headwall: Type 2 \(pdf format, 1Mb\)](#)
- [HSD/5/540b - Headwall: Type 3 \(pdf format, 578Kb\)](#)
- [HSD/5/542b - Headwall: Outlet Grid Cover \(pdf format, 382Kb\)](#)
- [HSD/5/543c - Headwall: Inlet Grid Cover \(pdf format, 565Kb\)](#)



A2. Street Lighting Design Requirements

- A2.1 Oxfordshire County Council provides a comprehensive street lighting design service using the latest specifications and computer aided design facilities. These designs show the minimum number of lights required to meet the appropriate category of lighting laid down in British Standard BS5489:2003. This also ensures the most efficient installation and keeps the capital cost, as well as future maintenance and energy costs, to a minimum. Doing this will also help in managing our Carbon Reduction Commitment.
- A2.2 We also had to consider the on-going reliability, ease of maintenance and energy consumption of equipment. Therefore we have decided to standardise on the types of equipment we specify, which includes LED and dimming technology.
- A2.3 We have resolved to make a charge for design work which we carry out for third parties. The fee is based on 5% of the estimated capital cost of the installation works, subject to an £1020 maximum and £246 minimum charge for each section 38 or 278 agreement.
- A2.4 However, if a Developer/Consultant wishes to make arrangements to carry out their own street lighting design a specific design brief for your site must be obtained from the Electrical Services - Lighting Section. The lighting design must then be submitted to us approval prior to any installation work commencing on site.
- A2.5 Failure to seek approval of the street lighting design will prevent the section 38/278 adoption taking place. Please note that lighting designs submitted on more than two occasions will incur an administration charge of £66.00 for each subsequent submission. The charge will have to be paid before approval can be given.
- A2.6 Please contact our Street Lighting Team to discuss your requirement further, when the adoptable areas have been finalised and agreed with our Road Agreements Team.
-

A3. Structural Procedures

[Procedures for the structural approval of retaining walls, bridges and culverts adjacent to or on the highway \(pdf format, 78Kb\)](#)

A4. Planting on adoptable highways

[Trees and shrubs acceptable for planting in adoptable highways \(pdf format, 49Kb\)](#)

A5. Acceptable materials

Enquire with OCC Highway Authority

A6. Parking Standards for the City & Districts

A6.A – Oxford City Parking Standards

A6.A1. Oxford has lower parking standards than the rest of the county (**Table A6A1**) as it has lower rates of car ownership and good accessibility by non-car modes to a wide range of facilities. Even within the city there are differing degrees of access to local facilities and public transport and car ownership is typically lower in the city centre than the outer areas. For these reasons there are two parking standards that will apply: within the Transport Central Area as defined by the City Council in its planning policy documents and outside that area.

A6.A2. These recommendations should be treated as optima, reflecting good overall accessibility by non-car modes, and the need to use land efficiently. Also, shared off-plot parking, combined with on-plot parking where appropriate, will be encouraged.

A6.A3. Proposals, which are considered to have over-generous parking provision, will not be supported. Equally, proposals with substantially reduced parking provision may be unacceptable in some circumstances, for example, where this would result in unacceptable parking pressure on existing streets, which could not be reasonably mitigated. The onus is on the developer to show that the implications of the parking provision are acceptable.

Parking Provision – Outside the Transport Central Area

A6.A4. The amount of parking that would be required to meet forecast demand in new developments is shown in **Table A6A1**.

A6.A5. In new small scale development outside the Transport Central Area and in the tighter built up areas where densities are high and traditionally no on-plot parking is provided then proposals may not need to provide on-plot parking. In other cases **Table A6A1** will form the basis of the assessment.

A6.A6. Where local circumstances allow, a substantial element of shared off-plot parking will be preferred over the provision of 2 or more spaces per unit.

Parking Provision within the Transport Central Area

A6.A7. Proposals will be assessed case by case in the context of the Oxford Local Development Framework and will be lower than the parking provision recommended outside the Transport Central Area. ‘Car-free’ development or low level of parking provision will be encouraged, and when in a controlled parking zone will be enforced through exclusion from that **controlled parking zone**.

A6.A8. No more than 1.0 spaces per dwelling will be permitted within the Transport Central Area. Within the West End, flats will be car-free with disabled parking only.

A6.A9. Car parking spaces provided within the Transport Central Area can be provided by an allocated and unallocated mix to suit the specific location and development layout.

Student Accommodation

A6.A10. For both inside and outside the Transport Central Area student accommodation will be car free in terms of parking. However, provision of parking for the mobility impaired will be provided of one space per bedroom for 5% of the total number of bedrooms provided.

Houses of Multiple Occupation

A6.A11. **Table 6A1** will be used primarily to assess **Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO)**. However where 7 or more occupants are proposed in an area where parking congestion occurs then the Council may require additional spaces to ensure that a suitable and appropriate number of spaces are provided.

Car-free development

A6.A12. ‘Car-free’ development is defined in this document as accommodation for people who are prepared to relinquish their right to keep a private car in Oxford. ‘Car-free’ development is encouraged, which can bring significant benefits where properly implemented in appropriate locations.

A6.A13. ‘Car-free’ development will be acceptable in Oxford, provided that there are excellent alternatives to the car, shops and services are located nearby, and the car-free status of the development can realistically be enforced by planning condition, planning obligation, on-street parking controls or other means. The onus is on the developer to demonstrate that there are no adverse implications.



A6.A14. Many smaller residential proposals, involving domestic extensions, subdivision of a dwelling house into flats, and small infill development, do not specifically provide additional parking. These may be described as ‘**car parking free**’.

A6.A15. The addition of a few dwellings, without the provision of additional parking spaces to a particular area may be acceptable, either where there is reasonable and safe on-street parking capacity (as made clear by appropriate supporting information) or where there is excellent accessibility for those without a car and on-street parking controls are in place or will be provided.

Low car housing

A6.A16. An alternative to ‘car-free’ residential development is ‘**low car**’ (or ‘**low parking**’) housing, where the proposed parking provision is significantly below the parking standard. Such proposals will generally be assessed using the same principles as for car-free development.

Car clubs

A6.A17. ‘Car-free’ or ‘low car’ developments will be encouraged to incorporate or otherwise support a car club, which can be an attractive alternative to private car ownership and boost the attractiveness of such housing.

A6.A18. A car club provider makes cars available to local residents, and they are then shared between the households on a ‘pay-as-you-go’ basis.

A6.A19. Car clubs are particularly suited to areas of high-density development and areas with good accessibility to local services and public transport.

Unallocated parking

A6.A20. In general proposals with unallocated parking will be supported with up to 100% unallocated parking within a controlled parking zone or a Home Zone.

Garages

A6.A21. The provision of residential car parking in the form of garages will be discouraged within the city, as evidence suggests they are less well used than other forms of residential parking.

Conversion of Front Gardens to Parking Areas

A6.A22. Many planning applications propose the conversion of private amenity space at the front of dwellings to hard-standing, to provide additional on-plot parking. This is particularly common where houses are subdivided into flats, and may be considered necessary to prevent undue pressure on the public highway.

A6.A23. However, the cumulative impact of multiple hard-surfaced parking areas can change the character of an area and also significantly increase surface water run-off, which can, in turn, increase local flood risk. Also, the benefit of providing off-street spaces as ‘front garden parking’ will need to be weighed against the loss of existing on-street capacity as a result of new or extended drop-kerb.

**Table A6.A1.
Car Parking Provision in New Developments in Oxford outside the Transport Central Area**

Number of bedrooms per dwelling	Number of Allocated Spaces	Number of Spaces When 2 Allocated Spaces per Dwelling are Provided		Number of Spaces When 1 Allocated Spaces per Dwelling are Provided		Number of Unallocated Spaces When no Allocated Spaces are Provided
		Allocated Spaces	Unallocated Spaces	Allocated Spaces	Unallocated Spaces	
1	1	N/A	N/A	1	0.4	1.0
2	2	2	0.3	1	0.7	1.5
3	2	2	0.4	1	0.9	1.8
4+	2	2	0.5	1	1.2	2.1

A6.B – Cherwell Urban Areas Parking Standards

B.1. The parishes, which define the urban areas in Cherwell are:

- i. Banbury,
- ii. Bicester,
- iii. Kidlington,
- iv. Bloxham,
- v. Bodicote,
- vi. Adderbury,
- vii. Yarnton
- viii. Gosford & Water Eaton.

B.2. The car parking provision in new developments for the urban areas in Cherwell area are set out in **Table A6.B1**.

Table A6.B1

Car parking provision in new developments for urban areas in Cherwell

Number of bedrooms per dwelling	Number of Allocated Spaces	Number of Spaces When 2 Allocated Spaces per Dwelling are Provided		Number of Spaces When 1 Allocated Spaces per Dwelling are Provided		Number of Unallocated Spaces When no Allocated Spaces are Provided
		Allocated Spaces	Unallocated Spaces	Allocated Spaces	Unallocated Spaces	
1	1	N/A	N/A	1	0.4	1.2
2	2	2	0.3	1	0.6	1.4
2/3	2	2	0.3	1	0.7	1.5
3	2	2	0.3	1	0.8	1.7
3/4	2	2	0.4	1	1.0	1.9
4+	2	2	0.5	1	1.3	2.2

Note 1: The rows in the table for 2/3 bedrooms and 3/4 bedrooms can be used when there are additional rooms in the dwelling which are not shown as bedrooms but where there is a high chance that they could be used as bedrooms.

Note 2: The Council will consider **North West Bicester Ecotown** as a special case provided that certain minimum criteria are met. If there is a full range of every day services provided within easy walking or cycling distance of the dwelling and convenient access to an efficient public transport system accessing a wider range of services including employment, one allocated car parking space per dwelling will be required, regardless of dwelling size or tenure. This may be on plot or off plot. Off plot provision may be grouped in a parking court provided the courts are small, close by, secure and conveniently accessed. Additional unallocated off plot car parking may also be provided according to the principles of this document up to a maximum of one space per dwelling. A lower standard of parking may be acceptable dependent upon the layout and accessibility to services and to other modes of transport in agreement with the Highway Authority.

**A6.C – Parking Recommendations for all Other Areas in Oxfordshire
(Other than Oxford and Cherwell Urban Areas)**

A6.C1. Car parking provision recommendations for all other areas of Oxfordshire (other than Oxford and Cherwell Urban Areas) are set out in **Table A6.C1**.

**Table A6.C1
Car parking Provision in New Developments for all Areas of Oxfordshire
(Other than Oxford and Cherwell Urban areas)**

Number of bedrooms per dwelling	Number of Allocated Spaces	Number of Spaces When 2 Allocated Spaces per Dwelling are Provided		Number of Spaces When 1 Allocated Spaces per Dwelling are Provided		Number of Unallocated Spaces When no Allocated Spaces are Provided
		Allocated Spaces	Unallocated Spaces	Allocated Spaces	Unallocated Spaces	
1	1	N/A	N/A	1	0.4	1.2
2	2	2	0.3	1	0.6	1.4
2/3	2	2	0.3	1	0.8	1.6
3	2	2	0.4	1	0.9	1.8
3/4	2	2	0.5	1	1.1	2.1
4+	2	2	0.6	1	1.5	2.4

Note: The rows in the table for 2/3 bedrooms and 3/4 bedrooms can be used when there are additional rooms in the dwelling which are not shown as bedrooms but where there is a high chance that they could be used as bedrooms.

Cherwell District Council

By e-mail:
planning.policy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

22nd January 2016

196 MR 220116 CDC

Dear Sir

BLOXHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

I write on behalf of my client William Davis Ltd with regard to the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan consultation. My clients are a house building company who have secured an interest in land to the east of South Newington Road to the south of Bloxham (SHLAA reference BL029). Previous representations submitted directly to the Parish Council in relation to their consultation in January/February 2015 welcomed the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan as a means of providing a local policy context to compliment the emerging Cherwell District Local Plan 2006-2031, both Part 1 which has recently been adopted, and Part 2 which has now been progressed.

Those representations recognised the community's concerns in relation to the implications of ad-hoc development in the village, but did not accept the presumption in the draft Neighbourhood Plan that given the permissions that have been recently granted in and around the village, there should only now be very limited further housing development through to the end of the plan period. That remains my client's principal concern, but it should be noted at this point that they do support the majority of the policies in the Draft Neighbourhood Plan and consider that they will provide an appropriate context for guiding the sustainable development of the community.

However, their concern in relation to future housing development is highlighted in Section 5.2 Objectives: Deliver the houses the village needs. The specific objectives highlighted within that theme are not objected to, but it fails to recognise that the village will continue to have a role through plan period in meeting the identified housing needs of the District and wider Housing Market Area in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Cherwell Local Plan.

Policy BL1 relates to the proposed development on a site to the south of Milton Road that has the benefit of an outline planning permission and granted after March 2014 and therefore, contributes to the residual development requirements in the Cherwell Local Plan. Policy BL2 then, however, seeks to limit further development to conversions, infilling and minor development (generally less than 5 dwellings) within the village limits.

Whilst recognising the level of development that has in recent years been committed to Bloxham, the limitation on future development in Bloxham for the entirety of the plan period to 2031 clearly conflicts with the strategic policies and provisions Cherwell Local Plan as described further below. It will also constrain national policy and guidance issued by the Secretary of State to boost the supply of housing and to ensure that the full objectively assessed need for housing in a Housing Market Area is met. Paragraph 184 of the NPPF is particularly relevant here in so far as this states that a Neighbourhood Plan should not promote less development than that set out in a Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies. As such the policy fails to meet the basic conditions.

Paragraph B.96 of the Local Plan highlights that the District Council are committed to meeting the Objectively Assessed Housing Need for the District. Consequently Policy BSC1 identifies a requirements to deliver a minimum of 22,480 new dwellings in the period 2011 to 2031. 5,392 of those dwellings will provided in locations outside of Bicester and Banbury.

However, it should be noted that the housing requirements identified in Policy BSC1, and that then flow through to Policy Villages 2 (see below), only relate to the housing need for the District alone, identified in the most recent 2014 SHMA. The Local Plan explicitly recognises in the supporting text (paras. B.95-B.96) that there is a commitment to consider how the unmet needs arising in Oxford can be sustainably accommodated and ensure that the objectively assessed housing need across the whole Oxfordshire Housing Market Area are met. Consequently under the Duty-to-Cooperate, there will be a requirement for Cherwell District to accommodate a higher level of development than currently planned for, and that would be facilitated through a rapid partial review of the Local Plan. That will require the District Council to revisit the distribution strategy in the Local Plan, which could result in a need to identify and allocate more development sites in the Category A Villages than currently anticipated.

Policy Villages 1 in the adopted Cherwell Local Plan Part 1 identifies Bloxham as a Category A Service Village where minor development, infilling and conversions would be appropriate, recognising that *“there is a need for Cherwell’s Villages to sustainably contribute towards meeting the housing requirements identified in Policy BSC1”* (para C.261).

Policy Villages 2 then addresses the distribution of growth across the rural areas. The Local Plan states (para. C.270) *“The Local Plan must set out an approach for identifying the development of new sites for housing across the rural areas to meet local needs in sustainable locations and to meet the strategic targets set in ‘Policy BSC 1: District Wide Housing Distribution’.* It continues (para. C.271) to highlight that: *“In the interests of meeting local housing need in rural areas, an allocation is also being made to enable the development of some new sites (for 10 or more dwellings) in the most sustainable locations. A further 750 dwellings will be developed in the rural areas including Kidlington. Sites for 10 or more dwellings that have received planning permission after 31 March 2014 will contribute in meeting these requirements. Additionally, a realistic windfall allowance of 754 homes is identified for sites of less than 10 dwellings for the period (2014-2031). In total, some 5,392 homes will be delivered across the rural areas from 2011 to 2031.”*

Therefore, over 1500 new dwellings will need to be delivered in the Category A villages in the period to 2031 over and above the committed supply identified in Part 1 of the Local Plan. Policy Villages 2 highlights that the sites to deliver those dwellings will be identified in Part 2 of the Local Plan, Neighbourhood Plans and through planning applications, and the policy outlines the environmental/technical/infrastructure issues that will be considered in the identification of appropriate sites. Within that policy context, it is therefore, entirely inappropriate for the Neighbourhood Plan to seek to limit the scale of development in the village in advance of the site identification process being completed. Contrary to paragraph 184 of the NPPF, this may result in under-provision of housing relative to the housing requirement for the Policy 2 Villages.

Moreover, Bloxham is the largest of the Category A Service Villages, the best served in terms of community infrastructure and facilities, well related to Banbury and unconstrained by Green Belt. As such it is one of the villages in the District that is best able to accommodate future growth. The District Council’s response to the Neighbourhood Plan consultation undertaken at the beginning of 2015 specifically referred to it as being a *“more sustainable village than many with relatively good access to amenity and connectivity to Banbury”*. Consequently whilst the concerns highlighted in regard to the number of planning permissions that have recently been granted in the village is acknowledged, it would be completely unacceptable for the Neighbourhood Plan to restrict further

sustainable development that would contribute to meeting the identified needs in the District, let alone the wider Housing Market Area, if it can be demonstrated to be appropriate within the terms of the Development Plan and NPPF policy context.

William Davis are of the view that Bloxham could and should accommodate further growth within the plan period, and their land to the east of South Newington Road would be an entirely appropriate option for accommodating that growth. Indeed, it is apparent this would accord with the criteria set out in Local Plan Policy Villages 2 for the selection of future development sites. Their aspiration for the development of this site is to deliver a high quality housing development that respects its relationship with the surrounding urban form and sensitive environmental and cultural features. It is anticipated that in due course the development proposals for the site will evolve through an iterative masterplanning exercise that has taken into account the requirements of the various technical and environmental assessments that will be required, and best urban and landscape design practice. Whilst the development of the site would inevitably result in the loss of agricultural fields on the edge of the settlement, the intent of the assessment and design process will be to ensure that the proposals respond to the surrounding landscape character by retaining and enhancing boundary hedgerows and trees within the site wherever possible, and by providing new public open space with additional tree hedgerow planting to ensure a soft transition between the built development and open countryside.

On that basis William Davis contend that the site should be allocated in the Local Plan Part 2 and/or the Neighbourhood Plan for future development at the appropriate time in the plan period taking account of the strategic planning context, local aspirations and identified needs in the Housing Market Area, District and village.

William Davis does recognise the stated concerns in relation to the capacity of the facilities and infrastructure in the village. However, that is a common issue around the District and County, and the solution is not to restrict the housing development required to meet existing and identified future needs in otherwise sustainable locations, but to seek solutions to remedy those matters through re-planning and management and/or securing public and private sector investment in the forward planning and development management processes. Notably Policies BSC7, BSC8 and BSC9 in Part 1 of the Local Plan seeks to do precisely that in relation to education, health, and public services and utilities respectively.

Policy BL2 as drafted is therefore, too restrictive as it unduly limits sustainable development and in doing so does not reflect the NPPF's presumption in favour of Sustainable Development that is also affirmed in Policy PSD1 in the Local Plan. If the Neighbourhood Plan is not going to allocate additional development land itself in accordance with Villages Policy 2 in the Local Plan, then there must be an explicit recognition within Policy BL2 that further residential development is likely to be required in the village to contribute to meeting the identified housing needs in the District and wider Housing Market Area within the plan period in accordance with the Local Plan requirements. We suggest that the policy should be amended as follows:

In addition to the major development set out in Policy BL1 the following sustainable development will also be permitted, subject to regard for other policies in this plan:

1. *Conversion, infilling and minor development (typically 5 dwellings or fewer) within existing built up limits; and*
2. *Further major development deemed necessary to meet identified housing needs for Policy 2 Villages via Part 2 of the Cherwell Local Plan*

In conclusion William Davis are of the view that Bloxham could and should accommodate further growth within the plan period, and the land to the east of South Newington Road would be an entirely

appropriate option for accommodating that growth. As drafted with its implicit restriction on further development in the plan period, the Neighbourhood Plan does not meet the Basic Conditions required of it in that it does not accord with the NPPF or the Cherwell District Local Plan Part 1 in relation to housing delivery and, therefore, does not fully contribute to achieving sustainable development.

In light of the above comments, I would be grateful if you could keep me informed of the Neighbourhood Plan's progress.

Yours faithfully

Mark Rose
Director

Neighbourhood Plan Proposal – Bloxham Parish
Consultation Response Form

Bloxham Parish Council has submitted its proposed Neighbourhood Plan to Cherwell District Council under Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The proposed Neighbourhood Plan and related documents can be viewed online at www.cherwell.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning/ or as a hard copy at our Bodicote House offices, Banbury OX15 4AA 8.30am – 5.00pm and at Bloxham Mill Business Centre, Barford Road, Bloxham, Banbury, OX15 4FF from 8.30am – 3.45pm Monday – Friday.

Under Regulation 16, we are now required to publicise the Plan and supporting documents for a period of not less than 6 weeks and to invite represents before it is submitted for Examination. The consultation period will run between **Friday 27 November 2015** and **Friday, 22 January 2016**. The statutory period has been extended by two weeks to allow for the holiday period. **Representations received outside this period may not be accepted.**

Representations can be made using this form and should be emailed to planning.policy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk or posted to Planning Policy, Cherwell District Council, Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury OX15 4AA.

Neighbourhood Plans are not examined in the same manner as plans produced by Local Authorities. **Importantly, the Examiner is not to consider any matter other than those in the box below. As such, representations should only relate to such matters.**

When examining the Neighbourhood Plan, the Examiner is required to consider the following:

- A** whether the draft neighbourhood development plan meets the basic conditions (see paragraphs E-H)
- B** whether the draft neighbourhood development plan complies with the provision made by or under sections 38A and 38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
- C** whether the area for any referendum should extend beyond the neighbourhood area to which the draft neighbourhood development plan relates
- D** whether the draft neighbourhood development plan is compatible with the European Convention on Human Rights

The draft neighbourhood development plan meets the basic conditions if:

- E** having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood development plan
- F** the making of the neighbourhood development plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development
- G** the making of the neighbourhood development plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area,
- H** the making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.

Please include your contact details below

Name

Email/Postal Address

Shukri.masseri@cherwell-dc.gov.uk
Strategic Planning and the Economy
Cherwell District Council
Bodicote House
Bodicote, Banbury
OX15 4AA

Please indicate if you wish to be notified about subsequent progress of the neighbourhood plan, including when the District Council makes a decision about 'making' the plan (under Regulation 19), by marking 'X' in the box below:

Using information contained in the box on Page 1, please indicate which paragraph your representation relates to by marking an 'X' in the appropriate box(es) below:

A

B

C

D

If your representation relates to paragraph A, please identify which of the following your representation relates to by marking 'X' in the appropriate box(es)

E

F

G

H

Please use the following space to write your representation, clearly stating the policy, paragraph or page number you are commenting on. Continue on further sheets, as necessary.

We note and welcome the amendments made to the draft plan in response to our previous comments and suggestions.

The comments now made below are raised in the interest of assisting the Parish Council secure an approved Plan.

The Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documents were submitted to Cherwell District Council on the 19 November 2015.

Cherwell District Council as the LPA is in general satisfied that the community engagement and publicity under Schedule 4B of the TCPA 1990, and the regulations has been satisfied. The relevant documents have been submitted, and that the process followed satisfies the requirements of the legislation and regulations.

General comments

There should be clearer numbering of paragraphs and accompanying documents which is a standard practice and would make it easier to navigate documents. It would also benefit from the numbering of tables and maps.

Throughout the reference to 'Past Local Plan 1996' should be changed to saved policies of the adopted Local Plan 1996 where appropriate and relevant.

Cover page - It should be possible to read the Plan without the reference for it to be read in conjunction with the Sustainability Appraisal Report. The SA is a supporting document and does not form part of the Plan, nor does it contain the policies which will be used to determine planning applications when the Plan is made. The SA is a freestanding document and should not form an appendix to the main Plan document.

The plan needs to be more positive in recognizing the benefits development can bring in terms of revitalizing communities and delivering the homes, businesses, infrastructure and services needed, as the village grows and the population ages

The Plan also needs to recognize that areas with a made NP in place will qualify to receive 25% of CIL income from development in their area; if CDC were to adopt CIL this could be used to fund identified needs in Bloxham, and the positive benefits that would accrue to the community.

Sustainable development can also provide improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life.

The ambitions of the BNP should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area. The Plan needs to recognize that the adopted Local Plan is supported by an infrastructure delivery plan appendix 8, which has recently been updated in the 2015 Annual Monitoring Report. It identifies the infrastructure requirements to meet the growth in the District.

Many of the development sites including in Banbury not far from Bloxham require infrastructure, such as road access, new schools, and health facilities. The infrastructure delivery plan also considers how and when infrastructure should be provided having regard to funding opportunities. The provision of the supporting infrastructure, including the necessary community and leisure services and facilities will involve close partnership working with Oxfordshire County Council, public, private and voluntary sector organizations, and developers. The Bloxham neighbourhood plan should therefore support the strategic development needs set out in the Local Plan and plan positively to support local development. How is this Plan proposing to work with infrastructure providers to address identified need? Such as the lack of school capacity.

Specific comments

Page 4: reference to unplanned development is inaccurate as permissions were granted following a due assessment process and consideration of applications, which took into account social, economic and environmental consideration in accordance with NPPF and the PPG.

Page 4: 1.1 (2) - a neighbourhood plan is not only concerned with such matters as location, number and type of dwelling to be built, but is also a community led plan dealing with the future conservation, development, renewal and for the provision of facilities and infrastructure.

Page 5: 1.2 - the basic conditions are set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Page 5: 1.2 - 2nd bullet point should be clarified to read 'is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority'.

Page 5: 1.3 - there should be no need for clarification of the Plan's policies in the SA Report. The purpose of the SA report is to assess the environmental, social and economic impact of the policies and proposals.

Page 5: 2 - Our Bloxham, final bullet point, the reference should be to Regulation 5 (1) of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

Page 6: 2.2 - line 4 delete ...~~past~~ adopted Local Plan...

Page 7: 2.3 - table, population projection for Bloxham for 2031 is crude and not based on robust evidence.

Page 11: 2.2 - **Education Context**, an assessment of education provision will need to inform development proposals. The plan should recognize that developer contributions can be sought to mitigate the impact of development on school facilities and infrastructure. The views of the County Council as education authority should be taken into account.

Page 14: Final sentence of first paragraph - it is not clear what appendices 3 and 4 are.

Page 19: table of housing permissions: Clarifications are required here in relation to policies Villages 1 and Villages 2. Please refer to paragraph C.272 of the adopted Local Plan Part 1. An allocation of 750 dwellings is being made for new sites (for 10 or more dwellings) in the rural area including Kidlington. Additionally a realistic allowance of 754 homes is identified for sites of less than 10 dwellings 'windfalls'.

Page 20: Final paragraph – see point above in relation to the 754 dwellings

Page 22: Policy BL2: it is generally recognized including in the adopted Cherwell Local Plan that small scale development as being for 10 dwellings or less.

Page 26: How is a history of fluvial or run-off flooding going to be determined. Is this going to be based on Environment Agency records? The policy should be clear as to when action is triggered. Under Policy ESD 6 of the adopted Local Plan development proposals will be assessed according to the sequential approach, and where necessary the exceptions test as set out in the NPPF and the NPPG.

Page 28: Policy BL8 (criteria a & c) Policy BSC 4 of the adopted Local Plan deals with the mix of housing. The Policy needs to take account of the fact that the mix of housing on sites will be negotiated having regard to the Council's most up to date evidence on housing need, and available evidence from developers on local market conditions. Should the requirements of policy BL8 make schemes unviable then negotiations will take place with the developer to enable a scheme to come forward.

Page 28: Policy BL8 (di) - needs to be recognized that in some locations and in some schemes it would not be possible to provide car parking on the plot.

Page 28: Policy BL8 (d &i-iv) - are not planning considerations as they are requirements of Building Regulations which set standards for the design and construction of buildings to ensure the safety and health of occupiers. They cannot be controlled through planning policies in a neighbourhood plan.

Page 29: first paragraph, line 3 - it would be more appropriate to say that where development is permitted every effort should be made to mitigate any adverse effects.

Page 30: first paragraph - requires developers to fund studies to ascertain whether a housing development will lead to overload of wastewater and water infrastructure. It should be noted that Thames Water are the statutory water and sewerage undertaker for the District and are a specific consultation body who will highlight issues of concern. The requirement for developers to undertake such studies may be too onerous.

Page 31: first paragraph - reference should be to saved Policy C27 of the adopted Local Plan 1996

Page 33: Policy BL11; (criterion a.) needs to take account of the fact that a density higher than 30 dwellings per hectare may be acceptable in some circumstances depending upon the locality and site characteristics.

Pages 33-34: final paragraph and footnote - make reference to the Submission Local Plan 2013 in relation to density. The paragraph does not reflect the final wording of the adopted Local Plan, including to the generally lower densities in rural areas.

Page 40: Policy BL12 (b iii) - refers to an Appendix 5. The Plan does not contain an appendix 5.

Page 43: Policy BL14 – the Plan would be more effective having a policy which protects local services and facilities which then can be used in the application of BL14 rather than a clause within a policy which has another purpose and nothing to assess the development against.

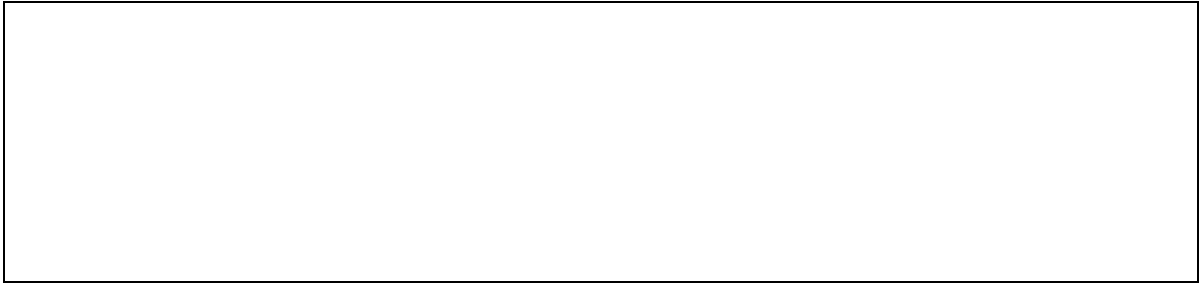
Page 52: **7. Bloxham Projects**; lines 4&5 refer to an appendix in the Consultation Statement containing a list of projects. This appendix referred to cannot be located.

(continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

Do you have any comments to make on the supporting documents?

Basic Conditions Statement

The requirement is that the making of a neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority. The basic conditions statement has considered how the policies of the neighbourhood plan meet each of the Cherwell adopted Local Plan (2015) strategic objectives, rather than the policies, although the policies of the Local Plan have been designed to give substance to the strategic objectives.



(continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

Neighbourhood Plan Proposal – Bloxham Parish **Consultation Response Form**

Bloxham Parish Council has submitted its proposed Neighbourhood Plan to Cherwell District Council under Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The proposed Neighbourhood Plan and related documents can be viewed online at www.cherwell.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning/ or as a hard copy at our Bodicote House offices, Banbury OX15 4AA 8.30am – 5.00pm and at Bloxham Mill Business Centre, Barford Road, Bloxham, Banbury, OX15 4FF from 8.30am – 3.45pm Monday – Friday.

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- H** the making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.

Please include your contact details below

Name

Email/Postal Address

Bhupinder Thandi Cerda Planning Ltd Vesey House 5-7 High Street Sutton Coldfield B72 1XH

Please indicate if you wish to be notified about subsequent progress of the neighbourhood plan, including when the District Council makes a decision about 'making' the plan (under Regulation 19), by marking 'X' in the box below:

X

Using information contained in the box on Page 1, please indicate which paragraph your representation relates to by marking an 'X' in the appropriate box(es) below:

A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>	C <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>
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If your representation relates to paragraph A, please identify which of the following your representation relates to by marking 'X' in the appropriate box(es)

E <input type="checkbox"/>	F <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	G <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	H <input type="checkbox"/>
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Please use the following space to write your representation, clearly stating the policy, paragraph or page number you are commenting on. Continue on further sheets, as necessary.

Please see attached document

[Empty rectangular box for text input]

(continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

Do you have any comments to make on the supporting documents?

Please see attached document

[Empty rectangular box for text input]

(continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

REPRESENTATIONS IN RELATION TO THE BLOXHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

ON BEHALF OF CALA HOME (MIDLANDS) LTD

Cerda Planning have been instructed to make representations in relation to the Bloxham Parish Neighbourhood on behalf of Cala Homes (Midlands) Ltd.

The Cherwell Local Plan

The Cherwell Local Plan Part 1 was adopted in July 2015 and sets out how the District will grow and change in the period up to 2031. Underpinning the plan is the need to focus development in and around Bicester and Banbury and direct development towards more sustainable villages whilst maintaining strict control over developments in open countryside.

The 2014 Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) identifies a requirement for a total of 22,800 dwellings over the plan period up to 2031. The plan advises that some 17,500 houses will be focused in Bicester and Banbury with the plan making provision of just short of 5,500 homes within rural areas. The plan does not set out a reliance on allocated site and makes provision for windfall sites to provide housing in rural areas.

The Plan recognises that Oxford may not be able to accommodate all of its new housing within its boundary and therefore Cherwell District Council is committed to working proactively with Oxfordshire Local Authorities to accommodate any potential growth.

Settlement Hierarchy

In terms of the strategic approach, policy C249 sets out that the Local Plan must identify the overall level of growth to be developed within the rural areas, identify sustainable hierarchy settlements and identify an approach for distributing growth across different villages.

Outside of Bicester and Banbury villages are ranked in terms of their sustainability with the most sustainable villages categorised as 'A' villages where development is supported in principle. The least sustainable developments are categorised as category 'C' settlements where development will be restricted to in-filling and conversions.

The spatial strategy sets out that the development will be directed to larger and more sustainable villages within the District that already offer a range of services and facilities and are well connected to major urban areas with particular emphasis on public transport links.

Development will be located to category A and B settlements as they are considered to be most sustainable villages.

The villages have been categorised based on the following criteria;

- Population size
- The number and range of services and facilities
- Whether there are any known significant issues within the village
- Accessibility of the village to an urban area, whether that is by private means or public transport
- Accessibility of the village in terms of walking and cycling and local employment opportunities.

Policy Villages 1 – village categorisation categorises Bloxham as a category ‘A’ village, making it one of the most sustainable locations for new development. The village, therefore, can accommodate developments, in-filling developments and conversions. Bloxham is within the same category as Kidlington, which is identified as a major growth area.

The appropriate forms of development will depend on the character and the development proposed. All developments should be appropriate to the size of the existing settlement.

The following criteria will apply when setting development:

- The size of the village
- Level of services
- Site context within the existing built environment
- Whether the development is in keeping with the character and form of the village
- Impact on landscape
- Consideration of the scale of the village.

Housing Distribution and Mix

Housing sites will be identified in Part 2 of the Local Plan and through the preparation of neighbourhood plans to determine the most appropriate locations for development.

The plan sets out, at section A.9, that the vision for Cherwell includes the building of sustainable communities to ensure that the settlements of Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington along with other rural areas offer a high quality of life to meet the needs of the entire population and to ensure communities have a wide range and choice of good quality, market and affordable housing.

Policy BSC1 in relation to District wide housing distribution states that within the remainder of the District outside Bicester and Banbury a total of 754 dwellings per annum will be provided on windfall sites that can accommodate more than 10 dwellings.

In relation to affordable housing policy BSC3 identifies a need for 407 affordable homes per year over the plan period. To that end all proposed developments for 11 or greater dwellings, will require a contribution of at least 35% affordable homes on site. In exceptional circumstances, off site committed sums will be acceptable.

Within this provision 70% will be expected to be social rented and 30% intermediate affordable homes.

In relation to housing mix, the SHMA identified a greater need for 3 bedroom properties within the District.

Policy BSC4 sets out that all new residential development will be expected to provide a mix of homes to meet the current and expected future requirements of the local community. The mix of housing will be negotiated depending on latest evidence on housing need and evidence from developers and market conditions.

Policy C242 sets out that as the District grows one of the key challenges will be to direct development to the most sustainable locations to meet the needs of villages and rural communities.

The Village of Bloxham

The village of Bloxham is located in northern Oxfordshire on the edge of the Cotswolds. Bloxham is located approximately 5.5km to the south of Banbury, 40km north of Oxford and 53km west of Milton Keynes. It is a large village with an approximate population of 3,500 residents. The village caters for the day-to-day needs of its residents with a number of key services and facilities, including primary and secondary schools, post office, church, shops, doctor's surgery, recreation grounds and public houses.

Bloxham is located off the A361 Banbury Road which serves as the major traffic route through Bloxham and connects Bloxham with Banbury to the north and Chipping Norton to the south. The village is 8.5km from the M40 motorway.

Bloxham's proximity to Banbury makes it accessible via rail connections to a range of destinations including London, Reading, and Birmingham.

The Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan sets out 4 broad themes for issues and challenges within the village.

The first theme is the need to deliver housing that is required to live in a village through the following objectives:

- Housing need must be met in a sustainable way;
- Homes must improve general connectivity minimising traffic congestion and catering for the projected increase of resident mobility issues;
- Build homes that adapt to and mitigate the effect of climate change;
- Build homes that better meet the needs of residents seeking to downsize;
- Build homes that show regard for the amenity of pre-existing properties.

The neighbourhood plan will be implemented in the context of recent and ongoing development whilst contributing towards the general affordable housing stock.

Whilst housing is encouraged this should not be at the expense of local infrastructure, primarily that the Bloxham Primary School has reached full capacity in terms of places and physically in size.

The following comments are raised in response to the consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan:

Policy BL1 relates to a site to the south of Milton Road where outline consent for 85 houses has been granted. This is the only site in the village that the Neighbourhood Plan advocates.

Whilst the principle of the policy is agreed with, other sites in and around Bloxham should be supported for development in accordance with the core principles of the National Planning Policy Framework. The Framework sets out that plan making should proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs.

Policy BL2 states that additional sustainable development, whether it is conversion, in-filling or minor development within the built limits will be supported, subject to developments being in scale with the village and that show regard to policy BL9D which relates to school places.

The built up limits i.e. the settlement boundary are not defined in Part 1 or 2 of the Local Plan or the draft Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan. BL2 is a restrictive policy and conformity of policy with the NPPF is questioned as a result. The general thrust of the Framework is a presumption of sustainable development. Planning Inspectors have commented, that even when councils can demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing land and when policies concerned with the supply of housing are up to date (ie policies defining built up limits to settlements), that provided a development is sustainable it can occur outside of the settlement boundary. In this case there does not appear to be a defined settlement boundary. However our client's site is clearly beyond the built up area of the village but lies directly adjacent to it, within close proximity to a wide range of facilities and services. The following appeal decisions are considered useful in this regard:

New Street, Weedon Bec, Northampton (APP/Y2810/A/14/2228921), for the erection of up to 121 dwellings, the Inspector concluded

"..I find that as the Council can demonstrate a 5 year HLS the weighted presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply and the appeal should be determined on normal planning balance. Nonetheless, the site would be well connected to a village with many local services and none of the harm I have identified would outweigh the benefits of providing more housing and much needed affordable housing in particular..."

A similar approach was taken in respect of the appeal allowed at Whetstone, (APP/T2405/A/13/2193758). This was a site that was not identified for development in any Development or emerging Plan. Notwithstanding, the Inspector concluded at Paragraph 38;

"For the reasons given, I have found that a five year supply of deliverable housing land has been demonstrated in accordance with the Framework, and neither of the appeal proposals would have a significant adverse effect on the character and appearance of the countryside. On balance... both of the proposals would represent sustainable development in accordance with the Framework".

Policy BL3 seeks to ensure that new developments promote and improve low carbon connectivity throughout the village, through the provision of footpaths and cycle routes. The policy is welcomed, however these connections should be applied on a site by site basis and are design led based on the development proposed. My client's site is well connected to the village with the potential to provide pedestrian links through to the adjoining residential development.

Policy BL4 sets out parking standards in relation to new housing developments in Bloxham. The policy sets out that development will be expected to deliver at least 1 car space per dwelling and 0.5 spaces per dwelling in shared visitor parking. Whilst parking standards are common place the standards should be applied on a site by site basis dependent on the size and location of the site. The indicative masterplan and design and access statement demonstrates that my client's site would provide parking in accordance with this policy.

Policy BL6 sets out that all new housing should be designed for maximum of 110 litres of water per person per day usage in line with Building Regulations. The Deregulation Bill 2015 states that:

"local planning authorities and qualifying bodies preparing neighbourhood plans should not set in their emerging Local plans, neighbourhood plans, or supplementary planning

documents, any additional local technical standards or requirements relating to the construction, internal layout or performance of new dwellings. This includes any policy requiring any level of the Code for Sustainable Homes"

It is therefore considered that this policy is not consistent with planning policy and legislation and should be deleted from the Neighbourhood Plan.

Policy BL8 (a-d) requires at least 20% of the market housing to be designed for the needs of residents at or beyond pension age including appropriate landscaping. In addition the policy states that bungalows or buildings will be restricted to a maximum of 2 storeys including any accommodation within the roof and homes will be required to be of the lifetime home standards. The proposals for this site in terms of housing mix will evolve, taking into account the identified need from the Council's housing officers.

In relation to specific needs housing (part a) the policy is welcomed however this should be applied on a site by site basis and largely dependent on the housing need at the time of submission and determination of a planning application. This is also inconsistent with Policy BSC4 of the Local Plan that sets out that all new residential development will be expected to provide a mix of homes to meet the current and expected future requirements of the local community. The mix of housing will be negotiated depending on latest evidence on housing need and evidence from developers and market conditions contained within the SHMA.

In relation to part c it is considered that this is inconsistent with the NPPF which (at paragraph 59) sets out that design policies should avoid unnecessary prescription or detail and should concentrate on guiding the overall and general principles of development. Detailed design for layout, house types and landscaping for this site will be determined at a later date through reserved matters applications.

In relation to part d (life time homes standards) attention is drawn to the comments made in relation to the Deregulation Bill and that any imposition of technical standards is contrary to legislation.

Policy BL9 (considerations of water supply, residential amenity and additional traffic) is welcomed. Part D requires the ongoing provision of school places to be maintained (ie new development should not result in the lack of school places). This policy would appear to restrict development. A S016 agreement or CIL contributions payable by developers would assist in the provision of infrastructure within the village. The conformity of this policy with the NPPF is questioned. My client would be willing to make appropriate financial contributions as necessary to meet the demand for new school places resulting from their proposals in accordance with the CIL regulations.

Policy BL11 states that all development should be encouraged to respect the character, historic and natural assets of the village. The design and materials should relate to the scale, mass and layout of neighbourhood properties including a maximum density of 30 dwellings per hectare. Whilst the general principle of the policy is welcomed these issues should be considered on a site by site basis. The policy is considered to be inconsistent with the NPPF which (at paragraph 59) sets out that design policies should avoid unnecessary prescription or detail and should concentrate on guiding the overall and general principles of development.

The above sets out specific comments on the policies contained within the Bloxham Parish Neighbourhood Plan, however there is more fundamental issue with the Cherwell District Council Local Plan and the Bloxham Parish Neighbourhood Plan. The Local Plan at several points sets out that development sites will be identified in part 2 of the Plan through the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans.

The Bloxham Parish Neighbourhood Plan does not identify preferred sites for development which appears to be in conflict with the Localism Act and the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 185) which sets out that the aim of neighbourhood plans is to shape and direct sustainable development in their areas. It appears there is an opportunity for the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan to guide development in the village rather than rely on the suggested allocations set out in Part 2 of the Cherwell District Local Plan.

In relation to the above Cala Homes are promoting a site for residential development for up to 30 dwellings. The site is approximately 1km from the centre of Bloxham and covers approximately 2.7ha and is located at the northern edge of Bloxham. It is bound by Ells Lane to the north, existing residential dwellings on Crab Tree Close to the east and open undeveloped land to the south and west.

The site currently comprises two small scale field enclosures of agricultural pasture divided by the existing hedgerow vegetation.

The development achieves an average net density of 37 dwellings per hectare when excluding the southern field. Overall the density results in the efficient use of the site whilst at the same time promoting densities which are appropriate to the local area and which will help assimilate the development into the surrounding areas. The development will allow for a range of dwellings across the site with varying sizes and tenures in order to accommodate a variety of household types including affordable homes.

The site and the development would form an appropriately sized, logical and sustainable extension of the village fronting Ellis Road within close proximity of the centre of the village.

Please see attached a Design and Access Statement which sets out the design considerations of the site and demonstrates Cala Homes commitment to the site.



ELLS LANE
BLOXHAM
DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

PREPARED BY PEGASUS URBAN DESIGN
C.0542_5A | MARCH 2015



“THE GOVERNMENT ATTACHES GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THE DESIGN OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT. GOOD DESIGN IS A KEY ASPECT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, IS INDIVISIBLE FROM GOOD PLANNING, AND SHOULD CONTRIBUTE POSITIVELY TO MAKING PLACES BETTER FOR PEOPLE.”

[PARA. 56 & 57, NPPF 2012].

CONTENTS

PAGE 05

1

INTRODUCTION

PAGE 07

2

ASSESSMENT

PAGE 23

3

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

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Prepared by Pegasus Urban Design
Pegasus Urban Design is part of Pegasus Group Ltd
Prepared on behalf of Cala Homes
March 2015 Project code C.0542_5A
Contact: Urban Design - Edward Turner

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PAGE 25

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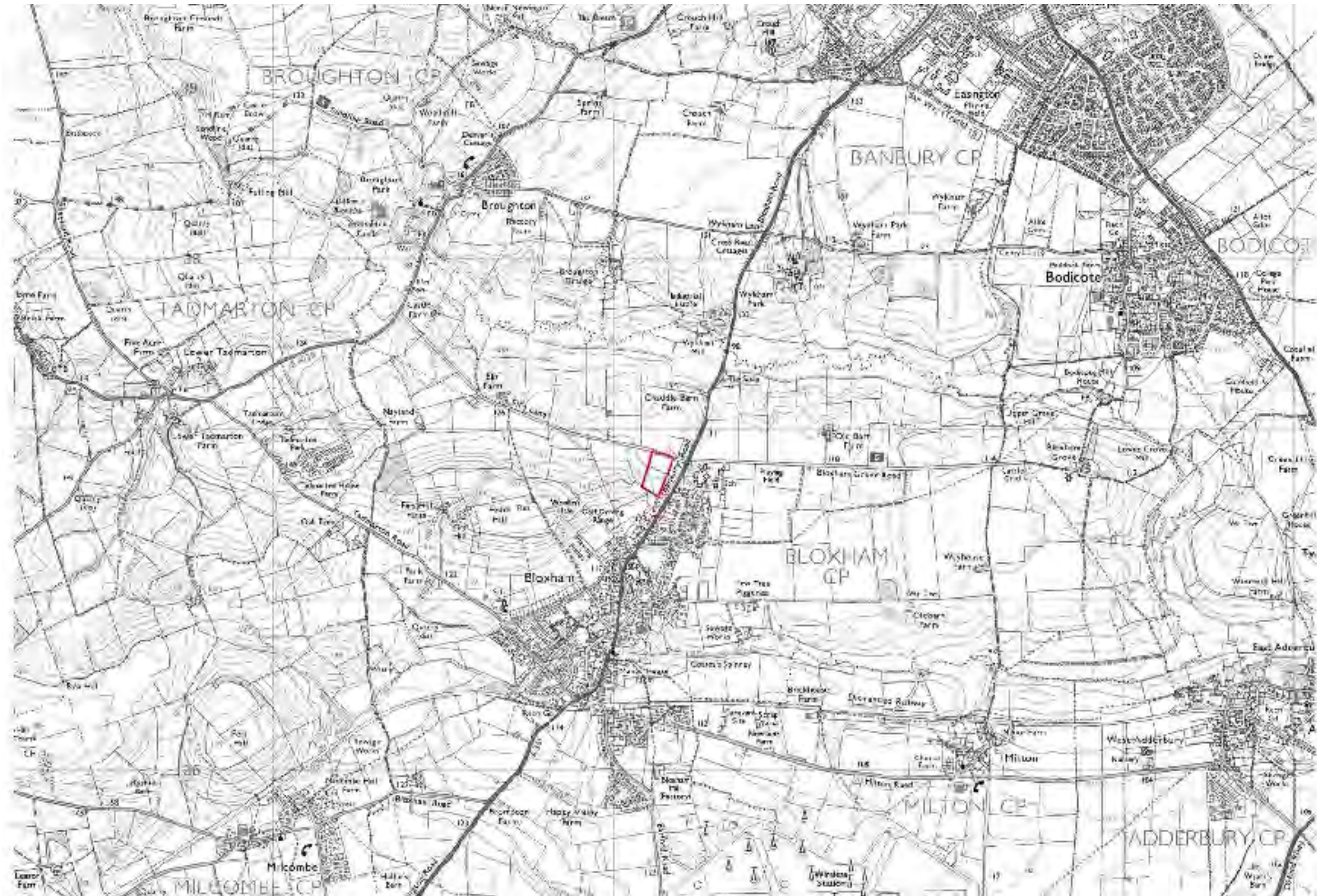
DESIGN PROPOSALS

PAGE 37

5

SUMMARY

NOTE: THIS DOCUMENT IS DESIGNED TO BE VIEWED AS A3 DOUBLE SIDED



WIDER CONTEXT

1 INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE STATEMENT

- 1.1 This Statement has been prepared by Pegasus Urban Design on behalf of CALA Homes to accompany the outline planning application for up to 30 residential dwellings on land south of Ells Lane, Bloxham.
- 1.2 This statement has been prepared in accordance with Article 8 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010, as amended June 2013, which requires certain applications to be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement.
- 1.3 The purpose of this statement is to explain;
“how the proposed development is a suitable response to the site and its setting and demonstrate that it can be adequately accessed by prospective users” (para. 30, Planning Policy Guidance, March 2014).

- 1.4 The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 (as amended 2013) also states the following requirements:
“(2) An application for planning permission to which this article applies shall be accompanied by a statement (“a design and access statement”) about:
(a) the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development; and
(b) how issues relating to access to the development have been dealt with.
(3) A design and access statement shall:
(a) explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development;
(b) demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the context of the development and how the design of the development takes that context into account;
(c) explain the policy adopted as to access, and how policies relating to access in relevant local development documents have been taken into account;
(d) state what, if any, consultation has been undertaken on issues relating to access to the development and what account has been taken of the outcome of any such consultation; and
(e) explain how any specific issues which might affect access to the development have been addressed.

- 1.5 This document achieves this within the following sections:
Section 1: Introduction – outlines the purpose of the document;
Section 2: Assessment – considers the site and its surroundings in terms of the physical, social and planning context;
Section 3: Design Principles and Sustainable Structuring – presentation of the design principles that have been derived from a combination of Government Policy, site assessment, public consultation and design evolution);
Section 4: Involvement and Evolution – outlines the stakeholder participation and consultation undertaken as well as its key findings;
Section 5: Design Proposals – presentation of the design proposals including uses and amount proposed, access arrangements, layout of the development, scale of buildings, landscaping treatments and appearance.
Section 6: Summary
- 1.6 This statement should be read in conjunction with the Outline Planning Application and its accompanying documents including the Planning Statement, Transport Statement, Travel Plan, Landscape Assessment and Flood Risk Assessment.



SITE LOCATION PLAN

2 ASSESSMENT

2.1 This section provides a summary of the assessment of the site and its surroundings that has been undertaken

PHYSICAL CONTEXT

2.2 Bloxham is a village located in northern Oxfordshire on the edge of the Cotswolds under the jurisdiction of Cherwell District Council. Bloxham is located approximately 5.5km to the south of Banbury, 40km north of Oxford and 53km west of Milton Keynes. The A361 Banbury Road runs through Bloxham approximately 80 metres to the east of the site.

2.3 Bloxham is a large village with 3,374 residents (2011 census). The A361 Banbury Road runs through the centre of Bloxham linking Chipping Norton and Banbury. The village is designated as a Conservation Area but the site lies just outside of this.

2.4 The site is approximately 1km from the centre of Bloxham where a number of day-to-day facilities and services are located. Bloxham has one primary school; Bloxham C of E and two secondary schools with sixth forms; Bloxham School and The Warriner School.

SITE'S IMMEDIATE CONTEXT

2.5 The Application site covers approximately 2.7ha and is located at the northern edge of Bloxham. It is bound by Ells Lane to the north, existing residential dwellings on Crab Tree Close to the east and open undeveloped land to the south and west.

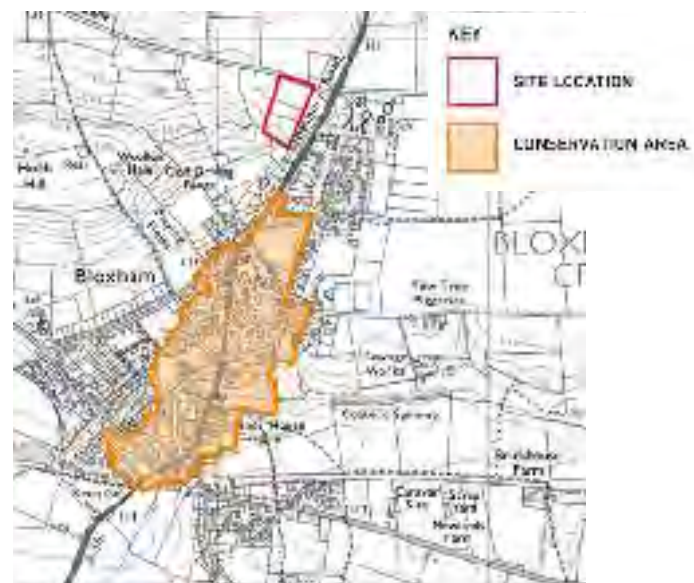
2.6 The site currently comprises two small scale field enclosures of agricultural pasture divided by the existing hedgerow vegetation.



VIEW LOOKING ONTO SITE FROM ELLS LANE



SITE FROM NORTH WEST CORNER



CONSERVATION AREA

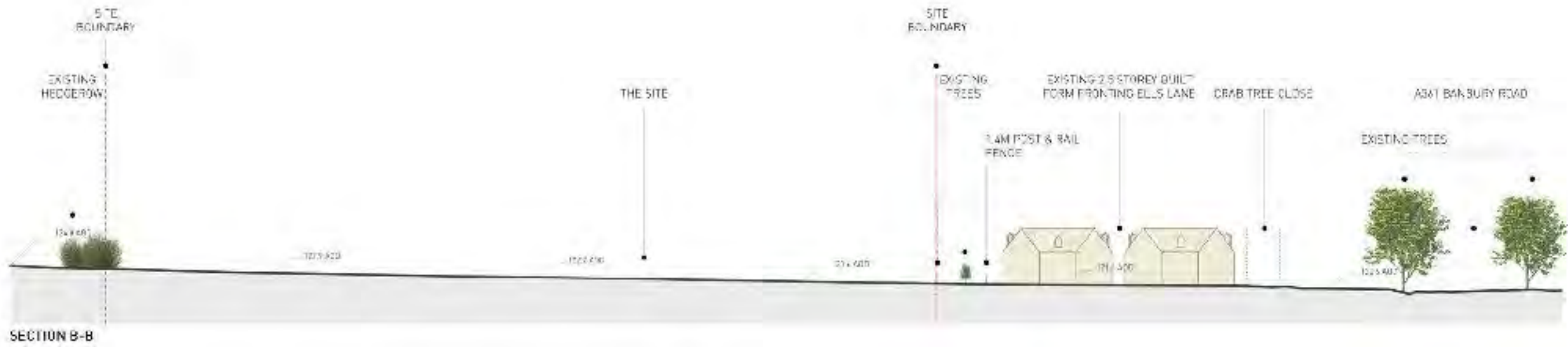
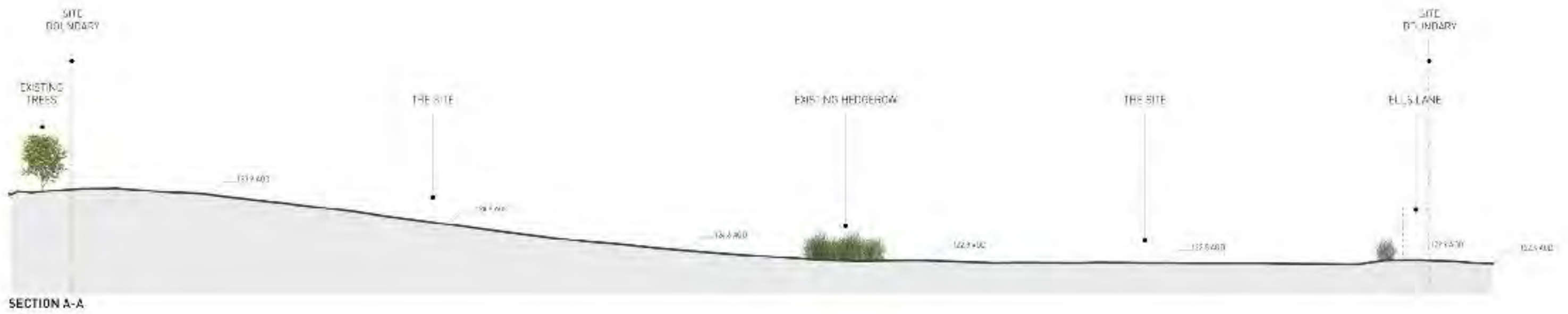
PHOTOS OF THE SITE



VIEW LOOKING ONTO NORTHERN BOUNDARY FROM ELLS LANE



LOOKING SOUTH OF THE SITE FROM CRAB TREE CLOSE



EXISTING SITE SECTIONS

LANDSCAPE & TOPOGRAPHY

- 2.7 The site falls from the south west to the north east. The highest point of the site situated at the south-western corner is 137m AOD; from here the landform starts to drop sharply towards the centre of the site and then continue to fall gently towards the north-eastern corner of the site where the lowest point of the site is formed at 122m AOD.
- 2.8 The site is bounded by dense and continuous vegetation along the northern and western boundaries. The southern boundary is formed by a small section of hedgerow on each end together with a few mature trees in the middle. The eastern boundary is defined by the timber railing that follows the edge of the residential units located off Crab Tree Close. Young planting exists adjacent to the timber railing, just outside of the site, which will establish over time creating a screen from the development. This principle could also be introduced to the western boundary to screen the development from the existing open space surrounding the site. The surrounding area includes extensive areas of mixed use agriculture.
- 2.9 The site and proposed development will be visible from a localised area only and where it will be seen, the highest degree of adverse effects are limited to the views on, or immediately adjacent to the site only. The following locations are where the proposed development will be seen:
- Looking west from private drive in Crab Tree Close
 - Looking south-west from Ells Lane
 - Looking south-east from field gate off Ells Lane.

SECTION
LOCATION PLAN





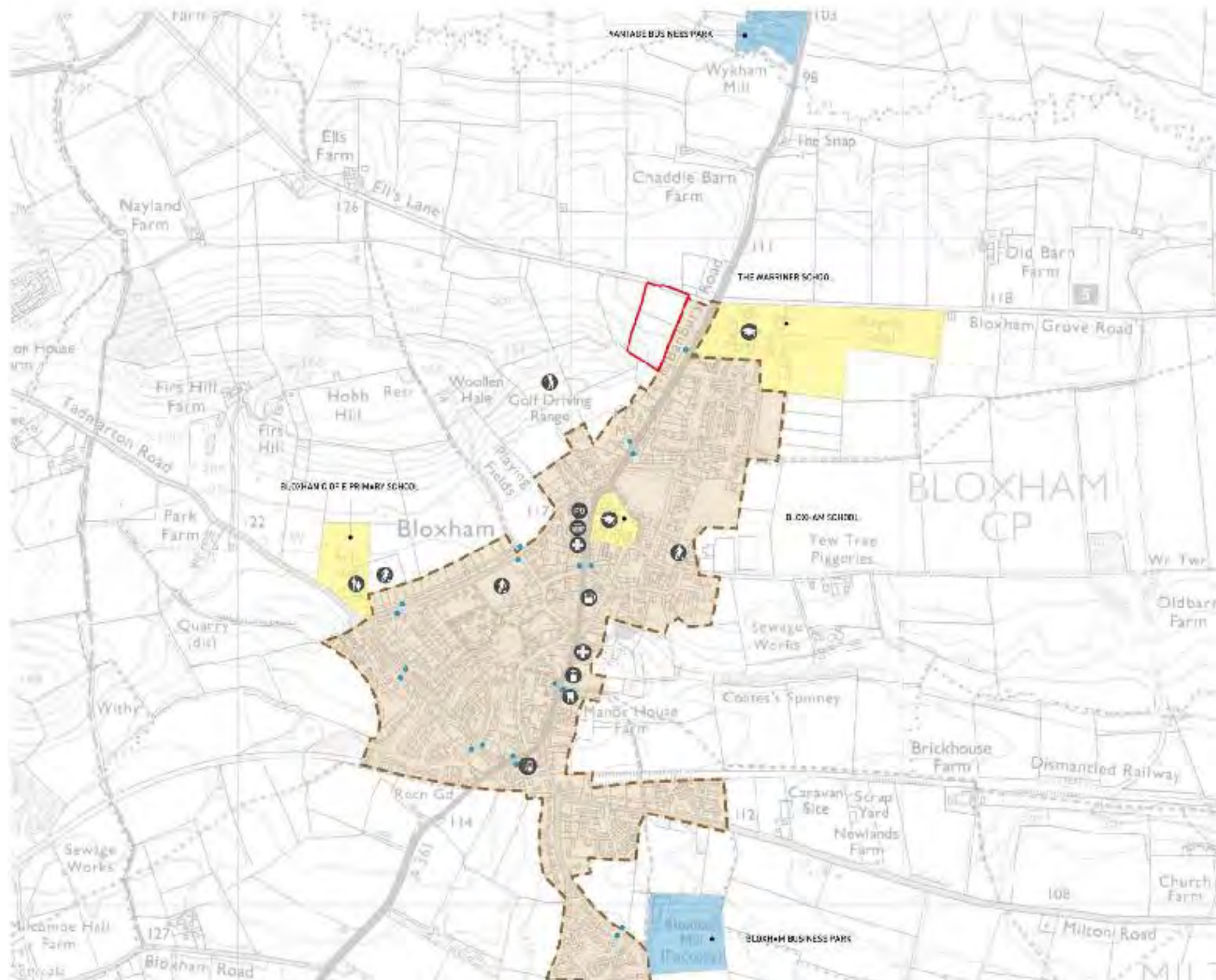
EXISTING MOVEMENT

CONNECTIONS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

- 2.10 Bloxham is strategically located off the A361 Banbury Road which serves as the major traffic route through Bloxham, connecting with Banbury to the north and Chipping Norton to the south. Bloxham is 8.5km from the M40.
- 2.11 The nearest railway station is at Banbury approximately 5.5km from the site. The railway station provides access to a range of services throughout the day to local and national destinations including London, Reading, Newcastle, Birmingham, Bournemouth, Manchester, Oxford, Edinburgh, Leeds and Southampton. Bus service 488/489 provides access to Banbury bus station with a journey time of approximately 12 minutes. Banbury bus station is approximately 400m or a 5 minute walk from the railway station.
- 2.12 The nearest bus stops to the site are on Banbury Road to the north of Chipperfield Park Road, approximately 350m walking distance from the centre of the site. Bus service 488/489 provides an hourly service from Monday to Saturday.

- 2.13 Whilst there are no Public Rights of Way which cross the site, there are several Public Right of Ways within Bloxham. The closest footpath is located within the residential development to the south-east of the site which reaches the village of Bodicote. A number of public footpaths provide short links between the centre of Bloxham village and the immediate landscape setting to the surrounding villages.
- 2.14 The National Cycle Route 5 runs along the shared footway/cycleway on Banbury Road, before heading along Bloxham Grove Road opposite Ells Lane. This provides a cycle connection to Banbury to the north and Oxford to the south.





- KEY**
- APPLICATION BOUNDARY
 - EXTENT OF EXISTING DEVELOPED AREA
 - EDUCATION
 - EMPLOYMENT
 - BUS STOP
 - POST OFFICE
 - DENTIST (BLOXHAM DENTAL PRACTICE)
 - HILLSIDE FARM GOLF DRIVING RANGE
 - PHARMACY/GP SURGERY
 - RECREATIONAL GROUND
 - CHURCH
 - PRIMARY SCHOOL (BLOXHAM C OF E)
 - SECONDARY SCHOOL (THE WARRINER, BLOXHAM SCHOOL)
 - PUBLIC HOUSE (THE BRIDGION)
 - CONVENIENCE STORE (THE CO-OPERATIVE)

LOCAL FACILITIES PLAN

FACILITIES AND SERVICES

- 2.15 The site is located approximately 1km from the centre of Bloxham where a number of day-to-day local services and facilities are located.
- 2.16 There are a few essential facilities located within short walking distances from the site. The Warriner Secondary School and Sixth form is located 240m from the entrance to the site. The nearest children's play area is located in Crab Tree Close, approximately 190m from the entrance to the site and the closest bus stop is approximately 280m from the entrance to the site.
- 2.17 Other facilities include; another secondary school with sixth forms, Bloxham School; a primary school, Bloxham C of E; Post Office; Cooperative Foodstore; Pharmacy; Village Hall; Petrol Station; Pub; Surgery and Dentist.
- 2.18 Further facilities are located 5.5km from the site in Banbury, including a number of large supermarkets, leisure facilities and a hospital.





SURROUNDING CHARACTER ANALYSIS

- 2.19 The development pattern of Bloxham village mainly consists of street facing development formed by buildings with a mix of gable and non-gable elevations. In the historic core of the settlement, the majority of the buildings were constructed from local natural stones.
- 2.20 During the post-war stage, there were a few developments composed by more modern building styles, street trees and front and rear gardens.
- 2.21 Existing development in the immediate proximity to the application site is residential and The Warriner secondary school and sixth form is approximately a 240m walking distance from the site.

Crab Tree Close

2.22 The site is located adjacent to the newly built residential development set in Crab Tree Close at the northern edge of Bloxham. Crab Tree Close is in parallel with the A361 but separated by a linear landscaped area creating a set back for the dwellings from the road.

2.23 The development predominantly consists of large detached dwellings fronting onto the A361 Banbury Road and the public domain. There are also some semi-detached and terraced dwellings. Approximately 50-60% of the dwellings are 2.5 storey, located on the northern and central areas of the development.

2.24 Dwellings have pitched roofs with the majority of dwellings also having dormers. The built form is either built from red brick or Natural Ironstone reflecting the existing materials used in the local area. Stone headers and cills feature on all dwellings along with pitched entrance door canopies, stone corbelling and exposed rafter feet.

2.25 Corner turner buildings have been used throughout the development creating an active frontage. Bay windows are often used on these dwellings.

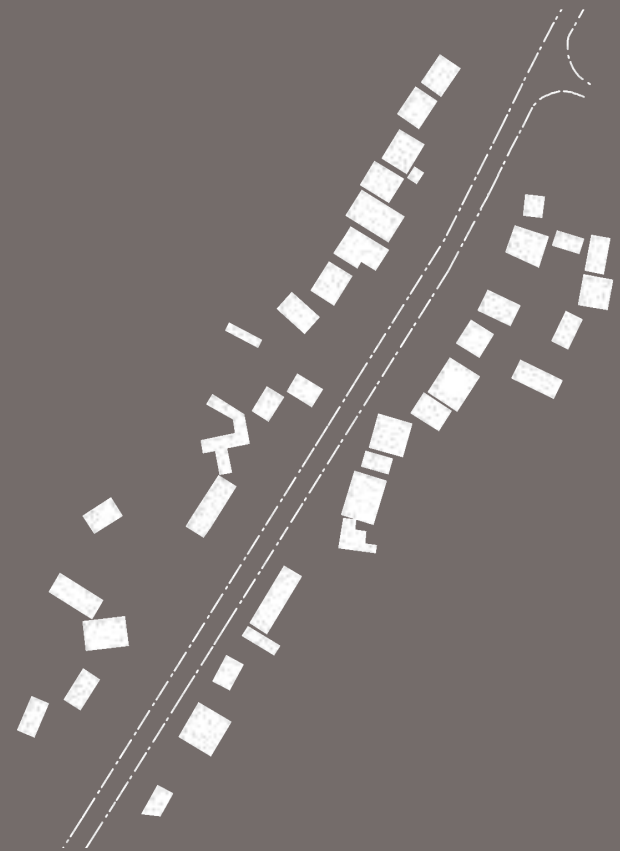
2.26 A Local Equipped Area of Play is provided in the centre of the development creating a central landscaped space. Surrounding 2.5 storey dwellings provide this space with natural surveillance.

- 2.27 Urban design principles and architectural details which could be used to inform the detailed design of the development proposals include:
- Clear building frontage lines, where buildings turn corners animation to both elevations is required, however it should be made clear through the detailing which is the principal elevation;
 - 2.5 storey dwellings front onto Ells Lane;
 - Chimneys, gables and dormer windows punctuate the roofscape; and
 - Decorative details such as clipped eaves, exposed rafter feet and corbelling also contribute to the animation of the streetscape.



A361 Banbury Road

- 2.28 Dwellings are located to both sides of Banbury Road. The building line is predominantly consistent with the occasional dwelling set back further from the adoptable highway. Dwellings along Banbury Road generally have driveways to the front.
- 2.29 Along Banbury Road, a variety of roof forms such as hips, pitches and gables create vertical interest to the street scene along with a variety of chimney styles. A variety of building heights can be seen along Banbury Road from 1 storey bungalows to 3 storey dwellings. Occasional bay windows and contrasting brick quoins add interest to the street scene.
- 2.30 Private boundaries are typically defined by the use of either brick walls, railings or picket fences.
- 2.31 A recent small infill development is located along Banbury Road which consists of a similar architectural style to the dwellings off Crab Tree Close.
- 2.32 Urban design principles and architectural details which could be used to inform the detailed design of the development proposals include:
 - Varied roof forms are further punctuated by gable fronts and chimneys;
 - Private front amenity areas incorporate on-plot parking provision alongside soft landscaping to aid in creating a varied and active street scene; and
 - Contrasting brick details and occasional bay windows are used to animate dwellings.



Chipperfield Park Road & Surrounding Streets

- 2.33 To the south-east of the application site there are residential properties along Chipperfield Park Road, Colegrave Road, Lawrence Keys and Strawberry Hill. These dwellings are all of a similar age and architectural style.
- 2.34 The building line is consistent in this area and includes a uniform set back distance from the back edge of the public domain. These front amenity areas provide on plot parking provision for the dwellings along with areas of soft landscaping. Dwellings tend to have open front gardens or low level planting to define the boundary between private and public domain.
- 2.35 Dwellings have pitched roofs with a concrete roof tile and either Red or Buff brick to the walls.





- KEY**
-  APPLICATION BOUNDARY
 -  THE WARRINER SECONDARY SCHOOL & SIXTH FORM (APPROX. 240M WALKING DISTANCE FROM THE SITE)
 -  CONTOURS (0.5M)
 -  EXISTING VEGETATION (SUBJECT TO DETAILED SURVEY)
 -  EXISTING DEVELOPMENT
 -  RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ADJACENT TO SITE
 -  VEHICULAR ACCESS
 -  EXISTING OPEN VIEW THROUGH DEVELOPMENT
 -  OPPORTUNITY TO FRONT ONTO 'ELLS LANE' AND ADJACENT LAND
 -  PEDESTRIAN LINK
 -  LANDSCAPE BUFFER TO REFLECT THE ADJACENT RECENT DEVELOPMENT
 -  CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA (APPROX. 190M WALKING DISTANCE FROM THE SITE)

CONSTRAINTS & OPPORTUNITIES PLAN

CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 2.36 The constraints and opportunities presented by the site are utilised to inform and structure the development proposals. These are outlined below and illustrated, where appropriate, on the Constraints and Opportunities Plan shown opposite.

CONSTRAINTS

- EXISTING HEDGEROWS AND TREES WHICH FORM THE EXISTING GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ON AND AROUND THE SITE;
- THE DIRECT VIEWS OF THE SITE FROM THE DWELLINGS LOCATED IN CRAB TREE CLOSE;
- PROTECTION OF THE ADJACENT RESIDENTIAL AMENITY;
- THE SITE'S LOCATION ADJACENT TO OPEN SPACE AREAS AND NECESSITY TO CREATE AN APPROPRIATE BUILT FORM EDGE; AND
- THE MORE OPEN VIEWS ACROSS AND INTO THE SITE, PARTICULARLY FROM LOCAL ROADS LOCATED AT THE HIGHER GROUND ON THE NORTHERN VALLEY SLOPE.

OPPORTUNITIES

- THE SITE IS CONTAINED BY THE TOPOGRAPHY, BUILT FORM AND VEGETATION FROM THE WEST, SOUTH AND EAST. THIS WILL OFFER ADDITIONAL SCREENING OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT;
- THE NORTHERN FIELD THAT IS LOWER-LYING LANDFORM COULD BE CONSIDERED AS MAIN AREA FOR DEVELOPMENT;
- THE PROXIMITY OF THE SITE TO THE EXISTING BUILT EDGE OF BLOXHAM;
- MAINTAIN VIEWS BETWEEN CRAB TREE CLOSE AND THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT;
- POTENTIAL TO EXPLORE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR A PEDESTRIAN LINK BETWEEN CRAB TREE CLOSE AND THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT;
- DWELLINGS SHOULD FRONT ONTO ELLS LANE AND THE ADJACENT OPEN SPACE;
- CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA LOCATED WITHIN A 190M WALKING DISTANCE FROM THE SITE; AND
- THE WARRINER SECONDARY SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM LOCATED WITHIN A 240M WALKING DISTANCE FROM THE SITE.

DESIGN RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

- 2.37 Government guidance in the form of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and a core principle in support of this is to:
- “Always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings”**
para 17, point 4, NPPF 2012.
- 2.38 National Planning Policy Framework (Section 7: requiring good design) sets out the Government’s commitment to good design:
- “The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.”**
- “It is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes.”**
para. 56 & 57, NPPF 2012.

- 2.39 Section 7 of the NPPF, seeks to promote more sustainable development by requiring developers to address the following:
- Add to the overall quality of the area;
 - Establish a strong sense of place;
 - Optimise the use of land and placing an importance on high quality design;
 - Respond to the local character and history;
 - Create safe and accessible environments; and
 - Are visually attractive with good architecture and appropriate landscaping.
- 2.40 However, the NPPF goes on to state at paragraph 59 that:
- “Planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles of particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirement to conform to certain development forms or styles. It is however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness”.**

- 2.41 **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 4: Promoting Sustainable Transport**, recognises that transport policies have an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development and also in contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives. Smarter use of technologies can reduce the need to travel. The transport system needs to be balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes, giving people a real choice about how they travel. However, the Government recognises that different policies and measures will be required in different communities and opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary from urban to rural areas. Of particular note is paragraph 38 where larger scale residential developments are encouraged to promote a mix of uses on site for the day-to-day needs of the community.
- 2.42 **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 8: Promoting healthier communities**, recognises that access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.

2.43 National guidance in the form of Planning Practice Guidance, published in March 2014 further reinforces the NPPF’s commitment to requiring good design by stating:
“Achieving good design is about creating places, buildings, or spaces that work well for everyone, look good, last well, and will adapt to the needs of future generations.

Good design responds in a practical and creative way to both the function and identity of a place”
 para 001, Planning Practice Guidance, March 2014.

2.44 Whilst the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the subsequent publication of Planning Policy Guidance (March 2014) has replaced the Planning Policy Statements the following design guidance documents are still relevant to creating good design:

- Safer Places – The Planning System and Crime Prevention (ODPM, 2004);
- Manual for Streets 1 & 2 (DOT/DCLG 2007/2010);
- Building for Life 12 (Cabe at the Design Council, Design for Homes and the Home Builders Federation, 2012) and
- Design at Access Statements – How to write, read and use them (CABE 2006).

LOCAL DESIGN GUIDANCE

- 2.45 The development proposals have been formulated having due regard to the Supplementary Planning and Design Guidance.
- 2.46 The development plan for the proposed development comprises the following Core Policy Documents:
- Cherwell Local Plan ‘Saved’ Policies (November 1996)
- 2.47 Other material policy and guidance is contained within the following documents:
- Cherwell Local Plan Proposed Submission (August 2012); and
 - Non-Statutory Cherwell Local Plan 2011 (December 2004).





- 3.1 In line with National and Local Government Guidance and Policy, considerable importance has been placed on achieving a high standard of design across the site. The application of urban design objectives will ensure a high quality layout is achieved whilst the identification of the constraints and opportunities will ensure that the proposals are sensitively assimilated on the site and into the surrounding landscape and urban fabric. Successful urban design is dependent upon achieving an appropriate relationship between community needs, development principles, development form and a positive response to local conditions.
- 3.2 The masterplan has evolved through the application of the development principles and through consultation with the project team. The diagram opposite shows the design principles.
- 3.3 The principles which have been developed in order to steer the design of the new community have been derived from the site assessment in conjunction with the delivery of a high quality development which achieves the criteria set out within the NPPF, namely:



3 DESIGN PRINCIPLES

FUNCTION AND QUALITY

“Developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development” paragraph 58, point 1, NPPF 2012.

- New development provides the opportunity to establish a distinctive identity to a place which, whilst having its own character, integrates with the surrounding built form and landscape context;
- Retention of the existing landscape features on the site;
- Establish a distinctive identity through well-designed spaces and built form; and
- Minimise the impact of the development on the open countryside and surrounding context.

QUALITY OF PUBLIC REALM

“Developments will establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit” paragraph 58, point 2, NPPF 2012.

- Provision of a clear hierarchy of connected spaces and places, including streets, accessible by a variety of users which consider the design of the space as well as its function as a movement corridor;
- Integration of existing and proposed landscape features in order to soften the built form, particularly towards the countryside edge of the development;
- Creation of a clearly defined public realm through variations in enclosure of private spaces; and
- Control of access to private areas, particularly rear gardens.

ACCESSIBILITY

“Developments optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public spaces as part of developments) and support local facilities and transport networks” paragraph 58, point 3, NPPF 2012.

- Convenient, safe and direct access for all residents to Ells Lane;
- Maximisation of the opportunities for alternative modes of transport to the car particularly walking, cycling and bus travel; and
- Creation of a clear movement hierarchy providing easily recognisable routes which balances the street as a space alongside its function as a movement corridor.

RESPONSE TO CONTEXT

“Developments will respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surrounding and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation” paragraph 58, point 4, NPPF 2012.

- Integration of the development into the existing built form fabric particularly in relation to scale, height and massing;
- Respond to the existing site topography including the consideration of views in and out of the site;
- Retention of the existing landscape features and habitats on the site; and
- Protection of existing and proposed residential amenity through the use of frontage development thereby enclosing rear gardens.

SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE ENVIRONMENTS

“Developments create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion” paragraph 58, point 5, NPPF 2012.

- Creation of a clearly defined public realm through the provision of continuous building frontage lines and variations in enclosure of private spaces; and
- Control of access to private areas, particularly rear gardens and parking courts.

A PLACE FOR EVERYONE

- Creation of a development which allows ease of movement for all types of users and provides equal employment, social, community, leisure and retail activity opportunities for all; and
- Consideration of the proposals in relation to the location of the buildings on the site, gradients, and the relationship between various uses and transport infrastructure, particularly for those with disabilities.

SUSTAINABILITY

- Provision of a range of house types, tenures and sizes in order to cater for choice and a variety of households;
- Provision of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems as part of the flood mitigation proposals;
- In-built ‘robustness’ – the ability of the development, including individual buildings, to adapt to changes such as use, lifestyle and demography over time; and
- Make efficient use of land through proposing a development with an appropriate density.



- KEY**
- APPLICATION BOUNDARY
 - CONTOURS (0.5M)
 - EXISTING VEGETATION (SUBJECT TO DETAILED SURVEY)
 - EXISTING DEVELOPMENT
 - RETAINED GREEN SPACE
 - SUSTAINABLE URBAN DRAINAGE
 - PROPOSED TREES
 - RESIDENTIAL EDGE
 - LOCATION OF LOCAL AREA OF PLAY IF REQUIRED
 - VIEWS THROUGH FROM ADJACENT RESIDENTIAL AREAS
 - EXPLORE POTENTIAL FOR PEDESTRIAN LINK



ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN

04 DESIGN PROPOSALS

USE & AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT

4.1 (The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 states that "amount" means (a) the number of proposed units for residential use).

Residential - up to 30 dwellings (Class C3)

4.2 The development achieves an average net density of 37 dwellings per hectare (dph) when excluding the southern field and Sustainable Urban Drainage area. Overall the density results in the efficient use of the site whilst at the same time promoting densities which are appropriate to the local area and which will help assimilate the development into the surrounding areas.

4.3 The density will also allow for a range of dwellings across the site with varying sizes and tenures in order to accommodate a variety of household types. This will provide a hierarchy of dwellings from large detached properties with larger plots through to smaller terraced forms allowing for a variety in the proposed streetscape.

Affordable Housing

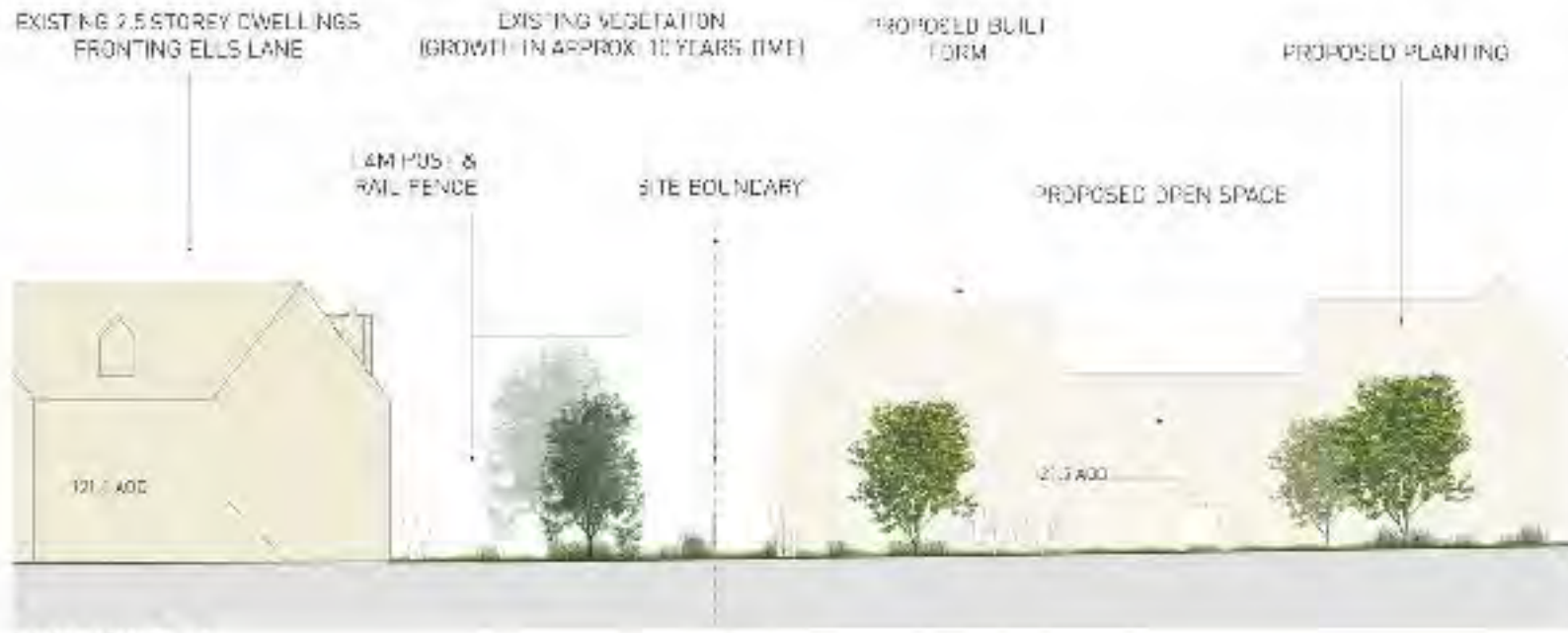
4.4 An element of affordable housing will be provided within the development as a mixture of rent and intermediate (tenures to be agreed).

Public Open Space and Green Infrastructure

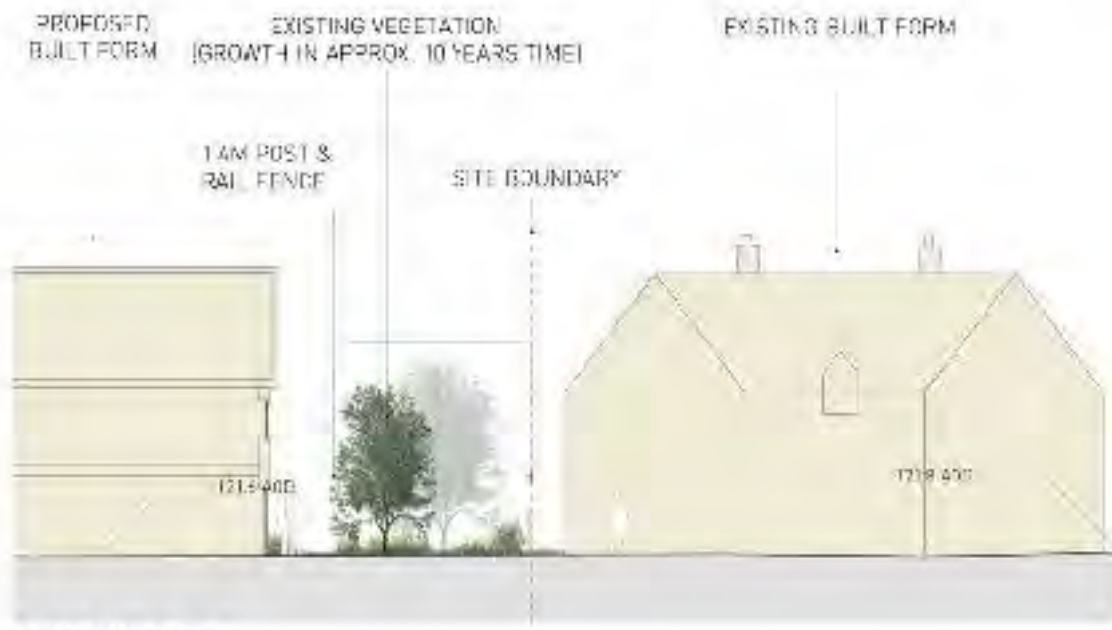
4.5 Residential built form will be set back from Ells Lane providing front gardens to dwellings fronting onto Ells Lane. The north-eastern corner of the site provides an area for Sustainable Urban Drainage due to low level ground. This area could provide an area of public open space also benefiting the neighbouring residential area along Crab Tree Close.

4.6 If required, a local area of play could be located in the existing pastoral field at the southern part of the site, in a suitably accessible location which is subject of good natural surveillance. The southern field will be retained as open land.





SECTION A-A



SECTION B-B

PROPOSED SITE SECTIONS



SECTION LOCATION PLAN

LAYOUT

- 4.7 The layout comprises an arrangement of three development blocks whose configuration allows the natural surveillance of streets and open spaces whilst at the same time maintains security for rear garden areas.
- 4.8 Dwellings located on the northern and southern edges of the built development are likely to front onto Ells Lane and the open space. It is suggested that these dwellings could have small front gardens to allow the opportunity for soft landscaping to soften the edge of the development.
- 4.9 We have considered the orientation of dwellings, particularly to the east of the development where dwellings follow the existing building line off Crab Tree Close to allow views between the development and Crab Tree Close.
- 4.10 The open space in the north-eastern corner is proposed for the Sustainable Urban Drainage and provides a set back to Ells Lane, whilst also protecting the amenity space of the dwellings on Crab Tree Close.

PROPOSED MOVEMENT AND ACCESS

- 4.11 Vehicular access is proposed to be provided via a new priority junction with Ells Lane, approximately 90 meters west of the junction with Crab Tree Close. Ells Lane has a carriageway approximately 3.4m wide along the site frontage. It is therefore proposed to widen the carriageway to 5.5m between Crab Tree Close and the proposed site access. In addition to the widening of the carriageway, it is proposed to provide a 1.2m wide footpath on the southern side of the carriageway between the site access and Crab Tree Close. This footpath will provide pedestrians with a continuous footway between the development site, Bloxham village centre and via a controlled crossing, the Warriner School.
- 4.12 In order to necessitate the provision of the site entrance, a section of the existing hedgerow will be removed.

- 4.13 The Indicative Masterplan shows the disposition of land uses and the proposed structure for movement within the development. A well connected movement network, accessible by all users, is proposed which helps ensure that all areas of the development are easy to navigate, safe and secure. The movement hierarchy clearly defines the main routes and helps achieve a permeable layout. The hierarchy recognises the need to combine the function of the street as a movement corridor alongside its place function. The importance of each of the street types in terms of its movement and place function varies within the hierarchy. Streets are defined by the building layout, so that buildings rather than roads dominate.
- 4.14 The development proposals have been influenced by "Manual for Streets 1 & 2" which encourages designers to move away from standardized prescriptive measures and adopt a more innovative approach in order to create high quality places for all users, ages and abilities.

PROPOSED SITE ACCESS





- KEY
-  VEHICULAR ACCESS
 -  STREETS
 -  PEDESTRIAN LINK
 -  EXPLORE POTENTIAL FOR PEDESTRIAN LINK

MOVEMENT HEIRACHY PLAN

FOOTPATHS AND CYCLEWAYS

- 4.15 The location of the site close to the established community and close to public transport is a positive characteristic. Safe and convenient routes through the site, particularly for those people with disabilities, require a fundamental understanding of the elements required to achieve inclusive access and should be used to inform the detailed design proposals.
- 4.16 The development of a pedestrian/cycle network within the site and the potential for connection to any future off-site network will allow users of all ages and abilities to move safely and conveniently between all points of the development and surrounding facilities.
- 4.17 The following measures to provide accessibility by foot and cycle are proposed:
- Provision of pedestrian/cycle links through the site;
 - Internal road layout design to ensure low traffic speeds. The design will promote safe walking and high permeability through the site, and limit potential for anti-social behaviour;
 - Particular attention to be paid to surface quality, and sufficient 'overlook' to provide a sense of safety and security for users; and
 - Appropriate signage and crossing points of roads through the development, to include dropped kerbs, tactile paving and guardrails as appropriate.

- 4.18 Pedestrians are led into the site from well-lit links created between existing and proposed residential areas including the new recreation area to the north east of the site. All pedestrian links will be suitable for use by disabled people. There is potential to explore a pedestrian link between the site and the adjacent residential development off Crab Tree Close.
- 4.19 Cycle use is encouraged through the high degree of permeability within the layout. With traffic movement low within this phase due to dwelling numbers, cyclists will therefore find it safe and convenient to use the streets for cycling.

PARKING

- 4.20 Parking should be designed in line with the standards set out by Cherwell District Council. The standards set out the principles of allocated and unallocated spaces. It includes related space dimensions, parking layout and general street design issue.
- 4.21 The majority of allocated parking will be provided on-plot and is generally located to the side or front of dwellings within an individual parking bay and/or garage set just back from the building line to allow ease of access to dwellings.

SCALE AND DENSITY

- 4.22 As previously stated, the development proposals achieve an average density of approximately 37dph which accords with Government guidance on ensuring the efficient use of land, yet is reflective of the scale of the local area.
- 4.23 As discussed, a variety of house types, tenures and sizes are provided which will assist in creating a balanced community as a variety of households can be accommodated thereby minimising the potential of social exclusion.

BUILDING HEIGHTS AND MASSING

- 4.24 The height and massing of the proposed development could vary across the site according to the nature of the public realm to be created. There could be 2.5 storey dwellings fronting onto Ells Lane and occasionally in key locations to provide distinctiveness in the street scene.
- 4.25 In terms of a variety in the heights and massing of the residential buildings, this is achieved through the use of a range of house types and sizes ranging from smaller units to 3-5 bedroom detached houses.



BUILDING HEIGHTS PLAN

APPEARANCE

- 4.26 Following an assessment of Crab Tree Close and its environs, distinctive spaces, materials and details have been identified that can be incorporated into the detailed design of the new development. This will ensure the urban design and architectural response of the proposal reflects the immediate surroundings.
- 4.27 The appearance of the units fronting onto Ells Lane and the open space is particularly important as they should continue the character through from the adjacent newly built development on Crab Tree Close.

ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

- 4.28 In order to reflect the distinctive and high quality architecture of Bloxham, it is proposed that the detailed designs, once they occur, should feature the following Architectural components:
 - The inclusion of chimneys, especially on key buildings;
 - The inclusion of dormer windows and gable fronts, to provide interest to the roofscape and greater presence within the street scene; and
 - The occasional use of bay windows to the ground floor of dwellings, particularly on corner turner units.

MATERIALS PALETTE

- 4.29 Materials used for the construction of the proposed dwellings should reflect those found within Crab Tree Close. It is proposed that the walls of the dwellings to be finished in a combination of Ironstone or brick. It is suggested that Ironstone should predominantly be used on dwellings fronting onto Ells Lane to continue the character through from the dwellings on Crab Tree Close.





LEGEND

-  Site boundary
-  Contours
-  Existing vegetation to be retained
-  Existing pond to be retained
-  Existing roads
-  Potential access point
-  Potential footpath link
-  Potential development envelope
-  Proposed landscape buffer planting
-  Potential area for public open space
-  Potential green corridors and green infrastructure connections

LANDSCAPE STRATEGY PLAN

LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

- 4.30 Landscape design is a key component for creating a successful development at Ells Lane. The green spaces are an integral part of the place and create a strong landscape structure across the site. The new green infrastructure has been a driving factor in the creation of new routes and spaces within the masterplan and the landscape helps to further define the public and private space whilst adding colour, water and seasonal interest to the residential environment.
- 4.31 The following landscape principles are advised to be incorporated into the development proposals:
- Retention of the existing boundary vegetation and enhancement through infill planting and on-going maintenance programme;
 - Retention of the existing pastoral field at the southern part of the site;
 - Create a planting buffer on the western boundary to screen the development from the surrounding open space;
 - Additional planting across the site, but particularly along the northern edge of the site and along the western edge in alignment with the existing field boundary vegetation;
 - A set back of the built form from Ells Lane which will provide sufficient space to create a robust and meaningful area of green infrastructure and open space;
 - A set back of the development envelope from the western boundary to accommodate additional strategic landscaping to create a strong landscaped edge to the site and to integrate with the adjacent open space; and
 - A small area of public open space towards the north eastern corner of the site to provide connections with the wider green infrastructure network.

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

- 4.32 The presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the planning system as government drives legislative change through the Localism Act 2011 and subsequently through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Local Policy Frameworks. Resolution 24/187 of the United Nations General Assembly define sustainable development as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED Report " Our Common Future" (1987)) and is captured within the NPPF. As set out within paragraph 6 of the NPPF, "the policies in paragraphs 18 to 210, taken as a whole, constitute the Government's view of what sustainable development in England means in practice for the planning system. The NPPF goes on to describe a presumption in favour of sustainable development should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan making and decision taking.

ADAPTABILITY

- 4.33 The development should be flexible enough to respond to future changes in use, lifestyle and demography. This means creating flexibility in the use of property, public spaces and service infrastructure and introducing new approaches to transportation, traffic management and parking. The development should therefore be flexible in order to accommodate future changes of use and circumstances through evolving social, technological and economic conditions.

SUSTAINABLE BUILDING TECHNIQUES

- 4.34 Where appropriate, sustainable building construction techniques will be used in line with current building regulations. Sustainable construction measures typically comprise a combination of the following:
- Improved energy efficiency through siting, design and orientation;
 - Water conservation measures;
 - Considering fabric efficiency in the design of buildings;
 - Use of building materials capable of being recycled; and
 - An element of construction waste reduction or recycling.

From: Keith Janes

Address [REDACTED]

I regard the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan as providing for a sustainable way forward for development in the village as long as it is followed. Specifically I support the following:

BL1 - This recognises the existing permissions for major developments in Bloxham and I support BL1 as this accepts the Local Plan requirement for the category A and B, (ie. 35 villages), to provide 1504 new dwellings and guarantees Bloxham's contribution to this. Bloxham has grown significantly over the last 15 years and the Neighbour Plan for the village matches what can be achieved by the attainable infrastructure.

BL2 - I support this policy as it recommends further development must be of a minor nature. Future developments must be within a sustainable infrastructure that is achievable for schools, drainage, utility supplies and traffic management, and the current inadequate pedestrian pavements which fail to provide safe access, for all, to village facilities and services. There has been no upgrade by the local authorities to pavements, now a safety hazard because of volume of people and traffic, or roads that reflects the dramatic increase in traffic on the A361 in recent years and the situation at school times is desperate; this not sustainability

BL4 - I support this policy as it seeks to address the need for adequate parking on new developments as cars are essential for residents of Bloxham to access services and jobs. Bloxham is reliant on the car as shown in the Parish Plan Report of 2010; very few people use public transport to access jobs and services. The existing bus links are tenuous and do not provide access to the jobs on the industrial estates in Banbury or to recreational facilities, or to the railway station, in a coherent manner. The recently announced cuts in public transport in Oxfordshire can only increase use of the car.

BL6 - I support this policy as people have little opportunity to downsize and remain in Bloxham.

BL10 - I support this policy. The recommendations of the Conservation Area Appraisal Document , produced at considerable expense by Cherwell District Council, must be adhered to.

BL11 - I support this policy to respect and protect the historic nature of the Conservation Area

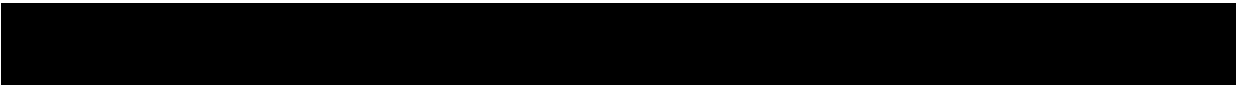
BL12 - I support this policy as open spaces and green spaces are part of the rural village and they should be retained.

BL17-19 - I support these policies as the village has outgrown the existing facilities. There has been a lack of planning obligations from new developments in Bloxham, over recent years, to extend or provide for recreation and sport facilities in Bloxham, particularly for young adults. Where money was available it has not been spent to the benefit of Bloxham, as facilities in Banbury are not accessible in Banbury at weekends using public transport. This reinforces BL4 in how Bloxham is reliant on car travel. Bloxham has a vibrant football club, and although identified some years ago no additional pitches have been provided for so teams have to play elsewhere using car travel.. It is therefore imperative that the recreation and green spaces that Bloxham has, referred to in BL12, are retained.

END

Dear Sirs

I reside and work in Bloxham.
Mrs Christine Joan Chittenden



I feel very strongly that there will be a detrimental effect upon the rural village environment if the following are not incorporated. Large numbers of poorly and dangerously illegally parked cars are spoiling our attractive village.

Policy No. BL19

....including a substantial car park to accommodate spectators as well as day-to-day school drop-off traffic to minimise the worsening impact of traffic through the village, near-by residents and businesses.

Policy No. BL9

...access to in-villages of places. Pressure on availability should be addressed by the expansion of the school with appropriate provision of parking for staff and parents to release areas within the school, currently used for staff cars, for use by children, and to limit the danger to pupils of ad hoc parking around the school.

I do hope that these will be seriously taken into consideration

Yours sincerely Christine Chittenden

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DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

**Cherwell District Council
Public Notice
Publication of Plan Proposal
Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2031**

Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, Regulation 16

Localism Act 2011

The proposal

Bloxham Parish Council has prepared a Neighbourhood Development Plan for its parish. The Plan proposes planning policies to be used in the determination of planning applications locally.

Where the plan may be inspected

The Plan and accompanying documents can be viewed on Cherwell District Council's website <http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning/index.cfm?articleid=10998>

Copies will be available for public inspection at Cherwell District Council Offices, Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA from 8.45am – 5.15pm and at Bloxham Mill Business Centre, Barford Road, Bloxham, Banbury, OX15 4FF from 8.30am – 3.45pm, Monday - Friday.

How to make representations

Any person or organisation may comment on the Plan or supporting documents. Comments can be made by completing a response form, which can be downloaded from Cherwell District Council's website (via the link above) and sent by email to planning.policy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk or post to Cherwell District Council Offices, Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury OX15 4AA.

Please note that all representations will be publicly available and will be forwarded for consideration by the person appointed to carry out an examination of the Plan.

The publicity period runs from **Friday 27 November 2015** until **Friday 22 January 2016**. The statutory period has been extended by two weeks to allow for the holiday period. Representations received after 5pm on 22 January 2016 may not be considered.

If you would like to be notified of the Council's decision under Regulation 19 (making a plan) to make the submitted neighbourhood development plan, please state this in your representation.

S. SMITH, CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Neighbourhood Plan



Consultation Main Statement

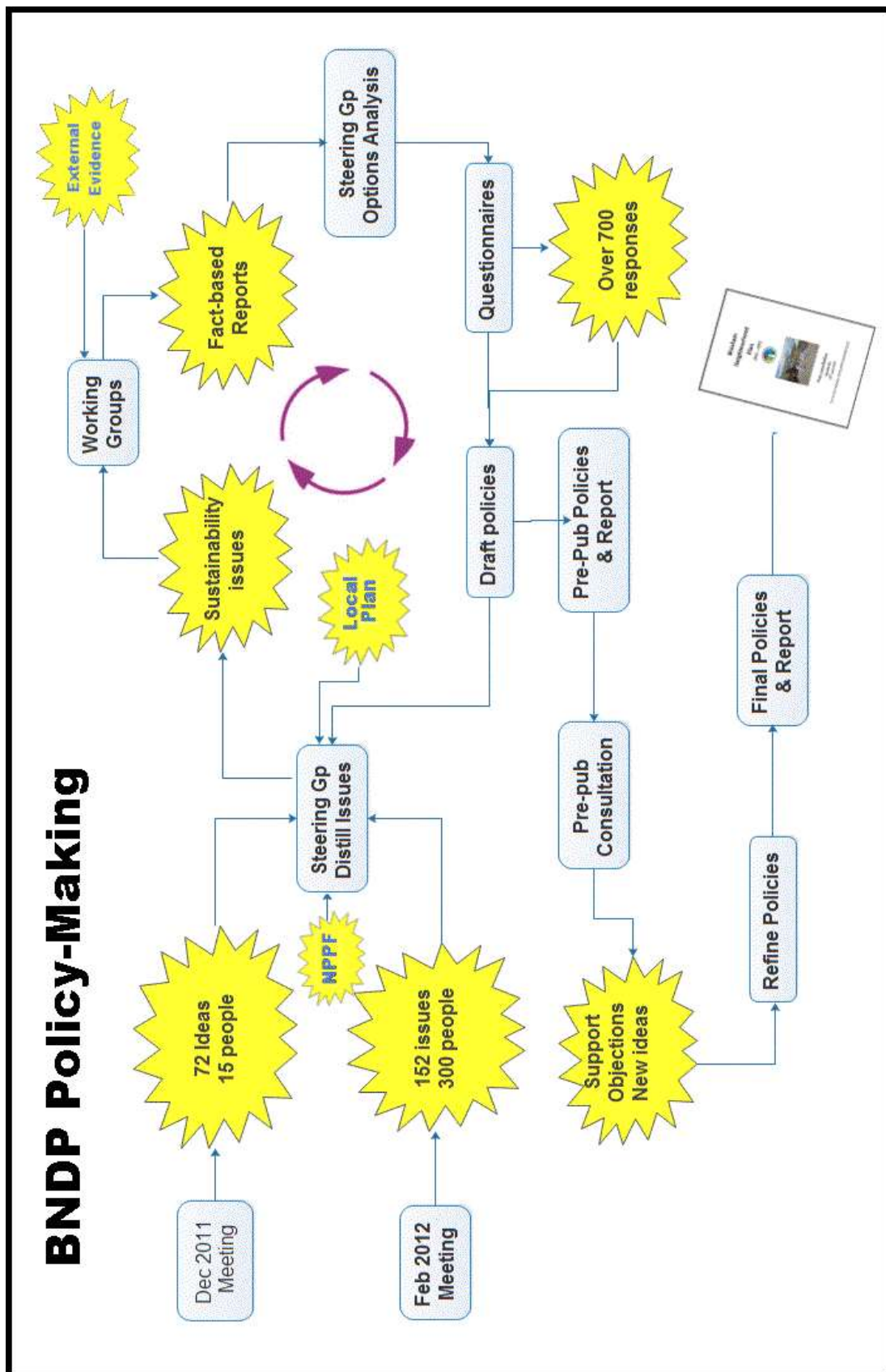


Submission Version
19th Nov 2015

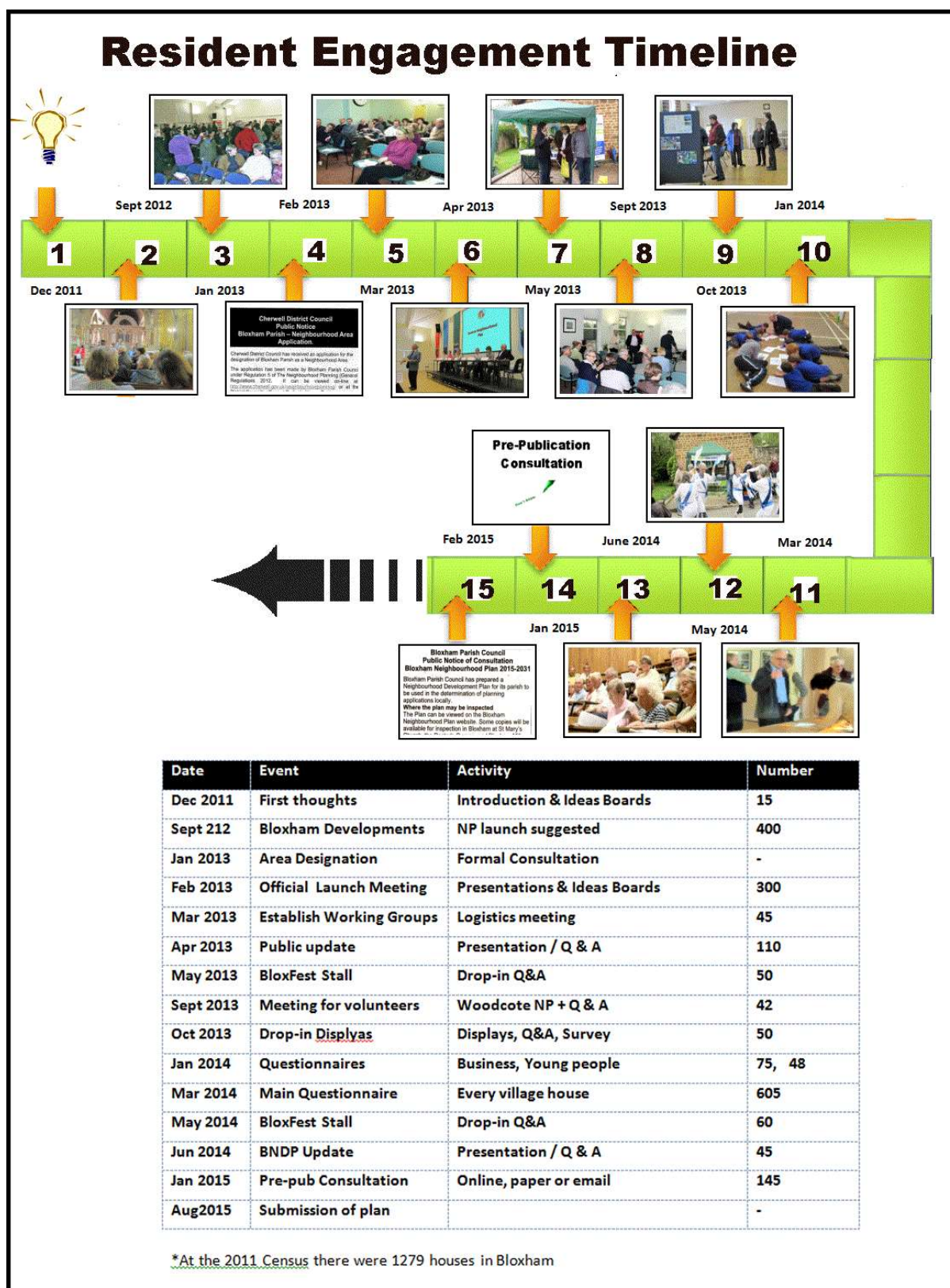
Contents

1. SUMMARY OF PLAN-MAKING PROCESS	3
2. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT	4
3. INTRODUCTION	5
A. THE CONSULTATION PROCESS	5
1. Meetings open to all	5
2. Working groups and steering group	5
3. Questionnaires	5
4. Media	6
4. DIARY OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	6
5. SUMMARY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS	7
6. THE PRE-PUBLICATION CONSULTATION	9
A. NATIONAL CONSULTEES	9
B. LOCAL COUNCILS ETC.	9
C. LOCAL SERVICES	10
D. DEVELOPERS	10
E. INDIVIDUALS	10
F. LOCAL VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS	10
G. LOCAL BUSINESSES	10
7. OUTLINE OF THE PRE-PUBLICATION CONSULTATION	11
A. THE FORMS	11
B. THE RESPONSE METHOD	11
8. COMMENTS FROM THE PRE-PUBLICATION CONSULTATION	12
A. COMMENTS SUPPORTING THE PLAN	12
B. COMMENTS ADDING TO THE PLAN	12
C. COMMENTS ASSERTING THE BNDP POLICIES ARE INVALID	13
10. APPENDICES:	16
APPENDIX1: DETAILED PRE-SUBMISSION CONSULTATION COMMENTS	16
APPENDIX 2: DETAILED DIARY OF ENGAGEMENT	16

1. Summary of Plan-making Process



2. Summary of Public Engagement



3. Introduction

The Plan, which covers the period to 2031, builds upon the Parish Plan and has been prepared by the accountable body – Bloxham Parish Council. They have been assisted by the Bloxham Neighbourhood Development Plan Group (BNDPG), comprising volunteers drawn from the residents of the Parish. It is based upon extensive research and robust engagement with the local community.¹

a. The consultation process

This plan has been the subject of extensive consultation. Broadly via four types of activity:

1. Meetings open to all stakeholders;
2. Meetings of working groups and steering group;
3. Questionnaires;
4. Media coverage via the village magazine, websites, and the local newspaper.

1. Meetings open to all

These events are set out in more detail in the N.P. Consultation diary². They ranged from formal meetings through to an informal presence at events such as BloxFest or Parish Council' drop-ins'. The degree of formality with which views were gathered tended to parallel the nature of the event. What remained remarkably constant were the issues residents wished to talk about. Bloxham consists almost entirely of people of UK origin. We did not collect demographic data but photographs of many events show a wide range of ages present. We also know that at the larger meetings just about every geographical area of the village was well represented.

2. Working groups and steering group

The Steering Group set the agenda for working groups and monitored the progress of the plan. There were also three Working Groups:

- i. Housing and landscape;
- ii. Infrastructure and business;
- iii. Recreation and leisure.

The Working Groups were tasked with contributing to identifying issues and concerns and then developing a factual evidence base pertinent to them. They also, to varying extents, offered suggestions intended to inform policy-making by the Steering Group.

The resulting reports run to almost 500 pages of fully referenced data. You can access these from the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan website.³

Given the rate of ongoing development in Bloxham, it was always understood that these reports would be "living documents" updated as new evidence became available and that this would continue to be the case up to the point that the Plan was formally submitted.

3. Questionnaires

These offer the hard-edged evidence of resident engagement.

We draw upon the findings of four separate questionnaires listed below.

Statistical analysis of the NP Main Questionnaire indicates we can have a very high degree of confidence in its findings.



NP Main Questionnaire	March – April 2014	601	45%
NP Business Questionnaire	Jan – April 2014	76	31%
NP Young person's Questionnaire	Jan – April 2014	57	unknown
Parish Plan Questionnaire	July 2010	909	71%

¹ We also acknowledge Tony Burton's consultancy advice and Clare B Wright's NPIERS Health-check.

² [BNDP Website – Key Documents](#)

³ [BNDP Reports](#)

A number of additional small-scale questionnaires were used at ‘drop-in’ events. They showed a high degree of consistency with the findings of the main questionnaire.

4. Media

- A special website was set up called Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan to provide access to shared documents. Total usage at the time of writing is around 19,000 page-loads.
- Updates were also regularly posted on the Bloxham Broadsheet website which gets around 40,000 page-loads per annum.
- Paper-based – information appeared in the Banbury Guardian villages column and in the paper edition of the Bloxham Broadsheet
- Occasionally leaflets were delivered to all houses in the village as the only reliable way to get the information to everybody.



4. Diary of stakeholder engagement

There is a Consultation Diary on the BNDP website that includes the nature, content and outcomes of the many opportunities residents and others have had to engage with the neighbourhood planning process. It has much more detail along with photographs. Here we simply tabulate the dates and nature of events. The Table does not include working group or steering group meetings which are too numerous to list here.

Date	Activity	~ Nos	% *
2-12-2011	Whole Village Meeting – first thoughts on a N.P.	15	0.6%
24-09-2012	Whole Village Meeting – unplanned development and NP	~400	16.0%
10-01-2013	Public consultation upon intention to have a NP	-	-
12-02-2013	Public meeting explaining BNDP	~300	12.0%
5-03-2013	Meeting of Volunteers for Working Groups	45	1.8%
3-04-2013	Public meeting BNDP Q&A session	110	4.5%
11-5-2013	Drop-in Stall at BloxFest (Music Festival)	~50	2.0%
10-09-2013	Training & Development by Woodcote NP	42	1.7%
12-10-2013	Pop-up Exhibition	~50	2.0%
01-01-2014	Online Questionnaire for young people	48	-
01-01-2014	Online Questionnaire for local businesses	75	30.0%
01-03-2014	Questionnaire and Housing Need Survey	605	45.0%
10-05-2014	Drop-in Stall at BloxFest (Music Festival)	~60	2.4%
12-06-2014	Public meeting BNDP Q&A session	45	1.8%
10-01-2015	Pre-publication consultation	143	5.9%
10-01-2015	Pop-up Exhibition	45	1.8%
14-02-2015	Pop-up Exhibition	38	1.5%

~Despite sign-in requests, for larger meetings exact numbers were difficult to collect but the rounded numbers are realistic estimates. Likewise, some of the more informal drop-ins are best estimates. We have used the Age 16-74 population to calculate meetings percentages.

The Plan has taken place against a background of extensive development activity and, throughout almost every engagement, the same concerns echoed and re-echoed:

- a. Traffic and parking making the already poor connectivity ever more dangerous;
- b. Progressively increasing concern over school (and to some extent health services) capacity;
- c. Concern over escalating infrastructure problems especially water supply, drainage and resilience of the electricity supply;
- d. The erosion of distinctive village character by use of inappropriate designs and materials;
- e. Failure of developers to respond to the need for open-market down-size properties;
- f. The capacity of recreational facilities – indoor and out – to keep pace.

Failure to provide commensurate infrastructure regularly featured but of even greater concern was what people perceived as the cumulative urbanisation of Bloxham by permitting off-the-peg estates that were entirely inconsistent with preserving and enhancing our distinctive historic rural heritage.

5. Summary of the Questionnaire Results

These can be found in full on the BNDP website. The return rate was such as to afford a very high degree of confidence in the results. Here we simply draw upon examples of the results that relate to some of the final policies within the submitted version of the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan

Theme	Question	Result		
		Yes	No	Don't know
Delivering the houses the village needs	The adopted CDC Local Plan (2015) indicates that additional village developments should be in the form of infill and minor development. Do you agree with this?	87%	8%	5%
	Are you or a member of your family on the Cherwell District Council Housing Register?	0.5%	99.5%	0
	Should all new homes be built to high water efficiency standards as recommended in the government's Code for Sustainable Homes?	94.2	2.3	3.5
	We have an ageing population. Should new homes be readily adaptable to accommodate older people and those with limited mobility?	80.3	9.8	9.8
	To reduce the traffic impact of on-street parking do you think that plans for new family homes in Bloxham should include at least two off-street parking spaces?	88.6	6.9	4.5
	Is it important that the number of new houses does not increase so rapidly that the capacity of the primary school is exceeded meaning children have to be transported by car or bus to schools outside of Bloxham?	96.2	2.0	1.8
	Protecting and enhancing our rural heritage	Bloxham conservation area document identifies views important to the landscape of Bloxham such as the church, views along High Street and Church Street and of Bloxham School etc. Should such important views be permanently protected?	97.3	1.5
Do you think new developments should seek to preserve the existing rural character?		98.3	1.2	0.5

	Tall 3-storey town-house dwellings are increasingly popular with developers. Are these an appropriate design for the village of Bloxham?	9.8	82.7	7.5
	Housing density is about how close together houses are built. Should new developments avoid abrupt changes of density between new and existing housing?	89.3	4.8	5.9
	Where a new development is in an area that already has houses with a mix of styles and materials should new dwellings 'lean towards' using rural materials and styles wherever appropriate?	91.3	4.2	4.5
Promoting economic vitality	Is the internet important to your business's success	94	6	0
	Should the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan include policies that promote working from home?	70	3	27
	Does internet speed / reliability affect your business	74	26	0
	Does mobile phone coverage affect your business	77	23	0
Ensure a safe, healthy cohesive community	Is it important to preserve rights of way and bridle paths in and around Bloxham?	97.8	0.9	1.4
	Which of these green-spaces should be protected from housing or business development:			
	– The recreation ground	95	5	-
	– The Jubilee Park	98	2	-
	– The Slade	96	4	-
	– The Red Lion Gardens	90	10	-
	– The green area fronting Bloxham School	81	19	
	– The rugby fields running up onto Hobb Hill	78	22	
		Yes	No	D.Know

 BNDP Main Questionnaire

 BNDP Pre-publication consultation

Many other questionnaire responses support the policies but do not fit into the simple 3-category format of the above.

6. The Pre-publication Consultation

a. National Consultees

The Table lists some of the national organisations that we consulted during plan making.

Consultee	Mode of Contact
Canal & River Trust	Email
Cherwell District Council	Phone, email, face-2-face
CPRE	Email
English Heritage	Email
Highways Agency	Email
Homes and Communities Agency	Phone, email
Natural England	Email
Network Rail Infrastructure	Email
NHS- Oxfordshire CCG	Email
Oxfordshire County Council	Phone, email
Scotia Gas Networks	Phone, email
Thames Water	Email, face-2-face
The Environment Agency	Email
Western Power Distribution	Phone, email, face-2-face

b. Local councils etc.

The Table lists some of the 'political' organisations or individuals consulted during plan making.

Organisation or person contacted	Mode of contact
Adderbury Parish Council	Email, face-2-face
Barford Parish Council	Email, face-2-face
Christine Heath (District Councillor for Bloxham)	Email, Face-2-face
Hook Norton Parish Council	Phone, email
Kieron Mallon (County Councillor for Bloxham)	Face-2-face
South Newington Parish Council	Email, face-2-face
Tony Baldry (MP recently retired MP for Bloxham)	Email, face-2-face
Victoria Prentis (new MP for Bloxham)	Face-2-face

c. Local Services

The Table lists some of the 'village based organisations that were consulted during plan-making.

Consultee	Mode of Contact
Bloxham Baptist Church	Email, face-2-face
Bloxham Dental Practice	Phone, email, face-2-face
Bloxham Pharmacy	Phone, email, face-2-face
Bloxham Primary School	Phone, email, face-2-face
Bloxham School	Phone, email, face-2-face
Bloxham St Mary's Church	Phone, email, face-2-face
Bloxham Surgery	Phone, email, face-2-face
Bloxham Veterinary Practice	Phone, email, face-2-face
The Warriner School	Phone, email, face-2-face

d. Developers

Consultee	Mode of Contact
David Wilson Homes	Email
Taylor Wimpey Homes	Email
Mark Rose / William Davis	Email

e. Individuals

Consultee	Mode of Contact
Residents	Leaflet drops, meetings, social media
Young people	Online questionnaire, visits to clubs.

f. Local Voluntary Organisations

- The majority of village organisations had committee members at whole village meetings.
- All will have received information from village leaflet drops.
- There was extensive coverage in the Bloxham Broadsheet which the N.P. questionnaire indicated 95% of residents use as their main source of village information.

g. Local Businesses

- Around 200 businesses were emailed or leafleted to inform them of opportunities to give their views upon the plan.
- A collection of businesses in different geographically locations (E.g. Bloxham Pharmacy, Bloxham Post-office, The Doctors surgery , Bloxham Mill) made copies of the plan and pre-publication consultation forms available from their premises.
- Over 70 businesses participated in the BNDP Business questionnaire.

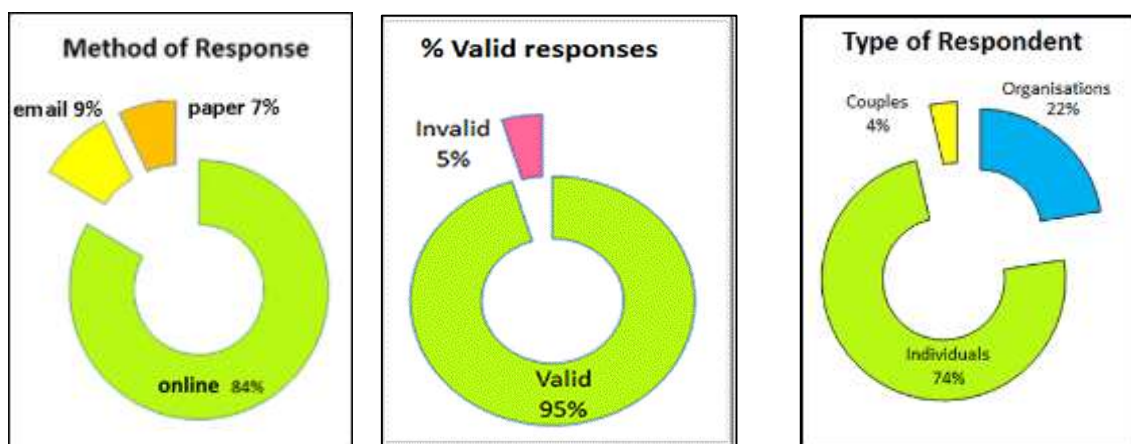
7. Outline of the pre-publication consultation

a. The Forms

Stakeholders were offered the opportunity to express their opinions and around 150 took that opportunity. The online form provided a 'free-response' text-box. Local Green Space (LGS) status should only be conferred upon land of particular importance to the local community. As a further check on this we also offered consultees the opportunity to give a 'yes-no' opinion as to whether or not proposed LGS areas emanating from earlier meetings and consultations should or should not be permanently protected from development.

b. The response method

The majority provided their response by some form of digital communication: online forms (84%) and email (9%) Only 7% chose paper.



- The consultation ran for a fixed period from 10th Jan 2015 to 22nd Feb 2015
- To discourage false responses respondents were told forename, surname and postcode were required but only the name and comment would be published. A small number failed to provide the required information or responded slightly beyond the final deadline and so are theoretically invalid.
- Most responses were from individuals, many simply commending the plan. Some were clearly marked as representing the views of organisations. Yet others were clearly marked as representing the views of two people (normally Mr. & Mrs.)
- We have looked at the implications of including or excluding data from "invalid" responses and of whether we should 'double-count' responses from two people. The reality is that it makes little difference to the overall outcomes.

8. Comments from the pre-publication consultation

a. Comments supporting the Plan

The overwhelming message from residents was a positive one of general support for the draft BNDP. People did this either by stating general agreement or by re-iterating concerns that the Plan sought to address.

The free-response nature of the consultation makes any statistical treatment impossible. E.g., does the following indicate support for all policies? I am in agreement with this vision for Bloxham and wish to thank the Bloxham Neighbourhood Development Plan Group and Bloxham Parish Council.”

Their message

Frequently mentioned concerns (in approximate rank order) include:

1. Strengthen protection of village or rural character or no large estates
2. Traffic, parking, road-safety, connectivity
3. Capacity of schools – especially the primary school
4. Capacity and condition of the Jubilee Hall
5. Need to protect the green open spaces that were left in the village



Our response

- We restructured the Plan creating a section dedicated to protection and enhancement of the rural historical character of the village (Theme 2).
- We created a Sustainability Report to summarize the factual basis of resident concerns on traffic, connectivity, schools, access to services etc.
- We have added or amended policies to ensure all of the above are covered.

b. Comments adding to the Plan

Their message:

1. More protection of the conservation area and heritage assets;
2. The rural ambiance of public rights of way (PROW) needed stronger protection with Hobb Hill being particularly mentioned;
3. More protection for views of the church across the village
4. Protection of the Slade nature reserve.
5. Encourage appropriate expansion of Bloxham Mill Business Park;
6. That all developments should employ SuDS;
7. That there should be greater emphasis on whether water and drainage can cope;
8. Garden development should be discouraged or the circumstances under which it might be acceptable made clear;
9. Protection for green areas that were created as a condition of recent developments;
10. Avoid loss of parking from existing dwellings;
11. More contextual information on housing numbers to clarify compliance with Local Plan;
12. A solution to improved parking at the shops or alternative shopping facilities;
13. The increasing Milton Rd traffic should be documented;
14. Consider policies on local power generation; and
15. That the minimum percentage of homes for older people should be specified.



Our Response

- ✓ **Comments 1-4** are all things we have heard many times at consultation events and that the Steering Group were certain would carry public approval. They have been incorporated.
- **Comment 5** (Bloxham Mill Business Park) was consistent with efforts to boost local start-up and microbusinesses and expansion of an appropriate scale was supported - however, this has been overtaken by events as permission for such expansion was granted on June 5th 2015 and so the policy statement supporting this has been removed again.
- ✓ **Comment 6** (Oxon CC) and 7 (Thames water) simply strengthened existing policies on water and drainage and have been incorporated.
- ✓ **Comment 8** on gardens and 9 on protection of recently allocated green areas are totally consistent with concerns to preserve a “rural openness” and have been incorporated.
- ✓ **Comment 10** on parking at existing buildings is consistent with the policy for new dwellings and this has been incorporated.
- ✓ **Comment 11** on more contextual information regarding recent and planned development has been added to the plan and (in more detail) to the Sustainability Report.
- **Comment 12** on High Street parking - we understand the problem but in the absence of available land have no solution to offer. It may be necessary to consider additional retail locations during the period of this plan.
- **Comment 13** is demonstrably correct but at present levels would probably need to be a component of cumulative concerns to influence planning decisions. No action taken.
- **Comment 14**. Given the proposed scale of new developments, Local power generation is probably best left to compliance with the Local Plan. No action taken.
- ✓ **Comment 15** regrading specifying the percentage of open-market homes for older residents: we have opted for 20%.

c. Comments asserting the BNDP policies are invalid

Their message

1. Designating Bloxham School Areas as Local Green Space was unduly constraining.
2. As a highly sustainable village the proposed housing numbers did not comply with the adopted Local Plan(2015) or NPPF
3. The BNDP should wait for the Local Plan to be finalised.
4. Deferring development to post-2025 was unenforceable
5. Linking tenure of affordable housing to those with a connection to the village in-perpetuity was not practicable.



Our Response

- ✓ **Comment 1** about Bloxham School Local Green Space. We have considered our discussions with the school and the content of the comments from them and those who supported them. We reiterate that the visual impact of the areas, especially the cricket area fronting the main buildings is without doubt demonstrably special to the local community and, judging by its use in school marketing, is equally so to the school itself. We remain committed to preserving the stunning visual impact but have no desire to impose unreasonable constraints on future development. This LGS policy has been removed despite support for it from 80% of the community. It is replaced with a policy that will not inhibit further development so long as the visual impact is

development.

Consequently, we have sought to protect the views via a less draconian Policy on “the importance of space and key street-scenes and views.”

We accept that most past expansion has involved development of appropriate scale, design and materials – and this policy should do nothing to inhibit similarly appropriate future development.

We met again with the school prior to the final version of the revised plan. They accepted we had sought to address their concerns but said they were not yet in a position to endorse the plan or make any definitive statement and that they would, “provide a formal response to the Cherwell District Council consultation when the plan is submitted up.”

properly preserved.

We consider this addresses the objections raised by Bloxham School and its supporters whilst also recognising the genuine concerns of the majority of the village to protect key views.

<p>– Comment 2 on sustainability and compliance with adopted Local Plan (2015) Policy Villages 1.</p> <p>We do not accept the broad-brush assessments regarding sustainability contained in various Cherwell DC documents. We set out our case in detail in the Sustainability Report. We note the Cherwell Plan was also said to require more work in this respect by the Local Plan Inspector.</p> <p>We are clear that we do comply with Policy Villages 1 but the fact that in the pre-publication version of the plan we did not explicitly mention the 85 extant house permissions for Milton Road – which legitimately count towards the total may have misled those who made these comments to deduce otherwise.</p>	<p>We have added a Sustainability Report that sets out in more detail the sustainability of Bloxham.</p> <p>We have added a policy explicitly accepting the 85 Milton Rd dwellings.</p>
<p>– Comment 3 is about waiting for the adoption of the Local Plan. This is not a requirement but may well happen anyway.</p>	<p>No action taken.</p>
<p>✓ Comment 4 on deferring development to 2025 remains desirable (See Oxon C.C. education comments about school capacity) but we accept that, given the number of additional dwellings being discussed it would be hard to implement. We have removed it.</p>	<p>We have removed this policy.</p>
<p>✓ Comment 5 on in-perpetuity affordable housing. Given the direction of travel of the new government regarding affordable housing there seems little point in persisting with this policy.</p>	<p>We have removed this policy.</p>

Following the consultation the plan was amended and we engaged with various stakeholders once we were nearing the final version. Most were happy with the changes we had made.

We met with Bloxham School who, whilst appreciating the changes we had made, fell short of making any definitive comment either endorsing or objecting to the plan. See email below dated 6th July which followed a meeting with them on 25th June 2015

You replied to this message on 07/07/2015 21:20.

From: Neil Urquhart <bursar@bloxhamschool.com>
To: John Groves
Cc: Paul W. Sanderson
Subject: Bloxham Revised Plan

Sent: Mon 06/07/2015 16:37

Dear John

I am sorry that it has taken to late this afternoon to provide you with some formal comment from Bloxham School in time for the Parish Council meeting this evening. Thank you also for coming with Jenny to brief Paul and me on the 25th June.

As we discussed at the meeting, we note the changes that you have made to the plan and, in particular, the reconsideration of which areas of the village will be recommended for designation as local green spaces. We also note that the revised draft plan places greater emphasis on protecting and enhancing rural heritage and, in particular, of preserving specific views. Appendix 4 includes views across our playing field to the main school buildings and from Hobb Hill across our Courtington Lane playing fields.

The School's position remains unchanged. We support the establishment of a neighbourhood plan but we will not support any undue restrictions on the ability of the School to carry out its business, now or in the future. Any future developments that we make will need to take account of the Grade 2 Listed Buildings status of parts of our site and the fact that much of our site is within the village conservation area. As shown by other recent projects, we have no wish to undermine this.

I cannot give the draft plan the unreserved endorsement from Bloxham School that you are probably seeking for tonight's meeting. Having taken informal advice, we are now in the process of engaging a planning consultant in order to provide a formal response to the Cherwell District Council consultation when the plan is submitted up.

I am sorry if you are disappointed by this reply but I hope that you understand that I have a duty to consider the potential needs of the School over the 15+ years of this proposed plan. Good luck with this evening's meeting and please do call me if you want to discuss this in advance. My mobile number is 07867 695550.

Kind regards

Neil

From: John Groves <finchamgroves@totalise.co.uk>
To: 'Neil Urquhart'

Sent: Tue 07/07/2015 21:21

Dear Neil

Thank you for keeping us in the picture.

We look forward to reading your final response in the next consultation.

John

9. Other issues arising from public consultations

Consultation extended well beyond what is contained in the written responses with residents and members of working groups voicing opinions on many issues highly pertinent to village well-being but which do not easily sit within the neighbourhood planning framework.

We list some of these here so that they are not entirely lost to the Parish Council and others who may seek to address them as part of their priorities for action.

1. There appears to be⁴ greater demand from those with a connection to the village for shared equity housing than for social rented housing. Whilst not entirely consistent with the policies of the adopted Local Plan (2015) we do not believe some small variation on the mix for Bloxham could be considered as putting at risk the CDC strategic policies.
2. Cherwell D.C. seems to adopt a default position of using developer funding for recreation for highly equipped play areas on each new development. Only 4% of residents think community cohesion best served by this approach. They would prefer investing more into the two whole-village recreation areas.
3. Cherwell D.C. correctly prioritises spending some developer funding for district level sports projects. However, given the rapid expansion of Bloxham we would argue that finding strategies to rectify the emerging shortage of pitches at parish level should be the top priority until such deficits are remedied.
4. A submission was made (July 2014) to gain 'designated heritage status' for the Red Lion Gardens: an area of that has long provided villagers with what is essentially a replacement village green. We urge Cherwell D.C. to progress this bid.
5. Oxfordshire Better Broadband plans for superfast broadband are happening with many residents having already signed up - but it is not at all clear what the roll-out schedule is for the significant number of properties that are close to the exchange but served by 'exchange only lines.'. We urge early connection.
6. An Inspector Appeal for the Barford Road development (which is currently under-way) provided Oxfordshire Highways with S106 funds to provide a strategy for solving capacity issues at the mini-roundabout. We eagerly await the solution.
7. We encourage Oxfordshire C.C. / Cherwell D.C. to seek improved mobile coverage in Bloxham in such dealings as it may have with network operators. Mobile operators have been the most difficult of the utilities to engage in dialogue with despite our having hard survey evidence of the extent of coverage issues in Bloxham.

10. Appendices:

Appendix1: Detailed pre-submission consultation comments

The Detailed comments can be found in the separate Appendix 1. Comments that prompted some response by us are highlighted although some amendments will be in response to the cumulative weight of several comments rather than any one.

Appendix 2: Detailed diary of engagement

This also exists as a separate document. It is little more than a "scrap-book" gathered as the whole process progressed but does provide more detail about the events, the advertising and the outcomes. There are also quite a few photos illustrating the extent and range of engagement.

⁴ See BNDP Questionnaire results

Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan



Consultation Statement Appendix 1

Pre-Publication Consultation Comments



This is regarded as an Appendix to the formal consultation Statement.
It contains details of the comments received in the pre-publication
consultation

Submission Version
19th Nov 2015

Yellow highlighting indicate comments that are reflected in changes made following consultation on the pre-publication version of the plan.

(Please – Note – The Local Plan had not been adopted at the time we carried out and responded to this consultation. What was the emerging plan is now the adopted Local Plan (2015).

No.	Name	Your comments	Our Response
1	Abigail Porter	<p>HR1, 2,3,4,5,6 - this is a historical, rural village and houses should be built with that design in mind - not the cheap-looking red brick, devoid of any character. The village also has a great sense of community spirit - with people always greeting each other and taking an avid interest in social events. With (almost gated) communities being set up in the new builds, can this be guaranteed to continue? And if we are expected to accommodate these new builds, are we, in turn, going to be given the funds required, to extend our current facilities i.e. schools, dentist, doctors etc.</p> <p>ERF - Bloxham High Street needs to be organised and now! I am surprised we have not a fatality on that road with people pulling in and out of a very over-stretched parking lot, on to a very, busy main road - we need more off road parking - or (sorry for sarcasm!) as we are only a small village - people could just walk!</p> <p>CR1 - Yes, Yes and Yes!</p> <p>CR2 - Yes, Yes and Yes!</p> <p>CS1 - Yes, Yes and Yes!</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>See Policies Theme 2 Protecting and enhancing our rural heritage</p>
2	Andrew Whiffin	All policies except HN2 and HN3 strongly supported, especially those conserving green spaces and requiring that housing development conform to the neighbourhood plan.	<p>Noted</p> <p>See Policies Theme 2 on spaces</p>
3	David Goode	I agree to all the 31 policy statements	Noted
4	Rodney Kane	Page 17 Provision for safe low - carbon travel. section c the road footpaths are not safe in parts of the village I feel that this should be reviewed as traffic levels increase and kept under review. The preservation of green spaces should be agreed subject to Villagers having access to such places.	<p>Noted</p> <p>See Policies Theme 1 on connectivity</p>
5	Torquil McLusky	Bloxham School has shown itself to be a responsible guardian of the village for more than 100 years. They should be trusted to make decisions in the interest of the school and the village and not be constrained by inflexible land designations on their playing fields which would limit their flexibility to ensure the continuing success of the school and the jobs they provide.	<p>Noted & amended</p> <p>- See also response to comment No. 40 from Bloxham School</p>
6	Henry Jervis	We have been made aware that the neighbourhood plan has designated two areas of land belonging to Bloxham School being Main Field off Strawberry Terrace and Second Field on Courtington Lane as Local Green Spaces. I must stress that we, in our village of Tysoe, are going through the same process to protect ourselves from overzealous developers spoiling our villages	<p>Noted & amended</p> <p>- See also response to comment No. 40 from Bloxham School</p>

		but we must be careful that we protect the areas of land for the correct reasons without harming our local businesses and economy. It is fine to say you do not wish the school to sell the land for housing but to have it designated as Local Green Spaces a totally different scenario which I don't think you have considered properly. I would ask that you consider if this where to happen the school would not be able to expand its facilities if required on its main campus which could damage the business. How would pupils move around if class rooms where built elsewhere, there is an issue of safety and long term business strategy to consider if where to happen and ultimately businesses which are held back by geography always move in the end.	
7	John Groves	Bloxham has seen frenetic growth in recent years and still has 225 extant housing permissions that will be fulfilled during the period of this policy. Elements of the physical infrastructure are "creaking" with water, electricity, traffic and especially primary school capacity all creating real issues that local planners seem either not to know or care about. By providing a breathing space for consolidation of recent and extant developments this plan represents a sensible way forward that will still see Bloxham one of the fastest growing villages in the district.	Noted See especially Theme 1 policies on connectivity and on primary school capacity
8	Jonathan Haines	In principle I have no objection to the expansion of house building in Bloxham. However, I am concerned that the amenities supporting a growing population are increased or put in place before such expansion - in particular the surgery, schools, footpaths and roads. The village already often becomes grid locked with traffic and many pavements and roads are not sufficient or wide enough to safely accommodate current pedestrians, cyclists and drivers. There need to be additional pedestrian crossings and traffic calming measures, particularly on the Milton and Barford Roads, as I fear greatly for children and parents currently (let alone additional numbers in the future) walking to school and shops from these areas. Who will bear responsibility for future deaths occurring on these roads? Has a bye-pass been considered? Surely a Health & Safety review would have to freeze all future development until appropriate remedial action was taken.	Noted – see especially Theme 1 Policies on connectivity
9	Colin Challenger	HN HA HT - Agreed. The village has often been treated as 'open plan' by developers over the pasrt several years. and is hopelessly over-developed for its facilities. Also little if any of the 225 houses for which permission has been given are compliant with local requirements. HC - Agreed. Current developments and the 225 outstanding permissions are not compliant with these requirements. CR CS - Compliance with these is essential. Existing and planned developmemnts are extraordinarily dense by rural standards, have or will overbuild large tracts of former rural landscape surrounding the village meaning that the remaining open areas must be preserved.	Noted – see especially Theme 2 Policies on the importance of space in a rural setting.
10	Alan Mole	I fully support the themes and objectives of this plan. In particular ensuring that the housing needs of the community are delivered in accordance with the evidential data obtained from the consultations and residents opinions expressed in the questionnaires. We must ensure that Policy HN is fully complied with in every respect.	Noted –and contained in Theme 1 policies

11	Phill Slater	<p>I strongly support the main thrust of the plan - I think it captures the major needs of Bloxham and the preferences of the community. It also recognises the part we have to play in the wider Cherwell plan and most importantly acknowledges the contributions Bloxham has already made. However we need greater support from Cherwell and Oxfordshire to address the ongoing challenges of traffic, school numbers & infrastructure.</p>	<p>Noted – See especially Theme 1 policies</p>
12	Darryl Everitt	<p>The thing I am hearing time and time again is - "It's such a shame about Bloxham". Or "what they are doing to Bloxham is terrible....".</p> <p>I used to believe you have to have tolerance for change. Yes a reasonable amount of new housing in every village and town area, but Bloxham does appear to be shouldering the brunt in this area along with Hook Norton to a degree.</p> <p>I spoke to the headmaster at the local Primary School and he has told me they are at capacity already - let alone the 2025 as you speculate in your plan. The traffic has already considerably increased in the 9 years since we have lived here and how someone hasn't been mowed down near the Co op is a miracle.</p> <p>I recently met one of the planners at Taylor Wimpy by pure accident. This is what he said. "Ahh Bloxham, I don't feel good about this one, what they are doing to Bloxham is terrible, the reason why; because Cherwell Council are ineffective and have not got the will-power, or resources to stop developers applications. Especially as government are strong arming every council to accept new housing or be fined.</p> <p>I think the current housing estates on the Milton road are good - they did them well and yes Bloxham can take this expansion. However isn't it true that Bloxham is a village and should stay a village rather than go supersize or town?</p> <p>I understand a new development application has gone in behind the church? How is the center of this village going to cope I wonder.</p> <p>Has anyone looked into how many houses are being built in Chadlington where Mr Cameron lives. You guessed it zero!</p>	<p>Noted See especially Theme 1 and 2 policies.</p>
13	Patrick Moore	<p>It is vital that we protect the rural nature of the village and ensure that residents, current and future, continue to enjoy the features that make us want to live here and which will be threatened unless expansion is controlled. Potential 40% growth between 2005-20131 is massive by anyone's standards.</p> <p>I fully support the policies outlined in the plan and congratulate the team for undertaking such a mammoth task.</p> <p>Patrick Moore</p>	<p>Noted – See especially new Theme 2 policies on the conservation area the rural character of the village.</p>
14	Jonathan Haines	<p>Further to the Health & Safety issues already raised, it must be assumed that the four imminent/pending sites will inject multiple hundreds, if not thousands, of additional daily vehicle movements within the village, with the resultant detrimental impact on pollution levels - even</p>	<p>Noted – Theme 1 policies on low-carbon connectivity and parking The government is mid-consultation on</p>

		<p>more so with the prospect of increased grid-lock. Have pollution levels been measured/estimated? Furthermore, recent press reports of EU directives specifying that the use of gas as a domestic fuel must be phased out over the next 20 years or so, appear to have been ignored by the developers. Agents for the new Bovis site on the Barford road have advised that these houses will still feature gas as a fuel for central heating and cooking whereas surely they, and all the other new Bloxham developments should now only be marketed as 'all electric'? - particularly given that this is the usual fueling specification within the many rural communities denied access to mains gas supply. EU proposals also specify that all new cars must soon create zero emissions - i.e. be electric or fuel cell powered within an even shorter time scale - so, given the current availability of such vehicles, surely all new homes should be specified now to offer easily accessible charging facilities for at least two of them? I'm prompted to suggest that sooner or later, from a marketing perspective, builders will have to include at least one, perhaps two, new electric vehicles within the price of every home. Certainly this, together with the removal of gas in the home, would help alleviate increased pollution levels, but I have to question why, in light of these plans for the near future, all new homes are not now compulsorily specified as such? It must also be emphasised that the switch to very quiet running electric vehicles gives even greater urgency to the need for the additional pedestrian/cycling safety measures requested in my earlier feedback - indeed more so, given a populace of increasing age and hearing deficiency. Finally, I would submit a plea on behalf of my new neighbours, for greater space being allocated to vehicles within the designs for the new estates. If it wasn't for many cars being parked on the pavements of my estate, it would be almost impossible to navigate a safe path through - large Refuse and Delivery vehicles already struggle. Again, there have been press reports advising of bans on such parking, but given the inflexibility of alternative modes of transport it is difficult to see a future with anything other than an ever increasing number of vehicles on the road, and thus to be safely parked. Ultimately I have to question whether all those responsible for signing off these new developments have really taken into account their full impact. The rush to build without at least a parallel growth in the infrastructure is surely a case of putting the cart before the horse?</p>	<p>zero-carbon homes policies and we have avoided policy making on this as there is likely to be central regulation of what is and is not permitted.</p>
15	Maureen Moore	Well done. Happy to support plan that keeps us as a rural village.	Noted – see especially Theme 2 policies on preserving rural character
16	Harriet Sansom (Centre for Sustainable Energy)	Policy HC: It is great to see a neighbourhood plan policy that proactively engages with climate change mitigation - this is quite rare amongst those that have been adopted. The plan also notes in the 'contextual information' against this policy that it recommends SuDS even for minor developments - this is a forward-thinking approach as accounts for the cumulative effect on flooding of multiple small-scale developments.	Noted – see especially Theme 1 policy regarding SuDS
17	John Webb	I strongly agree that all of the green spaces below should be protected from any housing or	Noted: see especially Theme 2 policies

		business development. (Noted all the green spaces mentioned in the N.P.)	on views and Theme 4 policies on recreation spaces .
18	Greg Sawyer	<p>I have read through the plan and agree with everything that has been included. I can't think of anything else to add but as a Bloxham resident would like to say thank you for the obvious time and effort that you have put in to this. I read an article in the Banbury guardian this week with regards to a member of the parish council resigning due to his efforts being ignored with the "bourne " development and the change of use to the Bell public house. Let's hope that your plan has more success and get's listened to.</p> <p>I will say that the development at salt lane is also going to make Bloxham even worse for traffic as cars will only have 2 directions to go, Banbury or Bloxham.</p>	Noted – with regard to traffic see Theme 1 policies on connectivity
19	Raymond Everitt	<p>HN - That the 30 dwellings ensure the use of the control of the ponds is clearly defined on the part of the developer.</p> <p>HA - On-site car-parking cannot be reduced by subsequent building permissions to the owner. The CofE Building division has backed a plan to fit all of the CoE's 16,000 churches with WiFi internet access. Is this of use in any way as part of EOC 2c</p> <p>The primary school also accepts children from Milcombe, South Newington and increases in these villages makes the situation worse and changes must be noted when considering primary school numbers.</p> <p>I totally accept all of your plan. My remarks are of a minor type to try and help in promoting the policies.</p>	We have taken on your point about not reducing car parking at existing dwellings. See Theme 1 policies
20	Sam Brassington	<p>I would like to communicate my concern about imposition of green space on the ability of Bloxham School to develop its facilities.</p> <p>I am concerned that there is no mention in the report of Bloxham school's support to the community, for example, in my role as Director of Drama, I have been very pleased to continue to make the Wesley Theatre available for village use for Bloxfest.</p> <p>Furthermore, we have enjoyed welcoming Bloxham primary for regular workshops, alongside having much of the local community attend our most recent school production. Engagement with the local community is very important to us, and we hope the community will also see the benefit of allowing Bloxham School to have the opportunity to develop its facilities appropriately as the school require.</p>	See response to comment 40 by Bloxham School.
21	Malcolm Timms	I fully support the findings and recommendations of the Plan.	Noted
22	Naomi Kanetsuka	As developments are highly likely to increase traffic in the village I believe that for the developments already given the green light, and as a stipulation for any future developments, the developers should be responsible for financing pedestrian crossings for example on the	Noted - see especially Theme 1 policies on connectivity.

		Tadmarton Road near the Primary school. Furthermore, the play areas provided by the developers ought to be more in keeping with a rural setting i.e. nature trails in leafy enclosures with sympathetic wooden play equipment similar to Hook Norton playground, Charlbury etc, as opposed to the token poorly thought out examples at Crabtree close, Aldous Drive etc. Lastly each developer should provide an allotment area with enough allotments to go with each property built. If these are not required by the new owners the allotments can be taken over by locals.	We are unlikely to have developments big enough to trigger a developer requirement to provide allotments. (It's all set out in a CDC document on planning obligations.)
23	Lawrence & Pamela SIMS	Don't build behind other peoples back garden	Noted – see especially Theme 2 policies on regard for amenity of existing residents.
24	Les Worthington	I wholeheartedly approve of the plan in its entirety.	Noted
25	Richard Farmer	A vote of thanks must be given to the group for producing such a thorough and well written report. It sets down a structure for the village to support and fight for in the years to come. We may have to accept the arrival of a further 225 homes but it is critical we investigate how our infrastructure can support and gain from the increased population. The range of services offered within the village need to gain from this increased base. It may be that in future children from other villages will be directed to other local primary schools so easing pressure on Bloxham based children. But with much of the increased building taking place on the opposite side of the village to the school I fear car journeys at peak time will increase in the village. As the village expands there is a continuing risk that a village identity will shrink. Even before the recent growth the village lost both its adult football and cricket teams. Such losses erode the feel of community in the village. Consideration needs to be given as to how new communities are brought into the village community. Bloxfest is a good example of a new initiative that strives to do this. Does the village have the drive to recreate that village spirit? I hope so! If not the village will continue to splinter and become increasingly anonymous.	Noted See Theme 1 policies on primary school capacity. Theme 4 policies look to improve recreation facilities. (The PC is working with the relevant trusts) Theme 2 policies aim to protect the village character.
26	Brian S. Smith	Thank you for giving us the opportunity to discuss the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2031 on Saturday. I have now read the public consultation draft, dated 28th November 2014, and wish to compliment you on an excellent paper. Your conclusions and recommendations are intelligent, practical and balanced. I understand from our discussions that the overall need for additional houses has been set at 1500 to be shared between 23 Oxfordshire villages. This 1500 requirement is in addition to approved but yet unbuilt houses. The consultation draft under 6. Our Policies, tells me that Bloxham could grow by 275 houses over the period on the basis of your proposed 20 new dwellings, the 30 in current application and	Noted

the 225 already approved.

2011 Census 1279

Extant Permissions 225

Plan & Applications 50

Total 1554

Total growth 21.5%

I believe it would be helpful for future discussions and communications if a full 23 village analysis was created to compare future proposals as they effect Bloxham compared with the other villages.

This could cover

- Village Name
- Current population
- Population as a percentage of the total of all the villages
- Current house numbers
- Extant permission numbers
- Plan and application numbers
- Total current + extant + plan + application
- Total as a percentage as an increase per village
- Total as a percentage of total increase for all villages
- I understand that decisions will be made taking into account current village services and amenities, but also that some villages will wish to grow significantly to support their case for services and amenity investment. This form of analysis would allow a simple, easy to understand approach to the challenge and could help get a fair decision for Bloxham. It could allow a clear “call to action” which may help unite people and gain supportive media coverage, especially on social media.

It is in the character of the British people to wish to see fairness.

Wishing you well in your continued consultations and discussions.

Much of this data is already present in the BNDP Housing and landscape report or the Sustainability Report. We simply do not have the capacity to gather all the permission data for every village

The key issue is sustainability rather than “ fair shares” and unfortunately the CDC assessment doesn’t dig deep enough to find the problems that these comments show residents experience every day.

27 Tony Baldry

I think it is an extremely good piece of work and I think that the Parish Council and everyone who has been involved with compiling the Neighbourhood Plan deserves to be congratulated. I think the Plan is extremely well laid out and extremely readable.

I have the following observations.

Firstly, the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan under planning law is of course sequential to and dependent on Cherwell District Council’s Local Plan being adopted.

If I understand the situation correctly, there has already been given planning permission for considerably more houses to be built in Bloxham between 2011 and 2031 than were ever

Noted – We don’t have to wait for approval of the CDC Local Plan but we will relate the NP to both the current and emerging Local Plans.

The area we cover in the NP is already

	<p>envisaged in Cherwell’s Local Plan and I think that needs to be made clear “in terms” in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>Secondly, Bloxham Parish is a square, with a sizeable chunk taken out to the south east by the Parish of Milton and I wonder whether it is possible and desirable to include Milton within the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan because if Milton don’t get round to doing a Neighbourhood Plan of their own, it runs the risk that land on the Milton Road within the Borough of Milton may become vulnerable to planning applications, and although not within the Parish of Bloxham, any further development within the Parish of Milton, will obviously have an impact on Bloxham. Those are my only two substantive points concerning the Plan which I think is an excellent document.</p> <p>I do, however, have another couple of second order points, whilst considering the future of the village.</p> <p>Firstly, the table on page 25 demonstrates how little green space there is in the village. I think given the size now of the village, it would be always worth exploring whether there is other land around the village which could be purchased for open space.</p> <p>Secondly, separately, the village has a number of small halls (ex-Servicemen’s Club, Jubilee Hall, Helen Hind Hall, etc.), but the only public space of any significant size is the Parish Church and I know that the Parish Church is seeking to re-order St. Mary’s to make the space within St. Mary’s much more flexible and usable for the village as a whole and hopefully the Parish Council and the Parochial Church Council can work closely on that project to ensure that St. Mary’s can be as useful an amenity to the community as a whole.</p>	<p>agreed and cannot be altered.</p> <p>It’s unlikely the P.C. will acquire enough money to purchase any significant sized piece of land.</p> <p>The Parish Council is aware of the proposals to convert the Church into a more multi-functional space. Given the rate of expansion of the village an additional large space will be a welcome addition but this clearly isn’t going to make much progress until a vicar is in post.</p>
<p>28 Therese Janes</p>	<p>First thanks to the whole team for this well compiled document, hope your hard work will be rewarded.</p> <p>Because we have become so big, we need to be told officially what Bloxham is, rural or urban. This ambiguous situation seems to benefit everybody else except us. It looks to me that the developers are at an advantage because they use the 'urban' rules so they do not have to provide so much parking, because as 'urban' we are supposed to have good public transport. On the other hands we are treated as rural by the other services, which means when we ask for extra traffic light (in front of Church) this has been denied in the past, Old Bridge Road cannot be repaired because lack of budgets. The electricity, water service and mobile phone are poor because we are not recognised as "big enough". Same with drains which are not cleaned regularly, the village becomes more and more dirty (especially dog mess).</p> <p>The new developments proposed are not in keeping with the rest of the village. They should been in harmony with the old dwellings.</p> <p>Enough new houses.....we cannot cope any longer with the amount of traffic.</p>	<p>Noted - see especially Theme 1 policies BL3 – 5 on traffic and walking and Theme 2 policies on rural character. See also the recent Sustrans report on connectivity.</p> <p>We have now additionally distilled material from the working group reports into a Sustainability Report that picks up many of the points that you make about infrastructure.</p>

29	Janis Sorrell	I agree with the contents of the Plan and if we have to have more homes built, I would prefer there to be more smaller houses rather than large family homes.	Noted – see especially Theme 1 policies regarding downsizers.
30	Martin Winterbottom	HN, HR, HC, - agree HT1 - Consider additional zebra crossing west side of shops and 20mph limit between. No speed humps but solar 20mph measurement sign each end. CT - need consideration of how to improve off main road footpaths and routes around village. Tarmac through Gogs and to Tadmarton road to make wheelchair and pushchair accessible. Gives a school route and a walkway. Consider tarmac footpath from Milton Road through to Ridgeway - gives a round Bloxham walk with little A361 contact ELW2 - no mention of proposals for local power generation as part of any development. Should this not be part of the village wants for future not just communication technology? CT1 - any new development should be conditional upon funding a community project - links to village or Jubilee enhancements or Joint use rec. centre	Noted - see especially Theme 1 policies on connectivity. Regarding paths and power generation - we agree some of this may be desirable but we are not seeking enough new dwellings to produce the money that would be required to fund it. See, however, the circular walk in the Appendices. See Theme Policy on the Jubilee Hall
31	Rachel Nutt	I am in agreement with this vision for Bloxham and wish to thank the Bloxham Neighbourhood Development Plan Group and Bloxham Parish Council.	Noted
32	Mike Glazer	The shopping centre on th A361 has no long term viability because of the difficulty of access. It can only get worse and one day there will be a very serious accident there. The increase in developments and hence car traffic does no bode well. It seems to me that consideration should be given to having a different shopping area created in another place away from this road. Why can't one of the developers seeking permission to build be made to include this?	Noted – see especially Theme 1 policies on connectivity. An additional retail location is an issue that may need to be reviewed during the plan period.
33	Mrs Diana Plumb	I feel the options I have chosen are the most important to the village but in an ideal world all 6 areas of green-space should be saved. (This refers to Local Green Space status)	Noted – especially Theme 2 on the importance of space and Theme 4 on recreation spaces.
34	Gloria Lester-Stevens	I feel the plan reflects the village as we are now respecting our heritage and how we live in the 21st century. I feel it is very important to keep our green areas and vistas as well as our views of our lovely church. Thank you to all who have worked so hard and I do hope that CDC will adopt it into their plan and allow our village to consolidate with all its new developments which are on the way. Also by being guided by the plan future developments will hopefully be aimed at what our community needs and wants so we can be an inclusive community.	Noted –especially policies on space and protection of views in Theme 2.
35	Chris Heath (district councillor)	HN - Housing Need Totally agree with proposal of only a further 20 dwellings - preferably after 2025 HR - Rural Heritage and Landscape a and b - We must stick to this policy and have no more "little boxes" edging our village. d - We have already had a few of these inappropriate garden infills and we must resist any more	Noted - Noted - see especially policies on rural character, space and views in Theme 2

	<p>which are taking away lovely open views. f - Definitely agree with this - we must protect our residents quality of life, after all. this is probably why they live in Bloxham in the first place. HA - Appropriate Housing Parking on site is a necessity! Parking courts are universally disliked and they are not helpful to on-street parking as residents want to park outside their houses to unload etc., and also to have their car visible from their property. HT - Traffic Containment It is vital that we get some answers to Bloxham's traffic problems - especially at the mini-roundabout which OCC said they could sort out with appropriate 106 contributions. EEL - Employment Land We must protect any employment land in the village as there is so little of it - we have plenty of houses scheduled but very little employment land and any applications to build on employment land should be strongly opposed. ERF - Retail Facilities The High Street has become a nightmare for parking and I really don't know the answer to it but as Bloxham lines the A361 for much of its length I cannot see where minor retail provision, off this road could be accommodated.</p> <p>CR - Recreational Facilities Bloxham definately lacks a suitable 'village hall' and I would support the idea of upgrading and expansion of the Jubilee Hall but I am not sure what is meant by "moderate expansion" in this context - this would need further clarification.</p>	<p>See also Theme 1 policies about on-site parking.</p> <p>See Theme 3 policies on protecting employment Land</p> <p>You are correct on High St parking but no-one has come up with any answers! Will need to review as the impact of new developments becomes clear.</p> <p>See Theme 4 policy on the Jubilee Hall The term moderate has been removed</p>
<p>36 PRICE</p>	<p>The village must be allowed to be a living and developing community, We do not have the right to try to limit our successors to what we might think is best at present - circumstances change and each generation must be allowed to respond as they think best.</p> <p>* We include this entry but it did not comply with the requirement for a forename and surname*</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>37 Mark</p>	<p>Designation to School facilities could endure beyond the 2031 timeframe of the current plan. There is no intention of selling off the land for housing but those running the School in future may want to build on parts of these areas, whilst maintaining their attractive character, to improve the facilities and remain competitive in a difficult market – just as predecessors have done over the last 150 years.</p> <p>* We include this entry but it did not comply with the requirement for a forename and surname*</p>	<p>See response to comment 40. We accept the schools good intentions and what you suggest will be possible within the re-written policies.</p>

38	Keith Bennrtt	Bloxham is rural village which with any further development beyond that proposed by this plan would simply morph into an urban messy sprawl. This is a balanced well thought out document that all future plans must abide by.	Noted – see especially Theme 2 policies on rural character.
39	David Quinney	I agree that most of them should be protected but I don't think it's fair to prevent the 150 year old school from building better facilities on their own land. (Assume this refers to the proposed green spaces.	- See response to 40.
40	Neil Urquhart On behalf of Bloxham School	<p>This submission is made jointly by Nigel Bankes, Chairman of the Council of Governors, and Paul Sanderson, Headmaster of Bloxham School. It is made on behalf of Bloxham School.</p> <p>Whilst we applaud the efforts made by the village of Bloxham to establish a Neighbourhood Plan to reflect community wide aspirations, we have significant reservations about the content of the draft plan. It makes very little reference to Bloxham School – the main employer in the village and a provider of significant economic benefit; it makes no mention of the support that the school offers to the community; and it attempts to impose Local Green Space planning restrictions on school property that would restrict our ability to develop our facilities and, potentially, our future viability. Section 5.2 of the plan sets out a number of Objectives. The second seeks to promote economic viability. Bloxham School employs 250 staff, over 80 of whom live in the village. In addition to providing direct employment opportunities for people with a great range of skills, the school offers other benefits to the economic viability of the village: pupils, staff and parents use the local shops on the High Street; and a significant number of retired Bloxham School teachers have chosen to remain in the village, many of whom are active in the community.</p> <p>Bloxham School also helps to ensure a safe, healthy cohesive community, the third Objective. With many of our employed staff living in the village, we support safe low-carbon travel as many do walk to work. Within the limitations of school use, we offer recreational facilities to the wider community: our re-furbished swimming pool is open 6 mornings a week for public use; members of the public can use our fitness suite and squash courts most evenings; and we make our other sports facilities available to local clubs when not in use by the school.</p> <p>We note the implied support in the Plan to the Warriner School establishing an all-weather pitch with flood lights and hope that a future application for appropriate lighting to our pitches would also be supported. As an example, the Bloxham junior football team play football in our Dewey Sports Hall; we would be pleased to let them use our outside all weather pitches in winter months too if these were lit.</p>	<p>The economic aspects of the school appears in the Infrastructure and Business Report of the NP evidence base but not the Plan itself. Bloxham School is one of three large village workplaces and is clearly of importance to the village economy</p> <p>We have added mention to the revised plan itself.</p> <p>The school contribution to recreation is recognised in the Recreation Report</p> <p>I would expect whether or not floodlights are permitted to be primarily dependent upon the extent of impact upon residents. They are not explicitly mentioned in the draft Plan.</p>

Developing the community theme, Bloxham School prides itself on its close links with the village. We offer support to the primary school, both with teaching and enabling their pupils to use our facilities. We are Friends of St Mary's, who on occasion use the school's music rooms, and we are delighted to be able to hold school services at St Mary's Church at least three times a year. On a smaller scale, our co-operation ranges from storing grit and grit spreaders to building links with the village historical society.

Noted

Bloxham School has been an important part of the village for 160 years and this should, perhaps, be mentioned in the Our Bloxham section of the Neighbourhood Plan. The original school building, which among others is Grade II Listed, dates from the mid-1850s. Subsequent buildings facing out towards the main approaches have been sympathetic to this original architecture making extensive use of the local ironstone. Bloxham School also brings wider national recognition of the village name from the Bloxham Project started in the 1960s to the Bloxham Faith & Literature Festival, which is now into its third year.

Mention of the School wrongly disappeared from the historical section between Plan edits.

Mention has now been reinstated.

Our main concern is the proposal to designate two areas of our school property as Local Green Spaces. These are mentioned in passing at the end of the document (Page 18 and map at Page 25) but the potential impact on the school is immense.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) designates Local Green Spaces (at Paragraphs 76 to 78) as areas for special protection being of particular importance to the local communities. 'By designating land as Local Green Space local communities will be able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances. ... Local Green Spaces should be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.'

We note the concern re. green-space status. We are familiar with the NPPF and are assured that its application to such a space is in no way inappropriate

We appreciate the importance of green spaces to the village, which have equal priority to us as a school, but we strongly feel that this proposed designation is not appropriate and is an unnecessary imposition upon Bloxham School as a business as well as an educational establishment.

The NPPF states that the Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open spaces and that the designation should only be used:

- where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- 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; and
- where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

These two school areas are close to the centre of the village but we question whether they are

demonstrably special to the local community. The playing fields on Courtington Lane, in particular, are surrounded by ribbon development, with possible housing development areas on either side. We therefore strongly oppose this proposed nomenclature as inappropriate use of the Local Green Space designation.

Additionally, we are concerned at this attempt at planning control. The two school sites are the largest of the five proposed Local Green space areas. Of the other three, two are the Jubilee Park and the Recreation Ground, both whole village facilities, and the third is the Red Lion area, which some members of the village have aspirations to purchase as a community project.

Both these school areas are core to our future. There is currently no plan to sell them off for housing development but we and our successors must have the flexibility to manage our estate for the educational development of the school well beyond the 2031 Plan period. In an increasingly competitive independent schools' market we need to improve our school facilities if we are to remain attractive to prospective pupils and parents. If we do not, we risk losing our appeal with the possibility that we, like many other independent schools, would close. We note the policy at Page 15 of the Plan to safeguard employment land and this requirement should be considered when designating commercial land as Local Green Spaces.

The Foreword to the Plan states that it is an 'opportunity to work alongside landowners/developers to shape a future that retains what is distinctive about our community with: housing matched to need, access to: local jobs, appropriate infrastructure, schools, recreational facilities and open spaces'. As one of the major landowners in the village, which provides most of these needs in some form, we aspire to working in tandem with the village to achieve sustainable development. Whilst we understand that many of the points we have raised above may not have been included in the draft Plan for reasons of brevity, we will be unable to support the plan if the designation of Bloxham School land as Local Green Spaces is retained in future iterations.

We look forward to working with the Neighbourhood Plan steering group in the preparation of subsequent drafts of the plan.

We appreciate that to date the buildings facing the main approach have been tastefully extended and we have responded positively to your concerns by removing green-space designation.

This in no way diminishes the importance we attach to the spaces but in seeking to protect visual impacts rather than the actual spaces it should no longer pose an impediment to sensitive and appropriate development by you or your successors.

41 Gary Simpson

As an employee of Bloxham School I believe they should have the freedom to improve their facilities as and when they see fit, without the constraints of this proposal.

See changes made in response to comment 40

42 Peter Turner

Whilst I sympathise with the desire to protect the village from large scale building on the School fields, I don't think it is right for the Plan to prevent a business from managing its own property portfolio. I believe the School to be one of the biggest employers in the village and the pupils/staff provide good business for the local shops. Why penalise them in this way?

Noted - See changes made in response to comment 40

		I don't see why the School would do anything other than enhance its own facilities on these green spaces, which would be to the benefit of the village. The School is very into sport and it is not going to compromise its ability to play games on these areas. We should trust it to behave responsibly with respect to the village that it has supported for 150 years.	
43	Julie Simpson	My opinions are below. (Not green-space for Bloxham School land.)	See changes made in response to comment 40
44	Alice Hickling	No comments but – protect all areas except the rugby field	See changes made in response to comment 40
45	Alison Garcia	I believe the school should retain developmental autonomy over the green areas in question.	See changes made in response to comment 40
46	David Yates	This is an excellent summary of the extensive material collected and assessed since the inaugural village meeting at the Jubilee Hall in 2011. The emerging/changing nature of NPPF guidance and slow gestation of Cherwell's Local Plan must have been frustrating for the authors, but I'm grateful they have stuck with the imposed process and produced such a readable document. The evidence base shared in the consultation sessions and online is impressive and has given me insights to many aspects of the village that I had not fully appreciated, despite having lived here for more than 30 years, I'll be happy to support the Plan in the forthcoming referendum.	We have also been urged to include more on habitats and we have taken the liberty of adding the swift survey, which I believe you were involved in, into the sustainability Report,
47	Richard Devesa	I do not wish to see development on any of the areas I have ticked below. (All green-space areas except the Red Lion Gardens)	Noted
48	Linda King	The protection of the Bloxham School Rugby ground portion of Hobb Hill to the right of the public footpath should be extended to the left of the public footpath to preserve the vista and amenity of Hobb Hill and preclude the possibility of future development of that land which could only serve to exacerbate the flooding problem and the traffic problem associated with the Primary School, on Courtington Lane.	Previous consultations have also prompted protection of the views and ambiance of Hobb Hill which the public do regularly access. We have added protection of the views from this PROW under Theme 2.
49	Jon Carlton	Generally, we are very supportive of both the direction and detail of the Plan. One specific comment regarding Policy EBA - we would support modest development of existing business facilities where there is space in the premises or land already owned. In particular we would support development of small business units of a suitable nature on the site owned by Bloxham Mill. We would very much support the proposed engagement with Oxfordshire CC and with CDC in the areas where, so far, they have been ineffectual or insufficiently supportive of appropriate development to Bloxham. This particularly relates to schooling, highways and the use of Section 106 funding. We strongly support development of superfast Broadband and are unsure of the logic behind Barford Road (and presumably Bloxham Mill) potentially receiving this facility some months after the core part of the village.	The Parish Council have recently supported appropriate expansion of Bloxham Mill.
50	Rosalind Carlton	Generally, we are very supportive of both the direction and detail of the Plan.	The Parish Council have recently

		One specific comment regarding Policy EBA - we would support modest development of existing business facilities where there is space in the premises or land already owned. In particular we would support development of small business units of a suitable nature on the site owned by Bloxham Mill. We would very much support the proposed engagement with Oxfordshire CC and with CDC in the areas where, so far, they have been ineffectual or insufficiently supportive of appropriate development to Bloxham. This particularly relates to schooling, highways and the use of Section 106 funding. We strongly support development of superfast Broadband and are unsure of the logic behind Barford Road (and presumably Bloxham Mill) potentially receiving this facility some months after the core part of the village.	supported appropriate expansion of Bloxham Mill.
51	David Hammond (Natural England)	Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 08 January 2015 which was received by Natural England on 08 January 2015. Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development. The consultation draft identifies the issues and areas that affect Bloxham Neighbourhood Parish area. The Neighbourhood Forum has identified relevant legislation such as the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Cherwell Local Plan together with Oxfordshire County Council documents where appropriate, this is to be welcomed and encouraged. Section 3.2 refers to Issues and Challenges and identifies the Preservation of Green Buffers (ii) and Protection of valued green areas (x) which is also to be welcomed and encouraged. The provision of green infrastructure, as part of new development proposals, can provide opportunities to enhance and increase open/green space provision, provide links to and across existing facilities, through green chains, green corridors and potentially help towards promoting sustainable transport options such as walking and cycling. NPPF paragraphs 109 and 110 would help the Parish in this area, identifying policy to assist in preventing impacts on areas and enhancing ecology and biodiversity. Subject to the above, Natural England has no further substantive comments to make in respect of the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan public consultation draft consultation document. For any queries relating to the specific advice in this letter only please contact David Hammond on 0300 060 1373. For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.	Noted – see especially Theme 2 policies upon the importance of space in street-scenes and vistas. See also updated Theme 1 policies which seek to encourage better low-carbon connectivity.
52	Robert Aplin	Congratulations on such a comprehensive & well thought through document. We have one reservation regarding the need to liaise more closely with Bloxham School (viz their playing fields). Otherwise our comments are as follows; + Section 7 Bloxham Projects; under 7.2 if Oxfordshire CC continue to drag their heels over issues such as our "urban" classification, the mini roundabout & repairs to Old Bridge Road we should by-	See changes made in response to comment 40 See revised Theme 1 policy on parking. (Planning law has very

		<p>pass them & enlist the help of Banbury's new MP. + New development play areas at Collins & Aldous Drives appear to be little used which should reinforce our case with CDC in focussing upgrades/extensions to play facilities at The Rec & Jubilee Park.</p> <p>+ Section 8 We should press CDC to ensure that they monitor & take action with developers who use inappropriate materials. Collins Drive is a classic example of their neglect. If Chipping Norton can do it (West Oxon DC) so should CDC.</p>	<p>recently changed on this topic.) The Parish Council is working with CDC to seek the majority of funding be directed to these 2 main areas.</p> <p>See strengthened Theme 2 policies on protecting rural character.</p>
53	Sylvia Davy	<p>Lets keep Bloxham a village and not allow it to be turned into an urban sprawl. One of the reasons people choose to live in a village is that priceless ability to walk at the most 5 minutes from your door and be in the lovely countryside. Therefore I fully support the policies as outlined in the plan.</p>	<p>Noted – See Theme 2 policies on protecting rural character. See also Theme 4.</p>
54	Michael Davy	<p>I fully recognise the need for additional housing being made available for a growing population but to impose it onto a rural community, which has already seen a high level of new developments on greenfield land, is totally unacceptable. We need to maintain the rural aspects, both within the village & the outskirts, so that we retain our sense of close community. The large residential & commercial developments will have a major impact on the traffic on the A361 & any future developments in the village will only exacerbate the problem further. I totally endorse all aspects of the Neighbourhood Plan especially the need to limit new housing & to retain the green spaces as identified in the Plan.</p>	<p>Noted – see especially Theme 2 policies on rural character Also Theme 1 policies on housing numbers connectivity</p>
55	<p>Jon Waite (Taylor Wimpey)</p> <p>Please note – this has been scanned using OCR and so may contain errors not in the original. Please check the original online at the BNDP site.</p>	<p>Taylor Wimpey 1.0 Introduction</p> <p>1.1 This representation to Bloxham Parish Council's consultation on Bloxham's Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) is made by Kemp & Kemp on behalf of Taylor Wimpey Oxfordshire (Taylor Wimpey). Taylor Wimpey is land owner of a site to the south east of Bloxham, referred to as 'Land off Collins Drive'. A plan outlining the site in red can be found at Appendix 1 of this representation.</p> <p>1.2The NDP area follows the boundary of Bloxham Parish. Bloxham is designated a 'Category A' village or 'Service Village' in Cherwell District Council's Submission Local Plan (SLP) October 2014. This means the Council considers Bloxham as one of the more sustainable settlements in the district.</p> <p>1.3 Under Policy Villages 2 in the plan, the Council are allocating an additional 750 dwellings to 'Category A' villages over and above any committed development or windfall allowance. They would be delivered through the Council's Local Plan Part 2 or Neighbourhood Plans.</p> <p>1.4 This representation demonstrates how the allocation of Land off Collins Drive in Bloxham's NDP would deliver a comprehensive housing scheme in a sustainable location and would help the NDP to</p>	<p>We consider our amended plan is in conformity with both the adopted and emerging Local Plan. We have provided more detail of this in the Sustainability Report available from the website.</p>

meet the 'Basic Conditions' at Examination.

2.0 Bloxham's Neighbourhood Development Plan – November 2014

2.1 The Plan, which covers the period to 2031, builds upon the Parish Plan and has been prepared by the accountable body - Bloxham Parish Council. It has been assisted by the Bloxham Neighbourhood Development Plan comprising volunteers drawn from the residents of the Parish.

2.2 The Parish Council have published its 'Public Consultation Draft 1' for a six week consultation before submitting it officially to Cherwell District Council (CDC). CDC will then publish it for a further six week consultation before submitting it for independent examination.

2.3 During the Examination the Examiner will consider whether the NDP meets the 'Basic Conditions'. In this regard, the Plan must:

- have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
- contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
- be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area.

2.4 Before the Council puts the NDP forward for Examination, it needs to be sure that the plan meets these conditions. The areas where Taylor Wimpey consider that the NDP does not meet the conditions are set out below.

3.0 The Level of Housing Allocated in the NDP

3.1 Policy Villages 1: Village Categorisation in the CDC's SLP designates Bloxham as a 'Category A' village or 'Service Centre' meaning it is one of the most sustainable settlements in the district. The categorisation is based on the following criteria:

Bloxham Neighbourhood Development Plan - November 2014

- Population size.
- The number and range of services and facilities within the village (shops, pubs, etc.) »
- Whether there are any significant known issues in the village that could be materially assisted by an increase in housing (for example to maintain pupil numbers at a primary school)
- The accessibility (travel time and distance) of the village to an urban area by private car and public transport (including an assessment of any network constraints)
- Accessibility of the village in terms of walking and cycling,
- Local employment opportunities.

3.2 Due to the sustainable nature of Category A villages, Policy Villages 2: Distributing Growth across the Rural Areas in CDCs SLP states that:

- A total of 750 homes will be delivered at Category A villages. This will be in addition to the allowance for small site "windfalls" and planning permissions for 10 or more dwellings as at

The Village Categorisation is a high-level report that looks at whether a village has facilities without considering the capacity of those facilities.

The Local Plan Inspector also voices concern that more work be done before allocating housing based on the CRAITLUS classifications.

The Sustainability Report clearly shows Bloxham is already at a tipping point and that further large scale development will necessitate levels of infrastructure funding that are unlikely to be forthcoming.

31 March 2014.

- Sites will be identified through the preparation of the Local Plan Part 2, through the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans where applicable, and through the determination of for planning permission.'

3.3 Policy HN Housing Need in Bloxham's NDP states that:

'Provision be made for a further 20 dwellings to be provided through infill, conversions and minor development of 10 or less dwellings. The majority of this provision shall be completed after 2025,'

3.4 This approach is clearly contrary to Policy Villages 2 shown above which allocates 750 homes to Category A villages In addition to small site windfalls and planning permissions for 10 or more dwellings as at 31 March 2014. Policy HN Housing Need only allows for windfall development in Bloxham.

3.5 As explained in paragraph 2.3 above, one of the 'Basic Conditions' the NDP will have to meet when examined is that it should be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan (Local Plan) for the area. In its current form the NDP is not.

3.6 Bloxham's NDP needs to make a housing allocation or remove/amend policy HN so it allows for a housing allocation in CDCs Local Plan Part 2 (as per Policy Villages 2 above).

3.7 Taylor Wimpy would suggest that as Bioxham residents want to have greater control over planning in their community, the allocation is made in their NDP.

3.8 The Local Plan Housing Trajectory 2011 - 2031 in CDC's SLP shows that in order for the Council to have a Five Year Housing Supply as required under paragraph 47 of the National Planning Policy Framework, it needs to deliver 650 housing completions on sites of 10 or more dwellings in the rural areas in the years 2014/15 - 2018/19.

3.9 As Bioxham is so advanced with its NDP (along with other Category A villages Adderbury, Deddington and Hook Norton) it is very likely that CDC will need to see housing completions in Bioxham in order to meet its housing targets. Therefore, the NDPs assertion in policy HN that development shall be completed after 2025 is unlikely to carry favour with CDC or an examiner.

3.10 In summary a housing allocation in Bloxham's NDP will:

- Help ensure the plan meets the 'Basic Conditions' when examined.
- Provide greater control to the local community over where the allocation is made (as opposed to waiting for CDC in make the allocation in its Local Plan Part 2).
- Help ensure support for the plan from CDC by helping the Council meet its Five Year Housing Land Supply target.

4.0 Land off Collins Drive, Bloxham

4.1 Land off Collins Drive, Bloxham lies to the south east of the village and measures some 3.2 hectares. To the east of the site are properties along Church Street and to the south properties along Milton Road. The north-western corner of the site is situated within the Bioxham Conservation Area.

Policy Villages 2 along with neighbourhood plans will deal with the distribution of dwellings between the villages.

We would point to recent CDC have cited overdevelopment of Bloxham and the resulting strains imposed upon infrastructure.

We have removed the policy relating to 2025 although Oxon CC Education would still welcome a pause in development in Bloxham

4.2 The site sits well with the existing built form of Bloxham and is close to existing services and facilities. There are a number of other benefits to the site which are set out below. This will help make the NDP 'contribute to the achievement of sustainable development' (another one of the 'Basic Conditions')

Arboriculture and Ecology

4.3 Taylor Wimpey commissioned The Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd to carry out an Arboriculture! Assessment of the site. It states that there are no trees within or adjacent to the site that are subject to any Tree Preservation Orders. It also shows that across the site there are, in arboricultural and landscape terms, five category A items, 10 category B items, 21 category C items, and 6 category U items.

4.4 A Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Bat Habitat Suitability Assessment has been produced for the site by Ecosulis Ltd. It shows that there are three component habitats on the site, namely:

- Improved grassland - grazed by sheep;
- Hedgerows - along the north, south and east boundaries (the western boundary is made up of wooden fence, brick wall and laurel); and
- Parkland/Scattered trees - broad-leaved

4.5 The assessment recommends that mature trees and boundary habitats should be retained where possible. The report also identifies two trees having the potential to supported roosting bats however. In taking this advice, it would be the intention of Taylor Wimpey to retain these important natural assets wherever possible in the final design.

4.6 A badger set has been identified but any proposal can easily meet the required exclusion zone.

Landscaping and Open Space

4.7 A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment for the stia has been prepared by The environmental Dimension Partnership II confirms that the site does not lie within or adjacent to any national landscape designations (although it is within an Area of High Landscape Value).

4,8 The- assessment concludes that the site is well contained and visibility of any development would be limited. It also states that the site would be able to accommodate- some change without significant effects on the local character or the wider landscape.

Transport and Access

4.8 A Transport Assessment and Travel plans been prepared for the site. It concludes that the site offers good access to the local highway network. It suggests that Milton Road would be a suitable point for vehicular access. It also slates that:

- There is no accident problem associated with the local highway network with just 2 accidents recorded within the past 5 years on Berry Hill Rd;
- The Site is accessible by sustainable modes of transport, with bus services providing connections to Banbury and Oxford, footways providing linkages to the village centre

Note- this is a VERY sensitive area of the village.

Probable cuts to the already limited bus service have recently been announced

The independent Sustrans report on cycling and walking in Bloxham paints a **VERY** different picture to the one that you present.

- end local roads being suitable for use by cyclists and Milton Road offers considerable reserve capacity and would be able to accommodate the additional traffic associated with a development.

Flood Risk and Drainage

4.10 A Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared for the site. It shows that the site is within Flood Zone 1 meaning that it has little or no risk of fluvial flooding. It also shows that development of the site would not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

4.11 Furthermore a Sustainable Drainage System (SUDs) could be implemented on the site.

Ground Contamination

4.12 A Land Contamination Preliminary Risk Assessment has been produced for the site. The assessment concludes that based on the historic use of the site, the information obtained on recorded pollution incidents and the geographical ground conditions, that the site does not present a risk of pollution to potential future residents.

5.0 Policies in Bloxham's Neighbourhood Development Plan - November 2014

5.1 Development of Land off Collins Drive, Bloxham would satisfy the following NDP policies:

HR2: Be in keeping with neighbouring properties and the village in general in terms of materials, style, scale, separation and character - Every attempt would be made with the design to ensure that the new dwellings fit with the local vernacular by building to an appropriate scale and style with suitable materials,

HR1 Lean Towards rural, not urban in respect of gardens, hedgerows, trees and soft-boundaries - Appropriate landscaping for the rural location would form part of any design. As stated above important trees and hedges would be retained

HR6. Avoid significant adverse effects upon existing residents re. privacy, noise and light pollution etc.- The preservation of local amenity would be a key aspect at the final design.

HA2: Encourage high-quality non-estate houses and bungalows sufficiently attractive to meet the needs of households who may wish to downsize - The site offers the potential to deliver a range of dwelling types. As an example, it could be possible to position bungalows towards the north of the site. This would both help protect views of the church and provide housing for a variety of needs.

HA3- New housing to offer adequate parking on the property not in distant parking courts or on-street - The development would be built using the appropriate parking standards to ensure the street scene is attractive to new and existing residents.

HT1: Development that can demonstrate its location and design will not significantly exacerbate traffic congestion at the village centre or other traffic hotspots - As stated in the Transport Assessment referred to above, access to the site would be from Milton Road. This area is not identified as a traffic hotspot in Appendix 1 of the NDP.

CT1: Design an environment that improves linkages between areas and services and facilities - There

Given the recent (March 2015) ministerial announcements upon parking standards the appropriate parking standards will be the one found in the new Theme 1 BNDP policies of the revised plan.

is a public right of way (PROW) to the south west of the site. There is potential to link the development to the PROW and on to the village services and facilities- This will help to sustain the services and facilities and ensure Bloxham remains a vibrant village.

CT3: Protect rights of way and take opportunities to improve general village connectivity - See above
CR2 Support the moderate upgrading / extension of the Jubilee Hall - Taylor Wimpey would make the appropriate developer contributions through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and or/a section 106 Agreement. This would provide funding for a range of services and facilities including potentially the Jubilee Hall

6.0 Summary and Conclusion.

6.1 Summary . Taylor Wimpey wishes to make the following key points on the Bloxham NDP: Bloxham is a Category A village in CDC's SLP meaning. It is one of the most sustainable settlements in the district. Policy Villages 2- Distributing Growth across Rural Areas in CDC's SLP states that 750 so dwellings will be delivered in the A villages over and above small site windfalls and outstanding permissions as at 31 March 2014. Policy HN Housing Need for Bloxham's NDP however states that only 20 dwellings will be provided for through Infill and minor development of 10 or fewer dwellings This policy is therefore contrary to Policy Villages 2. When the plan goes to examination, the examiner will need to consider whether the plan is in conformity with the Development Plan (the Local Plan) or not. It is likely that the NDP will fail at examination in this respect To help get the plan through examination, the cap should be lifted in policy HN and a housing allocation provided or Bloxham Parish Council could wait for an allocation to be made in CDC's forthcoming Local Plan Part 2 but for full community involvement Taylor Wimpey recommend that the allocation made in the NDP

Land off Collina Drive is an ideal site to allocate in the NDP for the following reasons:

- There are no arboriculture and ecology constraints on the site and any mature trees and boundary habitats can be retained in the design for the scheme,
- A Land and Visual Impact Assessment shows the site can be developed without significant effects on the local character or the wider landscape.
- The site is in Flood Zone 1 meaning it is least likely to flood or cause flooding elsewhere.
- Vehicle access to and from the site can be obtained safely from Milton Road - The road is not identified as a Traffic Hotspot in the NDP.
- It is accessible by sustainable modes of transport including foot, cycle and public transport.
- The development would satisfy the majority of policies in the NDP including those which seek sympathetic design, appropriate parking provision, traffic management, improved linkages between residential areas and services and facilities and funding towards services and facilities.

We think BNDP is consistent with Villages Policy 1 and will sit alongside Villages Policy 2 in determining the distribution of dwellings.

56	Ian Cox	I agree in principle with the policy statements contained within the Neighbourhood Plan and particularly those relating to giving green belt status to specific areas. I believe that the village is currently at capacity given the infrastructure that already exists.	Noted – see especially Theme 2 policies on the importance of space in street-scenes and vistas and Theme 4 on recreation spaces.
57	Alan and Margaret Griffin	<p>We agree with all the stated policies. In particular:</p> <p>HA All new houses should have adequate on-site space for wheelie bins and car-parking -- at least two car-spaces per house.</p> <p>HC All the approved sites are liable to flood. Suitable drainage MUST be installed.</p> <p>HT The current approved housing estates have contributed money to ease the traffic problems. Nothing has been done. The new houses will make the traffic worse. What is being done about this?</p> <p>CR We support the upgrade of the Jubilee Hall and the all-weather pitch for the Warriner School.</p> <p>CS The Rec, Jubilee Park, Red Lion Gardens, Bloxham School Cricket Ground and Bloxham School Rugby Field on Hobb Hill. It is essential that all these spaces should be preserved so that they can NEVER be built upon.</p>	<p>Noted – see especially the Theme 1 updated parking policies.</p> <p>See Theme 1 policies on climate change and SuDS.</p> <p>See Sustainability Report. OCC do not seem to have any significant plans to improve the Bloxham traffic situation despite recent permissions being based upon understandings to the contrary.</p>
58	Matthew Buckland	<p>Having moved to the village less than a year ago I perceive one of the major issues to be traffic around the shops. Cars driving over and parking on the pavement in a haphazard fashion is an accident waiting to happen. This area needs to be redesigned to accommodate both pedestrians and customer parking safely. As the southern area of Bloxham expands this is likely to get worse.</p> <p>There are some contradictions in the plans. For example a stated desire to expand recreational facilities on the edge of town which is likely to directly oppose the desire not to increase light pollution on the village periphery. With modern lighting this should be manageable so it would be better to omit the statement regarding light pollution if it is agreed recreational facilities for a growing population is vital.</p> <p>Whilst maintaining green space is important I cannot see how this can be enforced or indeed should be on private landowners or local employers / businesses. Potentially adding long term constraints to local business would seem detrimental to their sustainability. I would prefer constraints put on urban sprawl at the village periphery whilst allowing sensible in-fill or indeed business and employment development.</p>	<p>Noted – see especially revised parking policies but no-one has come up with any solution for the village centre traffic chaos. (The parking areas are not in public ownership.)</p> <p>Lighting is only likely to be approved if it is of a modern low-leakage design.</p> <p>Also see response to 40. We have provided Bloxham School with the flexibility you suggest.</p>
59	Angela Morris	<p>HR1 & HR2 I feel strongly that recent housing developments have not been sympathetic to the rural character of the village and any further developments must be.</p> <p>CT2 it is extremely important that there should only be future development if there are sufficient Primary school places for the children of the village. Bloxham children should not have to travel to other villages to go to school.</p>	<p>Noted – see especially Theme 2 on protecting rural character.</p> <p>School capacity issues which we address in Theme 1</p>

60	Susan Myburgh	<p>The authors of the Plan have identified the key features to retain the rural nature of Bloxham and are to be commended for this. As a former resident of Bloxham, now living 1.5 miles away, and still greatly involved in village activities there, I agree it is essential that Bloxham retains its rural nature otherwise it becomes a satellite of Banbury.</p> <p>HR- The type of housing to be built should be varied, reflecting traditional styles and catering for the needs of an ageing population who HA -wish to remain in the village but need to downsize to an appropriate property. The new developments seem to have been imposed upon the village with little thought of their impact, particularly to the amount and flow of traffic.</p> <p>CR -A condition of any new development should be for the developer to make a significant contribution to improving community facilities e.g .refurbishment of the Jubilee Hall.</p> <p>CS - The green spaces of the Rec, Jubilee Park and the Red Lion gardens should be preserved. I have reservations about the Bloxham School land as they may need to change its use in the future, although this seems unlikely as there is no other land for their sports in the vicinity.</p>	<p>Noted – especially downsize housing Theme 1 policies on demographic change and Theme 4 policy on the Jubilee Hall</p> <p>See also Response to 40. We have provided Bloxham School with this flexibility.</p>
61	Alison Urwick	<p>Traffic on Milton Rd should be listed as a hot spot</p> <p>Stronger emphasis on conservation area</p> <p>Otherwise - policies great!</p>	<p>Noted – You are right that already permitted developments along the Milton Rd in both Bloxham and Adderbury are exacerbating traffic problems.</p> <p>We have introduced a new Theme 2 policy on protection of the conservation area</p>
62	Tony Bliss	<p>CS1 Green belt suggests protecting land for all. Bloxham School Cricket / Rugby ground is NOT for all therefore some agreement for partial common use by the community rather than ring-fenced</p> <p>EDC Better mobile and internet connection very necessary</p> <p>HA1 Strongly agree - I do not want to live in a middle-class home-counties ghetto. We need diversity of backgrounds</p> <p>HN2 - Not large estatescorrect. Small estates probably OK. We need to take on our fair share of solving the housing shortage and avoid being NIMBYs.</p>	<p>Noted but what level of access Bloxham School gives to the public is not a planning matter.</p> <p>See Theme 4 policy on mobiles but the mobile operators are very hard to liaise with.</p> <p>The plan is positively disposed to appropriate sustainable levels of development</p>

63	Ian Eves	CR1 (All-weather pitch) Yes - excellent idea CR2 (Jubilee extension) - support this CS1 (Green-space) - In favour ELW (live-work) - support all -small scale.employment is life-blood. ERF (Parking) Yes - parking is a REAL issue. EDC (Mobiles) Support with concern re masts. HC1 - 4 (Climate) Support HT1 (Traffic) - Support CT1 - 3 (Low carbon Travel) support HA1 (affordable housing - preference to parish connection) - a must / absolute	Noted We think these are all covered in the revised plan. Access to “affordable” housing by villagers has not been a problem. The problem is houses villagers can afford (to buy!)
64	Kate and David Broughall	No more traffic through the village or strained village facilities e.g. school. Preserve green spaces so that future inevitable building does not result in a village 'concrete jungle.'	Noted See Theme 2 and 4 on spaces
65	Donna Duncombe	I support all the recommendations in the plan and would like the finalised document to be made available to those larger developers who currently have planning permissions.	Noted The document will be publically available – as will this one.
66	Ann Dancer	i was born in this village and have seen many changes not all was for the good of the village. the only thing this village needs is, no more buildings especially in the heart of the village a bigger primary school as well	Noted See Theme 2 policy on garden development and Theme 1 policy on primary school capacity.
67	Brendan Duffy	The reason why i moved to Bloxham and invested in a property is because of its character which is slowly being eroded with indentikit housing developments. The village can't cope with more cars on the roads, children in the school or drainage and sewerage channels. As an aside, the Slade is in bad need of work done to make it more usable and accessible.	Noted See Theme 1 policies on amenity of existing residents. The Slade is about to become owned by the Parish and has now been designated a green-space
68	Dan McInerney	Particularly agree with: HN: If the plan's proposals are unsuccessful, surely there has to be some developer limits placed... why can't it be limited to a certain number of dwellings over a certain period of time...? Is there any need for more than that? CT2: There needs to be some sort of structure to how school places for Bloxham families are allocated - particularly in regards to residents housed in newer developments with children (already placed in schools elsewhere) compared to those with children born and raised in the village. CT3: We are in need of a crossing by the church. The footpath ends on one side and the corner makes for dangerous crossing - especially for those less able. With the surgery, dentist and church right there, surely that's enough reason to get a pedestrian crossing built.	Noted See Policy BL1 & 2 on numbers See Theme 1 policy on school capacity. This Plan cannot influence school entry policies. See Sustrans report and Theme 1 policies on connectivity. OCC have the responsibility for road safety and would have to fund a crossing.

69	Glyn Williams	<p>HR5/6 Will the all weather pitch and lights at the Warriner not have an adverse affect. CR1 I seem to recall the Warriner swimming pool was meant to be joint-use facility. EDC Most mobile companies now share aerials. CR2 The Jubilee Hall needs more than moderate upgrading/extension. Whilst only 1:5 thought the village could support a larger facility it rather depends on the question asked. With a growing population better facilities are needed, improved play area and a trim trail for adults. Small play areas in developments separates communities.</p> <p>CS1 What is the ratio of persons using the Red Lion gardens as a village green?</p> <p>Could the copse and the ridge and furrow field behind Schofields Way be designated 'green belt.'</p>	<p>Noted Permission for Warriner pitch lighting will insist on low-leakage lights – see policy BL34</p> <p>The PC is working with the Trust that owns the Rec to improve them. e.g. At BloxFest huge numbers use the red Lion Garden. This is already designated as a wild life area in Cherwell’s info maps.</p>
70	Sophie Floate	I agree with the Neighbourhood plan.	Noted
71	Lsa Hammonds	<p>I totally agree with all the statements below but feel it will all be too late as the unique village of Bloxham has almost vanished and will never ever come back. Many of the fields which now have planning permission were once designated as 'green belt' areas, and it's only a matter of time before there's a serious accident on the Tadmarton Road or Courtington Lane at school time. Those with the power don't care and those that care no longer have any power over their environment.</p>	<p>Noted See especially Theme 2 policies on rural character. See also Theme 1 policies on connectivity and parking.</p>
72	Diane Clark	Network Rail has no comments	Noted
73	David Keable	<p>Generally I think the Neighbourhood Plan as presented reflects the opinions of most residents of Bloxham.</p> <p>I support the Themes and Objectives (para 5), and in particular the objective 1D regarding the needs of residents seeking to downsize.</p>	Noted – especially Theme 1 policies on the need for downsize housing.
74	Sian Morris	<p>The level of development in Bloxham has left the village already in a ridiculous state. There is a massive health and safety issue regarding access to school already with cars driving along pavement everyday where children are walking. School has no scope for further development (it's already been expanded so much you have situation when children are not allowed balls in the playground because it's so small for the number of children.</p>	<p>Noted – especially situation re school and traffic – See Theme 1 policies on school and connectivity.</p>
75	Keith R Mitchell	<p>I have studied your draft neighbourhood plan and much of the related documentation. I am baffled that there is no mention of what I assume is Bloxham largest business - Bloxham School. It is a significant employer and has a substantial footprint in Bloxham. It contributes in many ways to the community as well as to the local economy.</p> <p>Despite the absence of this major employer in your evidence base, you are seeking to block potential development on the School's land holdings. The School is an important part of the village's economy</p>	<p>Information is in the supporting evidence base but some has now</p>

		and makes a valuable contribution to education. If it needs to build classes or dormitories in the future, it would be most regrettable if it was prevented by this plan.	been moved into the Plan itself.
		I find the omission of the School from the business evidence base puzzling unless authors of the plan have an inherent objection to private education?	We have responded positively to the Bloxham School comments.
76	Vincent, Alan & Carole	We support the Plan which covers all the significant points that we would like to see incorporated.	Noted
77	Geoff Mollard	<p>Community CR recreational facilities: CR b consideration needs to be given to the current refurbishment programme currently being undertaken by the New Management Committee and Project team for the Jubilee Hall and this together with the proposed expansion of the Facilities at the Hall means word Moderate is no longer appropriate and therefore should be removed from the wording in the plan.</p> <p>The use of the word moderate, by interpretation, could restrict the amount of work that clearly has to be done to not only take account of many years of neglect but to achieve a result that will reflect the considerable growth in village population.</p> <p>A great deal of work needs to take place to bring the hall up to modern standards, improve recreational facilities and in so doing capitalise on the effective use of green space for all users</p> <p>3B: I believe the reference that only 1 In 5 residents think Bloxham could support an additional venue is misleading and that this is as a direct consequence of the reference in the questionnaire to the Church becoming a community centre which now appears unlikely to happen and that this statistic should therefore be deleted from the plan.</p> <p>CS local green space: CS1 I appreciate the designation of the jubilee Park as a Designated green space but account needs to be taken of the fact that the whilst the playing field area is to be retained the Jubilee Hall will need to be expanded with new changing facilities to match the intensive use of the playing field.</p> <p>Traffic hotspots: Could you please make reference in your NDP return to the dramatic increase in traffic using the Milton Road into Bloxham and the effect on the congestion at the mini roundabout at the junction with the A361.</p> <p>I fully support the NDP and offer my congratulations to all concerned for their perseverance and commitment to the future of Bloxham village.</p>	<p>Noted – especially regarding unduly constraining The Jubilee Hall.</p> <p>See Theme 4 policies where we have responded to remove the term moderate.</p> <p>Noted – that the Milton Rd traffic levels is already becoming an issue.</p>
78	Anthony Marsh	I fully support the recommendations of the neighbourhood plan especially the protection of all green spaces.	Noted see Theme 2 and 4 policies

79	Dyls Marsh	I fully support the recommendations of the neighbourhood plan especially the protection of all green spaces	Noted see Theme 2 and 4 policies
80	Marina Brounger	C.S Local Green Space : I don't believe Bloxham's School's Rugby ground needs to be protected. If the school, at some stage, wanted to develop the land adjoining Courtington Lane they should be able to do so. I walk on hob hill most days and would prefer this to be protected. Hob Hill is of greater interest as it has ancient ridge and furrow.	See response to comment 40 Theme 2 policies now seek to protect views from the public footpath on Hobb Hill - which is of course adjacent to and in many parts overlooks the aforementioned rugby field
81	J Byrd	Bloxham is a village. We do not wish to live in a town. Otherwise I'd have bought a house in a town!	Noted - See Theme 2 policies to preserve rural character,.
82	Tracy Cuthbert	we no longer need or want any more houses in Bloxham. The Primary School & Drs are full to capacity and it is no longer fair to them or the villagers. How on earth will Tadmarton Road cope with all the floods, how is Barford Road field going to cope with the floods, how are the new children going to get to a different schools. More and more houses are being built and we have no sports facilities and the existing parks are dated and need renovation.	Noted. See especially: Theme 1 policies on housing numbers and primary school capacity and Theme 4 on recreation areas.
83	Jane Labuda	Please stop large scale development as we rush becoming suburb of Banbury, overfilling our schools and disproportionately increasing residents who are in Social Housing so that village and school lost their high class reputation and become isolated ghetto	Noted. See especially: Theme 1 policies on housing numbers and primary school capacity.
84	Mobile Operators Association	Received by email Thank you for your recent consultation on the above. We have considered the proposal relevant to the Mobile Operators Association and offer the following comments on their behalf. We would like to offer our support to the inclusion of Policy EDC - Digital Communication, within the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan. We welcome the inclusion of this policy within the Neighbourhood Plan to facilitate telecommunications development and support its provisions which we find to be generally in accordance with the guidance within National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) relating to both development planning and to support for communications infrastructure. We trust you find the above comments of assistance. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any queries relating to the above matters. Yours faithfully Jacquelyn Fee BSc MSc Mono Consultants	Noted. See Theme 3 policies on mobile equipment. Note also public concerns voiced in this document about masts being as non-intrusive as possible.
85	Mike Tydeman on Pastor of Bloxham Baptist Church	Consultation feedback on behalf of Bloxham Baptist Church Our chapel in Hawke Lane is used daily by up to 200 people (members and non-members) every week but it is not of an adequate size for our Sunday morning worship, nor for some weddings and	Noted – and empathised with but in the absence of suggestions of land or funding for land then this scale

	<p>funerals. Ever since the Warriner School was built we have been hiring the school facilities each Sunday to accommodate our congregation of approximately 120 people. Although we are extremely grateful for the relationship we enjoy with the school, their facilities are not ideal for our needs, but manageable.</p> <p>For a number of years we have been very open to the potential of building a significantly larger community building in Bloxham if ever a suitable plot of land were available. This would not be 'a church' but would be a versatile resource owned and managed by Bloxham Baptist Church for the benefit of other community users as well as for its own purposes. An example of a similar project is at Finchampstead and can be seen at http://www.finchampstead.com/Groups/184845/Finchampstead_Baptist_Church/FBC_Centre/FBC_Centre.aspx</p> <p>We note the intention in the Neighbourhood Plan for a moderate extension to the Jubilee Hall. We are hesitant to support this for two reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A moderate extension to this existing facility will still not be large enough or versatile enough to meet the needs of the community, and 2. Its location is poor in terms of visibility and the access roads to the Jubilee Hall are inadequate for existing, let alone potentially higher, levels of traffic. <p>In the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire results, only 2 in 5 respondents felt that the village could not 'support' a larger community building. We would suggest that an attractive, versatile building with good access and parking would benefit our community but would also be supported by neighbouring village communities and Banbury.</p> <p>We would favour greater dialogue and some joined-up thinking between the trustees of the Ellen Hinde, Ex-Servicemens, Jubilee and Baptist Halls to find a solution that will really enhance our village.</p> <p>With regards to protecting green space from housing or business development we feel that it is important to protect them but would not want to prevent development if it would improve the access, function or community value of the overall space. We do not believe that we can protect space that is privately owned such as the school sites even if we might feel as in the case of the cricket pitch that it is an inherent part of the village's identity.</p>	<p>of Community Hall project is not something we can include as a planning policy.</p> <p>It is totally feasible to protect space that is privately owned space (Most existing green belt falls into this category.) We have however adopted less constraining policies w.r.t. Bloxham School land.</p>
<p>86 Jan Price</p>	<p>Policy CS1- Protecting the use of Red Lion Gardens, if privately owned, seems overly bossy and manipulative. As far as I am aware Bloxham School own the other two areas I have ticked as not being appropriate for 'protection' due to their private ownership.</p>	<p>Noted - Private ownership is no reason not to protect valued spaces. (Most existing green belt falls into this category.)</p>
<p>87 Ian Crawford</p>	<p>(Delivered to Drs Surgery)</p>	

		<p>With over 90% of residents against ANY developments, this survey is admirable in its desire to APPEAR to give the people of Bloxham a chance to control unwanted building. However there is not a snowballs chance those "Officials" will listen to or respect Residents" wishes.</p> <p>Why? In this country do NOT operate as a democracy i.e. government by the People OR their elected Representatives.</p> <p>But we DO HAVE a Democratic Centralism i.e. Policy decided centrally by "Officials" So these "Officials" WILL allow us to go through the motions of APPEARING to hold a democratic poll whilst all the time having NO INTENTION of allowing democracy to Rule. OK!</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>We realise you will not be alone in this view but are more optimistic that the views of the community will carry at least some weight via the BNDP</p>
88	Beryl Armstrong	<p>Overall a very confident and well thought out document especially on housing.</p> <p>Disappointed that no mention of public transport trying to be improved or perhaps encouraging a local mini bus to start up. As an older person with an ill husband I have not met many people and so life is very lonely – no associations or clubs that can visit or friendly meetings to join.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Regrettably it looks like even the present level of public transport is due to be cut. We hope the Sustainability Report offers information to influence planning but cannot influence this via Neighbourhood Plan policies</p>
89	Clive and Patricia Millward	<p>In general we support the policies. We retain concerns about the provision of primary school places for all Bloxham children of the appropriate age. We should strive to provide affordable housing for people born in Bloxham and wish to remain here. We have concerns that the long term house build will seek to provide far more houses than necessary. We have major concerns that the character of the village will be changed beyond recognition. We have concerns that the green areas beyond the “proposed” green spaces will be eaten up by housing leaving very little natural countryside. In the light of problems we already encounter with water and electricity supply, we are concerned that additional housing will add substantially to these problems.</p> <p>In terms of water surface flooding, we have evidence of floods to the depth of 2-3 feet over large areas near the recreation grounds and the fields behind Colesbourne Road (dated photos from 2006 – 2014).</p> <p>Our final concern is the increased risk to children and the elderly on the roads throughout Bloxham.</p>	<p>Noted – See especially:</p> <p>Theme 1 policy re. primary school</p> <p>Theme 2 policies on rural character</p> <p>Theme 1 policy on water capacity and SuDS</p> <p>Theme 1 policy on road safety.</p>
90	Terence Hollyoake	<p>I entirely agree with the policies set out in the Neighbourhood Plan and am particularly opposed to the urban sprawl of large estates recently or currently being built in the south of the village e.g Barford Road, Milton Road (2) and Tadmarton Road with little consideration for the village as a whole.</p>	<p>Noted. See especially:</p> <p>Theme 2 policies on rural character</p>
91	William Richardson	<p>I fully endorse the contents of this plan. It appears to be a thoroughly researched and well worded document, and I fully agree with all of the policies.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
92	Susanna Howard	<p>We need to protect our recreational areas</p>	<p>This is already designated as a wild</p>

		life area in Cherwell’s info maps.
<p>93 Mark Rose</p> <p>Re. Field on S Newington Rd</p>	<p>I write on behalf of my client William Davis Ltd with regard to the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan consultation. My clients are a house building company who have secured an interest in land to the east of South Newington Road to the south of Bloxham (SHLAA reference BL029). Bloxham has been the focus of developer interest in recent years, with speculative applications seeking to take advantage of the substantial 5 year land supply shortage in the District (that still remains). However, the community’s concerns in relation to the implications of ad-hoc development in the village is recognised. In that respect, my clients welcome the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan as a means of providing a local policy context to compliment the emerging Cherwell District Local Plan 2006-2031, both Part 1 which has recently been examined and we expect to be found to be “sound”, and Part 2 which will be progressed shortly.</p> <p>Housing Need</p> <p>My clients do not, however, accept the presumption in the Neighbourhood Plan and supporting papers that given the permissions that have been recently granted in and around the village, there should only now be very limited further development through to the end of the plan period. Policy Villages 1 in Part 1 of the Cherwell District Local Plan (as proposed to be modified) anticipates minor development, infilling and conversions at the Category A and Category B villages, recognising “that there is a need for Cherwell’s Villages to sustainably contribute towards meeting the housing requirements identified in Policy BSC1.”</p> <p>The requirements identified in Policy BSC1 relate to the housing need for the District identified in the most recent 2014 SHMA. However, the Local Plan explicitly recognises in the supporting text that Oxford may not be able to accommodate the whole of its housing requirement in the period to 2031. Consequently under the Duty-to-Cooperate, there may be a requirement for Cherwell District to accommodate a higher level of development than currently planned for, and that would be facilitated through a rapid partial review of the Local Plan. Indeed we would argue on the basis of the published figures and evidence that this is inevitable.</p> <p>Policy Villages 2, as proposed to be modified, refers to the delivery of 750 homes in the Category A villages. That level of provision is in addition to sites that already have planning permission (including those at Bloxham) and an allowance for small windfall sites. It does not yet take account of additional needs that have been identified in the wider Housing Market Area (notably Oxford). The policy states that sites to deliver these homes will be identified in Part 2 of the Local Plan, Neighbourhood Plans and through planning applications (the later of which is likely to continue in the absence of a demonstrable 5 year land supply in the District).</p> <p>Bloxham is the largest of the Category A Service Villages, the best served in terms of community</p>	<p>We note – recognition of extensive level of recent development.</p> <p>At the time of writing CDC have a 5-year supply of housing land.</p> <p>We believe this plan is consistent with Policy Villages 1</p> <p>The Cherwell categorisation is high-level and does not examine capacities. The BNDP Sustainability Report takes a far more detailed and realistic look at capacities and paints a very different picture. See also Local Plan Inspectors comments on this.</p> <p>There are published opinions in both directions regarding the latest SHMA. e.g. CPRE are convinced it overstates demand.</p> <p>At the time of writing CDC have a 5 year supply of housing land.</p>

infrastructure and facilities, well related to Banbury and unconstrained by Green Belt. As such it is one of the villages in the District that is best able to accommodate future growth. Consequently whilst your concerns in regard to the number of planning permissions that have recently been granted in the village is acknowledged, it would be entirely unreasonable for the Neighbourhood Plan to presume that further development to contribute to meeting the identified needs in the District, let alone the wider Housing Market Area, is not required or appropriate. Indeed, it is apparent that my client's site would accord with the criteria set out in Policy Villages 2 for the selection of future development sites.

Given that the Neighbourhood Plan must generally comply with the provisions and requirements of the emerging Local Plan, you may receive representations from the development industry that suggest that the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan is put on hold or delayed until such time as the need for further allocations in the village is confirmed. My clients view however, is that the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan could continue as long as there is an explicit recognition within it that further residential development is likely to be required in the village to contribute to meeting the identified housing needs within the plan period.

William Davis Ltd do recognise the Parish Council's concerns in relation to the capacity of the facilities and infrastructure in the village. However, that is a common issue around the District and County, and the solution is not to restrict the housing development required to meet existing and identified future needs in otherwise sustainable locations, but to seek solutions to remedy those matters through securing investment in the forward planning and development management processes. That is a matter my clients would be very willing to address in discussions with the service providers, County and District Council and of course the Parish Council.

Therefore, Policy HN should be revised to accurately reflect the policy context established by the emerging Local Plan, that further development will be required in the village to meet the District's housing needs, and the potential that a further review of Local Plan to meet wider housing market area needs may result in a further increase in the development requirement. Furthermore, Policy CT (criterion b) should not seek to phase or delay development required to meet identified needs on the basis of infrastructure constraints that can be addressed through a replanning of provision and/or further investment.

Other Proposed Policies: The focus in the Neighbourhood Plan on ensuring good design in the future development of the village to respect the local character and historic and natural assets of the area is very much welcomed. Consequently the intent of Policy HR Rural Heritage and Landscape is supported. Indeed, it is suggested that the policy might be expended to include a reference to the provision of multi-functional green infrastructure that incorporates natural habitat enhancements, strategic landscaping, sustainable drainage features, recreation routes and opportunities for play.

The BNDP has to comply with the adopted not emerging plan – but we do take full note of the latter. There is certainly no reason to put BNDP on hold.

The NPPF and NPPG make clear that requisite infrastructure issues are not an optional extra and that where feasible, development should proceed accompanied by supporting infrastructure. Evidence from independent professionals (E.g. Oxfordshire C.C. on schools and Sustrans on connectivity) is that such supporting infrastructure is simply not currently practicable.

Despite infrastructure capacity issues, we still seek to be in accord with Cherwell Villages 1

We note support for respecting our rural character and heritage. we include more detail on character areas -policies BL16 – 21

Similarly the intent of Policy HA Appropriate Housing is also supported, although it should be recognised that future housing development would need to respond to established needs (in terms of type and size of dwellings) for the village and wider District, and that the allocation of affordable housing is often outwith the control of the developer. Furthermore, whilst design is to a degree a subjective matter, the phraseology used in criterion b is very much open to interpretation and, therefore, that aspect would be difficult to practically apply. We would instead suggest incorporating an aspiration for local distinctiveness to reflect the prevailing character of the village. Policy HC in relation to climate change mitigation has worthy aspirations, and for the main part is appropriate. However, you should take account of the Government's Housing Standards Review which is seeking to consolidate the current myriad of complex technical standards (including those relating to water and energy) into the Building Regulations. The Neighbourhood Plan policies should not, therefore, seek to repeat or expand upon standards that will be more properly dealt with through the Building Regulations process (e.g. through reference to the Code for Sustainable Homes).

The concerns that underpin Policy HT are recognised, but the policy should be expanded to also refer to the potential for the traffic impact of a development to be mitigated through investment in sustainable travel modes and off-site highway improvement works.

My clients also support the intent of Policy CT Provision for Safe Low-Carbon Travel (aside from criterion b as set out above), Policy CR Recreational Facilities and Policy CS Local Green Space. Site Reference BL029 The Neighbourhood Plan background papers note that the Parish Council do not necessarily agree with the site assessments set out in the most recent SHLAA. In respect of land to the east of South Newington Road, the SHLAA states that "in principle the site is unsuitable", because it was not known whether the site was available. My clients will now be writing to Cherwell District Council to confirm the site's availability.

William Davis Ltd's aspiration for the development of the site is to deliver a high quality housing development that respects its relationship with the surrounding urban form and sensitive environmental and cultural features. It is anticipated that in due course the development proposals for

the site will evolve through an iterative masterplanning exercise that has taken into account the requirements of the various technical and environmental assessments that will be required, and best urban and landscape design practice. This process will address the concerns raised in the SHLAA in relation to the implications for the landscape character of the area. A robust landscape and visual impact appraisal will be undertaken to directly inform a sensitive "landscape-led" design of the development scheme proposals. Whilst the development of the site would inevitably result in the loss of agricultural fields on the edge of the settlement (if approved), the intent of the assessment and design process will be to ensure that the proposals respond to the surrounding landscape

Noted - We understand that affordable housing is a CDC issue.

The plan references the evolving Building Regs. but as these are not yet in place we are nervous about having policies that use them. Quoting the Code for Sustainable Homes in planning documents is no longer seems to be acceptable.

Bloxham has been waiting 3 years for OCC to repair Old Bridge Rd – what was a main connection within the village. Such highway improvement seems VERY unlikely.

Noted – support for green-space and recreation policies.

Noted: It is not for the BNDP to comment upon specific sites but there are inevitable concerns at the prospect of development on good

	<p>character by retaining and enhancing boundary hedgerows and trees within the site wherever possible, and by providing new public open space with additional tree hedgerow planting to ensure a soft transition between the built development and open countryside.</p> <p>Conclusion: In conclusion William Davis are of the view that Bloxham could and should accommodate further growth within the plan period, and the land to the east of South Newington Road would be an entirely appropriate option for accommodating that growth. However, they would like to progress their proposals for the site in partnership with key stakeholders at the appropriate time taking account of the strategic planning context, local aspirations and identified needs in the Housing Market Area, District and village, preferably through the forward planning process My clients will be seeking to discuss their proposals in due course with the District Council, and would also welcome positive discussions with the Parish Council in the context of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.</p>	<p>quality agricultural land and of a size and at a location that would likely exceed the capacity of the foreseeable village infrastructure.</p> <p>Noted – the commitment to sensitive design.</p> <p>Noted – although real improvements to connectivity from Bloxham –south are highly problematic.</p>
<p>94 Savills on behalf of Thames Water</p>	<p>BLOXHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – COMMENTS MADE ON BEHALF OF THAMES WATER UTILITIES LTD</p> <p>Thames Water Utilities Ltd (Thames Water) Property Services function is now being delivered by Savills (UK)Limited as Thames Water’s appointed supplier. Savills are therefore pleased to respond to the above consultation on behalf of Thames Water.</p> <p>Thames Water are the statutory water and sewerage undertaker for the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan area and the whole of the Cherwell District and is hence a “specific consultation body” in accordance with the Town & Country Planning (Local Development) Regulations 2012.</p> <p>General Comments on Sewerage/Wastewater Infrastructure capacity:</p> <p>New development should be co-ordinated with the infrastructure it demands and to take into account the capacity of existing infrastructure. Paragraph 156 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), March 2012, states: “Local planning authorities should set out strategic policies for the area in the Local Plan. This should include strategic policies to deliver:.....the provision of infrastructure for water supply and wastewater....”</p> <p>Paragraph 162 of the NPPF relates to infrastructure and states: “Local planning authorities should work with other authorities to: assess the quality and capacity of infrastructure for water supply and wastewater and its treatment.....take account of the need for strategic infrastructure including nationally significant infrastructure within their areas.”</p> <p>The web based National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) published in March 2014 includes a section on ‘water supply, wastewater and water quality’ and sets out that Local Plans should be the focus for ensuring that investment plans of water and sewerage/wastewater companies align with</p>	<p>We will add such a Policy See amended Theme 1 policies on water and drainage</p>

development needs. The introduction to this section also sets out that “Adequate water and wastewater infrastructure is needed to support sustainable development” (Paragraph: 001, Reference ID: 34-001-20140306).

Specific Comments

Omission of a ‘Infrastructure and Utilities’ Policy: With the above points in mind it is important that developers demonstrate that at their development location adequate capacity exists both on and off the site to serve the development and that it would not lead to problems for existing users.

Given the possible scale of development in Bloxham Thames Water consider that there should be a section on ‘Infrastructure and Utilities’ in the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan which should make reference to the following: Developers need to consider the net increase in water and waste water demand to serve their developments and also any impact the development may have off site further down the network, if no/low water pressure and internal/external sewage flooding of property is to be avoided.

Developers will be required to demonstrate that there is adequate wastewater and water supply capacity both on and off the site to serve the development and that it would not lead to problems for existing or new users. In some circumstances 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. We would therefore recommend that developers engage with Thames Water at the earliest opportunity to establish the following.

- The developments demand for water supply and network infrastructure both on and off site and can it be met
- The developments demand for sewage treatment and sewerage network infrastructure both on and off site and can it be met
- The surface water drainage requirements and flood risk of the area and down stream and can it be met.

Thames Water must also be consulted regarding proposals involving building over or close to a public sewer. If building over or close to a public sewer is agreed by Thames Water it will need to be regulated by an Agreement in order to protect the public sewer and/or apparatus in question. It may be possible for public sewers or water mains to be moved at a developer’s request so as to accommodate development in accordance with Section 185 of the Water Act 1989.

Further information for Developers on sewerage and water infrastructure can be found on Thames Water’s website at: <http://www.thameswater.co.uk/cps/rde/xchg/corp/hs.xsl/558.htm>

Or contact can be made with Thames Water Developer Services: By post at: Thames Water Developer Services, Reading Mailroom, Rose Kiln Court, Rose Kiln Lane, Reading RG2 0BY; By telephone on: 0845 850 2777; Or by email: developer.services@thameswater.co.uk

		<p>Example Policy: By way of an example of a strong policy, the Marsh Gibbon Neighbourhood Plan (located within the Local Authority of Aylesbury Vale) Section H on Infrastructure and Policy MG20 is the type of policy Thames Water would like to see adopted.</p> <p>Rationale: Developers need to consider the net increase in water and waste water demand to serve their developments and also any impact the development may have off site further down the network, if no/low water pressure and internal/external sewage flooding of property is to be avoided. Thames Water must also be consulted regarding proposals involving building over or close to a public sewer. Developers should engage with Thames Water at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>Policy MG 20: Water and Waste.: Developers will be required to demonstrate that there is adequate wastewater and water supply capacity both on and off the site to serve the development and that it would not lead to problems for existing or new users. 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.</p>	
95	Susanna Howard	We need to protect our recreational areas	Noted See Theme 4 policies
96	OCC - Overall view	<p>Oxon CC Overall view</p> <p>A Vision for Bloxham</p> <p>Page 8, bullet 7 needs and 'Cherwell District Council' inserted after 'Oxfordshire County Council' as most of these services are provided by CDC.</p> <p>Policy HN Housing Need</p> <p>Draft policy HN seeks to limit housing provision to a further 20 dwellings in the plan period, to be achieved through infilling, conversions and minor development of 10 or less dwellings, mainly post 2025. This would be in addition to 225 extant permissions.</p> <p>The definition of minor development as '10 or less dwellings' overlaps with the national and local plan definition of major development which is 10 or more dwellings. This may lead to confusion on how any application for 10 dwellings is to be treated.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan (NP) policy needs to be in general conformity with the adopted Cherwell Local Plan (CLP). The Inspector will decide whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -the total amount of housing allocated to the rural areas is sound; -there is sufficient guidance in the local plan on how the rural figure is to be distributed. The local plan proposes to leave identifying sites to the local plan part 2, neighbourhood plans or applications rather than an indicative distribution; and · whether village categorisation is right <p>At the Cherwell Local Plan Examination in Public, Bloxham Parish Council submitted to the Inspector that Bloxham should be downgraded from a Category A to a Category C village where only infilling and conversions would be allowed. The draft NP policy HN does not propose to allocate additional</p>	<p>This section was repetitious and has been removed.</p> <p>Agreed minor is usually taken to mean <10. We have removed this reference.</p> <p>We are not required to wait for the emerging Local Plan to be approved.</p>

sites but does allow for ‘minor’ development up to 20 homes.

There is no guarantee that the Inspector will accept CDC’s approach in full so it is advisable not to finalise the submission version of the NP until the Inspector’s report on the Cherwell Local Plan is available and it is clear how rural housing should be dealt with.

In the meantime there is reference to an application for 30 dwellings which would exceed the draft neighbourhood plan policy. Government has recently said that a neighbourhood plan should be a material consideration to which it gives weight, even at the draft stage.

Policy HA Appropriate Housing

OCC support the plan in principle in seeking to provide housing which would appeal to older people looking to downsize (HAb) and for developments over 5 dwellings to include some market lifetime homes (HAd) as both would provide choice in meeting the housing needs of the growing numbers of older people.

For developments where only outline permission has been granted, policy HA would provide some guidance to be taken into account at the detailed application stage.

Policy HAd would be more effective if it indicated a percentage of lifetime homes rather than ‘some’.

Policy CT Provision for safe low-carbon travel

It is questionable whether it is realistic or sound for policy CTb to try to phase the additional 20 dwellings post 2025.

It is likely that some or all will be through applications for a single dwelling/conversion or a very small number of houses at a time.

This (TW) outline planning application was changed to 37 houses shortly after the pre-consultation but seems to have been withdrawn following an officers report recommending refusal.

Noted – support for downsize housing and dwellings meeting lifetime homes standards. Now contained in Theme 1 policies

We now indicate 20%.

We have removed the 2025 policy although note OCC education would welcome it!

Having an aspirational policy may have some influence on developer applications.

97 Ben Smith (OCC)
Transport

Transport Strategy

Oxfordshire County Council note the Issues and Challenges relating to transport raised in paragraph 3.2, including:

- Avoid exacerbating traffic congestion by more effective off-street parking and safe cycle and walking routes.
- Encourage home working and micro and small businesses that avoid additional traffic problems and do not require large industrial style buildings.
- Should a need for additional retail provision arise during the course of this plan then sites away from existing traffic hot spots may be preferred.

· Strive to ensure additional development is matched by a proportionate improvement in our currently creaking infrastructure.

The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure that Bloxham works with the County Council to “address challenges such as highways”; this is considered a positive statement.

Objectives relating to transport include:

1G. Build homes where they are less likely to exacerbate traffic congestion

2A. Encourage homes that facilitate home-working

2E. Address any emerging need for additional retail provision in High Street and Church Street in a manner that will minimise additional parking and traffic congestion problems and not detract from the historic and rural nature of our village

3A. Encourage safe low-carbon travel

These all appear to be reasonable objectives that would benefit the village.

Policies relating to transport include:

HAc – Appropriate Housing. Require new housing to offer adequate car-parking within the curtilage of the property and to meet the Lifetime Homes criteria (or its successor) with regard to width and access to the home.

Parking courts are not an acceptable alternative.

This policy is inconsistent with OCC’s adopted parking standards. Bloxham Parish Council will need to consider whether such requirements can be fully justified at the examination stage.

HT - Traffic Containment. Development that can demonstrate its location and design will not significantly exacerbate traffic congestion at the village centre or other traffic hot-spots (see map – Appendix 1) shall be encouraged.

This is considered a positive statement.

ELWa - Live-Work Accommodation. Proposals for new live-work development that combines living and small-scale employment space will be encouraged within the built up area, provided they:

- do not harm local residential amenity
- do not exacerbate traffic or parking impacts; and
- do not exacerbate flood risk.

EBA - Business Accommodation Proposals to develop B1 business uses of less than 150 square metres through new build, conversion or splitting up existing employment space shall be supported, provided they:

- do not lead to the loss of A1 shops or of community facilities;
- do not harm local residential amenity;
- do not exacerbate traffic or parking impacts; and
- do not exacerbate flood risk

We Note general support for transport objectives.

We note See also Pickles [planning update](#). See also the recent BNDP Sustainability Report. The amended plan under Theme 1 retains evidence based parking policies.

It is not clear what the aims of policies ELWa and EBA are in transport terms. If the aim is not to support proposals that exacerbate traffic or parking impacts, the Parish Council should consider whether this is compliant with National Planning Policy Framework para. 32, which states: “Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.”

CT - Provision for safe low-carbon travel

All new development proposals shall be required to promote and improve new and existing networks of pedestrian paths and cycle routes by:

- a. Designing an environment that improves linkages between residential areas and services and facilities within the village
- b. Scheduling development after 2025 to reduce the likelihood of primary aged pupils having to travel to schools outside of the village
- c. Protecting and wherever possible extending public rights of way and where feasible taking opportunities to improve the footpath connectivity of the village as a whole.

Any mitigation contribution required of a development will need to be reasonable, but these appear to be positive aspirations from a transport perspective.

Bloxham Projects

Paragraph 7.2 raises some transport related issues. It states that:

“Bloxham is wrongly classified as urban by Oxfordshire County Council with regard to parking standards for new developments.”

The Parking Standards document was developed through an agreed methodology and confirmed by the Cabinet on the 19th of July 2011, at the conclusion of a lengthy public consultation and engagement process for common agreement across all districts (and the county). Amending this, even in a relatively ‘minor’ way would trigger a full revision and new public consultation. This would have a significant impact on resources and capacity. This work cannot be justified given that:

- The proposed change will not have a significant impact to the issue described above concerning planning applications. The key local policy document for determining planning applications is the district local plan.

The standards’ category (urban) for Bloxham is, in our professional opinion, appropriate to its character as a large village or ‘built-up’ area. This term should not be construed to indicate anything beyond a parking standard category which has been determined primarily through car ownership rates. It is not indicative of other traits for the village that may be associated with the word ‘urban’.

- The difference in the parking definitions between categories is marginal.
- Given the recent adoption of the standards, there has not been a significant change in circumstances warranting an early review.

It is important to note that the Parking Standards are not a binding document and are subject to

Noted. – The focus was upon roads in Bloxham that are demonstrably unsuitable for large vehicles and where their modification is impracticable.

We also note OCC have indicated that the mini roundabout on the A361 is at capacity at peak time now. Cumulative developments have *never* been assessed by OCC.

Note – we understand mitigation costs must be reasonable (and broadly in line with CDC Planning Obligations document.)

The OCC parking standards is a high-level document that would not be expected to apply universally. It doesn’t work for Bloxham and is exacerbated by the classification of Bloxham as urban - contrary to the DoT view which equally recently categorised us a rural.

On-street parking too often results

		<p>implementation by the district council as the planning authority. Ultimately, there are a number of influences that define the character of a new development of which this is only one.</p> <p>At bullet 3 on page 19 the inspector’s report needs to be fully referenced: “A recent inspectors report stated it had granted housing permissions on the basis that OCC had said there was a solution for the issues relating to the Bloxham mini-roundabout.”</p> <p>At bullet 7 on page 19 the following should also be discussed with Oxfordshire County Council:</p> <p>“We will highlight to Cherwell D.C. that as a village we will if appropriate consider seeking developer contributions towards a proper cycle-path towards Banbury;”</p>	<p>in on-pavement driving which is a major source of stress and conflict especially but not exclusively on school routes where it promotes a “unsafe to walk anywhere” mentality.</p> <p>We note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the standards are not binding. - overwhelming resident support for deviating from them - Recent planning updates at central government level. <p>We will add the reference to the inspector report.</p>
			Noted
98	Michelle Charles	<p>Bloxham is a village and needs to stay that way. I can accept some minor development,(the odd single house here & there),but too much will destroy this lovely village. I believe all green spaces should be left as just that, green space, where do families go to play if they become housing estates? The green space by us is used by families,dog walkers & football teams regularly. More houses would mean more cars, more pollution, more accidents.</p>	<p>Noted: See Theme 2 policies on rural character. See Theme 4 policies on green-space See Theme 1 policies on housing numbers.</p>
99	Stephen Phipps	<p>Overall this is a good Plan for the future of the village. There has been too rapid an expansion of the village in recent years (far more than any other village in the north of the district) with housing. This Plan will enable the infrastructure to catch up. The traffic through the village A361 and Milton Road is now at over capacity and more housing would aggravate this. There is no capacity in or around the village for further housing above the 20 further dwellings incorporated in this plan. We already have a further 225 dwellings with current permissions and the suggested 20 will make this 245 dwellings in an already unsustainable village with flooding, traffic and infrastructure issues.</p> <p>HN, HA, HR and HC policies are particularly relative to Bloxham and need to be retained as part of the Plan to ensure the village is both protected in the future to retain its character and not have developments more associated with urban areas. Recent permissions have wrongly leaned towards urban rather than rural density which has /will put pressure on the infrastructure.</p> <p>Re HA (a) Bearing in mind the saturation of affordable housing in the village with recent developments or permission granted which has little local take up, consideration should be given to</p>	<p>Noted – especially mention of Milton Rd traffic, rural densities, general infrastructure capacity etc.</p> <p>Note Theme 2 policies on SuDS</p> <p>Building affordable housing elsewhere is contrary to CDC</p>

		<p>developers providing monies but not houses for affordable housing in other areas where there are good transport links and school spaces and where overall the locality is sustainable in real terms not a tick box.</p> <p>Re HC(b) Flooding is a key issue in Bloxham and the words "whenever appropriate" should be removed. This should be a standard in our village and across the country.</p> <p>CR(a)The words "In Principle" should be added as it is in the detail that this would ultimately be viable and acceptable e.g. finance,lighting.</p> <p>There should be an a condition that a joint-use agreement in perpetuity with the village be signed with preferential rates for the village groups and residents. The reason being that much of the monies for this would come from finance provided developments in the village past and future.</p> <p>CR(b) Bearing mind the new management committee and a new Project Committee for the Jubilee and the need to both expand and refurbish the hall the word "moderate" should be deleted as so not to restrict these committees to do the work needed to match the hall with the use of the park. Should the development of the church not take place the Jubilee hall will become more important to the village and expansion more important to accommodate the village needs.</p> <p>CSAll 5 areas represent recreational facilities or key areas of open space and unique areas which define the being and character of the village. The loss of these views or function would make the village indefinable. These are important areas to protect from housing developments at the heart of the village.</p>	<p>strategic policy</p> <p>This fits with advice from OCC drainage engineer. Will modify</p> <p>Note also support for Warriner pitch to be conditional.</p> <p>Note concern at "moderate" for the policy relating to the Jubilee Hall. It will be removed.</p> <p>Phase 1 of development of the church is still on track</p>
100	Margaret Impey	<p>We need green spaces otherwise the village will be over run with concrete. We need areas where we can meet as a community. Also they must help a little with drainage..</p>	<p>Noted – especially need for open spaces IN the village. See Theme 2 and 4 policies.</p>
101	Kate Phipps	<p>There is nothing in the plan I can disagree with.</p> <p>There needs to be more provision in the Plan for dwellings suitable for older people wishing to downsize not wishing to go in to retirement homes/flats or first time buyer development houses. It is right we preserve all open spaces within the confines of the village and totally agree with the Local Green Spaces identified.</p>	<p>Noted – especially Theme 1 policies on downsize dwellings and Theme 2 and 4 policies on need for open spaces.</p>
102	Chris Cody	<p>The plan has been well thought out and explained and we agree with all recommendations. Bloxham has definitely had enough housing development and it can certainly take no more big estates. All new houses should be small and for first time buyers and of rural design.</p> <p>Improved mobile phone coverage should also be a priority.</p> <p>All the proposed green spaces should be kept and given 'green-belt' status as suggested.</p>	<p>Noted – see especially Theme 1 policies on size of developments. Theme 3 includes mobile coverage but in the last resort this is down to mobile operators and Ofcom. See Themes 2 and 4 on open spaces</p>
103	Emma Harris	<p>I think more houses in Bloxham is fab more and more younge families want Bloxham but can't</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

		afford the huge houses that are already there I myself are trying to get to Bloxham for the sake of my adhd son and so I can have my operation	See Theme 1 policies on housing numbers and Sustainability report for the background.
104	Dawn Petiss	OCC Economic Development No comment	Noted!
105	Nigel Holmes	OCC Extra Care Housing It is suggested that plans for new homes aim to meet the needs of older people wanting to down-size, and should construct 20% of new homes at level 3 wheelchair access standards. Plans to favour some of the above new homes to meet the needs of older people wanting to down-size are supported as is ambition to build 20% at level 3 wheelchair access standards.	Noted – especially the support for downsize homes with wheelchair access. See Theme 1 Policies
106	Richardram	OCC – Archaeology The submitted plan does not contain any reference to protecting the archaeological heritage of Bloxham. Section 6 highlights the need to protect the rural heritage and landscape in Housing policy HR, however this would appear to be concerned with protecting the rural character of the built environment. The introduction to this policy does state that ‘Housing development shall be encouraged to respect the local character and the historic and natural assets of the area’ but does not contain any detail policy to protect these historic assets of the area. We would therefore recommend that this section is amended to contain a policy for the protection and enhancement of the historic environment assets of the area both above ground and below ground in the form of archaeological sites and features as set out below. Policy HR – g – The Historic Environment: The parish’s designated historic heritage assets and their settings, both above and below ground including listed buildings, scheduled monuments and conservation areas will be conserved and enhanced for their historic significance and their important contribution to local distinctiveness, character and sense of place. Proposals for development that affect non-designated historic assets will be considered taking account of the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012)	Noted – especially the need for a policy to add a further layer of protection and enhancement of the historic environment assets of the area both above ground. We have added a new Theme 2 policy on the conservation area and on preserving our rural, historic past. We have also published the BNDP summary of archaeological and Heritage data that has informed the plan. Now included in Theme 1
107	Gordon Hunt	OCC Drainage All new housing and developments should be drained using sustainable methods.	We have amended the Theme 1 policy to ALL new housing should include SuDS
108	Barbara Chillman	OCC Education The County Council’s current position on primary school capacity in Bloxham is that Bloxham Primary School has been expanded to the full extent of its site capacity, and 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	Noted – especially the short-medium term implications of further expansion upon primary

place at the school.

Housing already permitted is expected to mean that:

- Children moving in already of primary age are likely to have to travel to another school, with the consequent travel costs and inconvenience to parents;
- The school will have to turn away younger siblings of out-of-catchment children who were able to get in while local demand was lower, with the consequent loss of amenity to existing residents;
- In the smaller villages surrounding Bloxham, which have historically fed to Bloxham Primary School, it is likely that children will need to attend a different primary school, this being made possible by the expansion of that school. (In many cases these villages already lie within shared catchment areas for both schools.)

Further housing development in the short-medium term would bring a significant risk that even some children living within the village, applying on time for a school place, may not be able to secure a place at the school. This would be detrimental to community cohesion and sustainability.

On these grounds, the county council School Planning team would support the Neighbourhood Plan's policy on housing need, that only small scale further housing growth takes place in Bloxham in the short-medium term. This situation could change if a feasible and viable solution to expanding primary school capacity in the village could be provided. The school's current playing field is owned by the County Council, and should the school need to expand the County Council would work with the school and Diocese to identify options for growth, but such growth would be expected to require additional site area being provided for the school, adjacent to its current site. Moreover, to enable the school to grow in an increment that is supportive of effective and efficient provision of education, significant additional accommodation for the school would be required, and to fund this would require a substantial number of additional homes. It should also be noted that the school is already 2 form entry size, and there are no village schools larger than this in Oxfordshire.

The Neighbourhood Plan's objectives (section 5.2) include "3D. Secure primary school capacity which provides a place within the village for all children from Bloxham and our satellite neighbours". As Bloxham Primary School is not currently in a situation to expand in an acceptable manner, current plans for additional primary school capacity are focused on the surrounding schools at Hook Norton and Deddington and/or Adderbury. Due to the normal fluctuations in population, it is possible that in some years there may not be sufficient school places within Bloxham for all children from the satellite villages; it is also possible some Bloxham village children may not be able to secure a place, especially if they are late applicants. While the county council would endorse the objective, it notes that it may not be fully attainable, due to the constraints on school size.

As pressure on primary school places has increased in recent years, so can pressure on secondary school places be expected to increase in the next few years. The county council would welcome support in the Neighbourhood Plan for the expansion of The Warriner School in Bloxham

school places and the negative impact upon both sustainability and social cohesion.

See updated Theme 1 policy on school capacity.

Also noted – the primary school is already amongst the largest in Oxfordshire.

Also noted – lack of accommodation for children from satellite villages. I.e. Bloxham no longer has the capacity to be considered a service village at least in this respect.

We note the general request to support expansion of the Warriner School. There is a positive disposition to do so provided issues such as parking and traffic are addressed. We do not currently

			have enough detail to formulate a policy.
109	Nathan Travis	OCC Deputy Fire Chief - No Comment	Noted
110	Frankie Upton	OCC Waste Project Manager No comment	Noted
111	Tamsin Atley	<p>Key issues: The Parish Council are advised to follow the advice on biodiversity in the Neighbourhood Planning Toolkit. The section on biodiversity starts on page 35 and can be found here. The Parish Council may also find some useful information within the following publications: – Communities & Parish Guide to Biodiversity – Biodiversity & Planning Guide: The District Council's ecologist may also have comments on the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>	<p>Noted We have looked at these and feel much is already covered in the Local Plan. Theme 2 now includes a policy on biodiversity and habitats.</p>
112	Raymond Guzenda	<p>In general I think the NP covers all areas that are of concern to residents, both at present and in the future, setting out a vision that will hopefully protect the 'rural heritage' of our village. Some general points/comments: RECREATION 1) Although we have both Jubilee and the Recreation ground as football pitches, in effect we only have Jubilee pitches during the Winter period due to flooding issues with the Recreation ground. 2) Is there a reason we don't highlight areas that could potentially be used for Sports or Recreation in the Plan? THE SLADE 1) There is no mention of the Conservation area (The Slade) and how this could be improved for the village to use. BUSINESS 1) Do we need to highlight the types of business we would like to attract to the village i.e a Bakers, another village shop etc? If congestion in the village centre is always going to be an issue, are there potentially other ends of the village where we could accommodate these new businesses? TRAFFIC 1) Although the roundabout is mentioned as being 'not fit for purpose' and the school area is always congested with traffic at peak school run times, this hasn't seemed to deter developments so far. Are we able to add traffic figures to the plan to highlight how bad congestion is at peak times in these areas? HOUSING 1) I feel it is extremely important to emphasise that any new developments must be in keeping with</p>	<p><u>Recreation</u>: We understand the problem. Unfortunately, investigation did not reveal any areas owned by the parish or likely to be affordable or gifted to it for recreation. <u>The Slade</u> is in the process of transfer to the Parish and will become a designated green-space. under Theme 4 policies) <u>Business</u> This will be a commercial decision that will emerge once the impact of existing permissions is felt. See Theme 3 policies. There is reticence that new sites may make the High St unviable and urbanise the village edge. <u>Traffic</u> We have produced a Sustainability Report that attempts to explain this.</p>

	<p>Bloxham's 'Rural Heritage' and how much detail are we obliged to give in the NP in terms of the types of brick, window frames etc. Do we leave ourselves open to developers interpretations of what THEY feel is in-keeping with our 'Rural Heritage'?</p> <p>As mentioned in the beginning, this is a huge leap forward in allowing Bloxham residents to take more control of how their village grows in the future. The effort and time the Parish Council and Steering Committees have taken to get the NP to this stage - along with residents filling out questionnaires - shows just how committed we are in working together for Bloxham's future.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>	<p><u>Housing</u></p> <p>The fact that the village already has a mix of building types makes detailed prescriptions difficult. Theme 2 policies seek to prevent cumulative urbanisation. The high level of community engagement is noted and appreciated.</p>
113	<p>Karen Hibbert</p> <p>I fully support the neighbourhood plan. The expansion over the last few years has been massive in proportion to the size of the village and risks destroying forever the character of the village. Amenities, schools and infrastructure cannot support continued expansion on such a large scale.</p>	<p>Noted. See especially Theme 2 policies on rural character and Theme 1 policy on primary school capacity</p>
114	<p>Mary Groves</p> <p>I fully support the aims and objectives of the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan and have the following comments to make.</p> <p>1.Housing Need (HN2) Appropriate Housing (HA)</p> <p>Bloxham has been subject to a considerable amount of development as illustrated in the documents. Notwithstanding the large number of houses built, there has been a failure to supply good, high quality accommodation for people who wish to downsize and who wish to feel safe in their neighbourhood. I agree that in future there should only be minor developments in order to meet the above need, thus freeing larger existing properties for families.</p> <p>I agree that new homes should provide adequate parking as parking on pavements is commonplace on new estates where parking courts are far from homes. Vulnerable people of all ages undoubtedly feel unsafe if they are unable to park close to their homes.</p> <p>2.Traffic Containment (HT)</p> <p>Any proposals for new developments should take into account the traffic conditions. The A361 is already a busy and dangerous road, but due to significant development in Bloxham and Adderbury, the Milton Road is increasingly busy. The infrastructure in Bloxham needs to be improved considerably to support the growing population but developers seem to be able to get away with lip service with regard to their obligation to finance improvements to the road and transport network. Cycling is dangerous for young people in Bloxham and there is lack of connectivity from Milton Road/Barford Road to the centre of the village, with narrow pavements along the busy A361. Parts</p>	<p>Noted. See especially :</p> <p>Theme 1 policies – downsize housing</p> <p>Theme 1 policies on parking</p> <p>Noted – that the Milton Rd is increasingly busy as well as the A361</p> <p>Noted – poor low-carbon connectivity. See Theme 1 policy on this. See also Sustainability Report.</p>

of the village can certainly not be safely accessed by wheelchair. There are accidents waiting to happen.

3.CT - Provision for Safe Low Carbon Travel

With current growth levels in the village there will not be enough places at the primary school for the coming 4-5 years. It is likely that a considerable number of children will need to be transported elsewhere for their education adding congestion to local roads at busy times. Further development in Bloxham should certainly not happen until this situation has resolved.

Noted – concern at no school places for young children. (In the questionnaire over 96% thought this should not be allowed to happen.) See Theme 1 policy on this.

4. CR - Recreational facilities

I fully support the proposals for funding for projects allowing community joint use of the Warriner Sports facilities.

See Theme 4 policies on Warriner and on expansion of the Jubilee Hall.BL34

I also fully support the development of the Jubilee Hall and Park to match the growing recreational needs of the village. I note that all parts of the village have a park within a fifteen minute walk and I support the development of good common facilities, rather than ghetto like play areas on estates which could possibly discourage a sense of sharing and community within the village as a whole.

Noted – importance of communal play areas for community cohesion Included in projects section of plan

C5 - Local Green Space

I support the need to protect green spaces for the greater good of the village in collaboration with landowners. It is important that we maintain the major green spaces as part of the village heritage and for the common good.

Noted – see Themes 1 and 4 on protection of open spaces.

115 c healy	I support the proposed document, but have some concerns that details are not thought out fully.	
	Bloxham should decide if it wants to be closer to Banbury with housing, or outer villages such as Milton, Milcombe and Lower Tadmerton, Barford StM. This question was not asked, but it may help shape decisions. My preference would be to extend away from Banbury, rather than closer to it.	Noted
	After seeing many villages where gardens are in-filled by developers, I believe that having more properties built in existing plots does not work. It creates a town/city feel to a village and only helps line developers pockets, or residents who move on make some more money when they sell. Gardens should be protected unless there is a legitimate reason for development, e.g. garage or extension to existing building.	See new Theme 2 policy on gardens and Themes 2 and 4 on Open spaces
	The main road between the Warriner school and Bloxham school is dangerous. Motorists speed along the road far too often and do not take into consideration 2 schools where pupils are of varying ages are often nearby. There needs to be some form of traffic control that reduces the speed of motorists and protects the children and makes the village a safer place to live.	Noted. This is more a matter for the PC and Oxon Highways than the BNDP.
	The Warriner school needs improving too. There needs to be a better solution for children to be dropped off and picked up for school. The school should get permission to build better sporting facilities and buildings to educate our children.(Assuming it has the money, or perhaps the current developers can pay?)	If the Warriner seeks to expand then these are factors they will be expected to address under Theme 1 policies.
	We should protect the farm land in the village from development, where it is used on a daily basis. The farms are what make a village, and without them, Bloxham will become a town very quickly. The plan should concentrate more on stopping farm land being sold to developers. The airfield or unused land is a better place to develop housing, rather than selling off farm fields for large housing development. Land should be categorised by the local council by its usage and then protected as much as possible.	Theme 2 See strengthened policies in Theme 1 on land and space. The MoD may have something to say about building on the "airfield" which would also exacerbate traffic issues at the mini-roundabout.
	Infrastructure to support the current village should be understood before development is approved again. E.g. public transport, road safety, water & electricity supplies, capacity of schools and future growth. Having a developer build a small playground near some new houses will not improve the schools in the village or roads. It just makes money for developers who do not live in the area or have children in the schools or have to get the bus into Banbury.	Noted Transport seems likely to be cut. There are policies on all the rest of these infrastructure concerns.
	Finally, this is the first village I have lived in where there appears to be an underdeveloped village hall (Jubilee park and near Co-Op) and central play area for children (Jubilee park) and teenagers. Most villages have invested in new playgrounds over the last 6 years, modern buildings with better facilities, land for recreation such as tennis clubs etc. Bloxham has a rundown play area and village hall in the park that appears to have had little investment in 50 years.	Noted See Theme 4 policy re Jubilee hall and projects on the recreational spaces.

116	Keith Janes	<p>HN1/2/3 Fully support HR1-6 Fully support - all developments should respect the assets identified in CDC Bloxham Conservation Area Appraisal document - retention of views and open spaces. HA - All family homes should have onsite parking for 2 cars as current expectations are that both parents will work and will require car transport for work as Bloxham has limited employment possibilities. HC - Fully support HT - Fully support ELW/EBA/EEL - Fully support. Conversions of retail space to housing should be avoided. Population increase needs facilities; the converse has occurred in Bloxham, facilities lost with growth. CT - a practical cycle route to Banbury is essential. CR - Bloxham Football Club needs more pitches CS - Fully support</p>	<p>Noted – see policies: See Theme 2 new policy on conservation area. See Theme 1 strengthened policy on parking spaces.</p> <p>See Theme 3 policy on employment land See Theme 1 on connectivity and Theme 4 on sports areas</p>
117	David and Alison Stevens	<p>This is a very impressive document which covers, in our opinion, all the areas of concern to our village. We are concerned about the amount of building taking place and the pressure on the village and feel that this document will help to guard against any development that doesn't embrace the feeling of the village. It is a fair document. We would like to see plans for a larger village hall considering the increase in population but realise funding could be an issue. Particular thanks to John Groves and the steering group for their hard work and clear vision in producing this plan.</p>	<p>Noted – see especially: Theme 1 policies housing numbers Theme 2 policies rural feel Theme 4 policies Jubilee expansion</p>
118	COLIN ILOTT	Fully support the plan.	Noted
119	Anna Frazer	<p>Bloxham School needs the option to use it's own land for any necessary expansion. It is a lovely school with intentions to improve relationships with the local community. I can't imagine that any building in the future would be to the detriment of the village. Any more development of the outskirts of the village should be frozen for at least five years to allow for any traffic improvements that might be possible.</p>	<p>We have amended the policies better to fit with the flexibility that the school has sought. See Comment 40</p>
120	Roy Townsend	<p>I completely support the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan . Produced by people people who know and care about our village. Still greatly concerned that the government do not understand our local concerns and have the power to dismiss the things we care about.</p>	<p>Noted Time will tell!</p>
121	Andrew McCallum (CPRE Banbury)	<p>As you know we discussed this at our committee meeting last night; thank you again for allowing us this short agreed extension to the closing date to allow this. Here is our response. Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Public Consultation: Response from CPRE Oxfordshire (Banbury District.) Villages all have their defining characteristics; in Bloxham these are very clear and distinctive. Most</p>	

people arriving in Bloxham for the first time and indeed most arrivals would be from Banbury. Arriving this way the first feature that defines Bloxham is Bloxham School with its fine, prominent buildings ahead of you with the great open space of its playing fields on the left. Few other villages have such a “statement” of arrival.

Then, on descending the hill, the next distinctive set of features is the area around the bridge with the Red Lion, which would make an excellent community centre, on your left, with its garden area and the range of old properties beyond the bridge on the left, the bridge itself and concluding with the front elevation of Tony Baldry’s house facing you.

Above all of this dominates the superb spire of the parish church (along with Adderbury and Kings Sutton one of the finest in north Oxfordshire) which with its grace and height is a marker of the heart of Bloxham. These are the features which make Bloxham a distinctive village with its unique character area the essence of which is worthy of preservation. Another area of the village worth noting is the old main road that pre-dates the existing one with many distinctive cottages on what is now a quiet and pleasant lane.

We note a number of green spaces highlighted in the plan but are averse to attempting to “rank” these; suffice to say that all are important to the vibrancy and health of the community although we are of the view that the school playing fields should be regarded as sacrosanct. Put simply; future generations of children will need them.

We are only too well aware of the rate of recent housing developments in the village which has been considerable and are of the view that with the present schemes completed the time has come to ease off the rate of development and to take stock of the village’s growth for a while.

One subject which we feel should be incorporated in the plan is that of public transport which seems not to be covered. Even with the present growth, let alone any more, in order to ease traffic congestion on the Bloxham – Banbury road we feel a more frequent bus service is desired. When a service is only hourly as at present it deters potential users due to the inflexibility in planning their journey. A half hourly frequency is far more attractive and itself would encourage more use. In particular attracting passengers onto buses at the peak morning and evening times would reduce congestion. The growing number of young residents would benefit from better bus services including later evening services as they will, inevitably, wish to go out to Banbury for their evening entertainment. The present service does not allow youngsters who do not yet drive to enjoy an evening out in Banbury independently of a parent or other lift provider. A growing number of older residents would also benefit such as those who have given up driving or have given up driving after dark. We believe there is a precedent for this as we understand that plans are afoot to double the frequency of buses between Banbury and Deddington via Adderbury as a result of housing growth with developer funding for an additional bus which would operate hourly to those villages to give a half hourly service combined with the existing hourly Oxford route. By the same arrangement a

Note the importance of Bloxham School visual impact. See revised Theme 2 policies

Note importance of the Red Lion gardens and surrounding character area. See Theme 2 and 4 policies

See revised Theme 2 policies on importance of the church as a village marker

Note the importance of the Bloxham School area again

Noted – rate of recent development. See Sustainability Report for more detail

Note – inadequate bus service that it seems is about to get worse.

	<p>Banbury – Bloxham hourly service could be overlaid on the existing Chipping Norton service. This response is brief for the simple reason that we consider the plan to be a well executed and comprehensive document, well researched which we support and endorse. Clearly a lot of effort has gone into its preparation and it is hard to find fault with it!</p>	
<p>122 Jenny Yates</p>	<p>Response to consultation on Bloxham Neighbourhood development Plan</p> <p>The document provided for consultation is substantiated by robust evidence and this should be featured within the text of the Final Plan submitted for Examination. Below are issues that I would welcome being considered by the steering group:</p> <p>Renaming of Policies to enable greater ease of use.</p> <p>The following are some main points that I wish to raise:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Village boundaries: Cherwell District Council (CDC) in the Submitted Local Plan (SLP) have not submitted evidence of the establishment of settlement or built up boundaries for villages, it is therefore important for the BNDP to show areas where boundaries should be protected to prevent coalescence of villages; for example on the Milton Road, as developments continue to be proposed in both Adderbury and Bloxham then Milton risks losing its identity. There should be a statement to not support further ribbon development. 2. Policy HT Traffic Hotspots: Policy The Milton Road is not shown as a traffic hotspot, this should be remedied. Due to the recent developments on this road, the increase in minor traffic incidents has increased. The road is also subject to repeated traffic flow constraints arising from Thames Water remedial works, to repair the existing pipe work that is proving unable/unsuitable to cope with the additional strain imposed on the system by the need to maintain a supply to present developments. 3. Policy HC Sustainable Development: Bloxham’s Neighbourhood Plan needs to build on Cherwell District Council’s Submitted Local Plan part 1. Policy ESD 2; by only supporting developments if they comply with the Energy Hierarchy and seek to reduce energy use, by utilizing ground sourced heating, grey water reuse, low energy, timed street lighting. If pumped drainage solutions are required for any development then this should only be supported if it can be shown that there is resilience in this provision by the use of a backup generator. Agree that all developments should be supported by sustainable Drainage Strategies. <p>As waste water is a major issue in Bloxham possibly a Policy on Infrastructure covering waste water, could be added stating that “Developers need to consider the net increase in water and waste water demand to serve their developments and also any impact the development may have off-site, further down the network. If no/low water pressure and internal/external sewage flooding of property is to be avoided, Thames Water must also be consulted regarding proposals involving building over or close to a public sewer. Developers should engage with Thames Water at the earliest opportunity”.</p>	<p>Noted:</p> <p>Noted – The Milton Rd junction is shown as traffic hotspot but others too have noted increasing traffic along the length.</p> <p>Noted – ongoing problems with water main to Bloxham. See Theme 1 policy on this</p> <p>Noted – but see reduced energy obligations for small developments. Have left this to the Local Plan.</p> <p>Sustainable drainage policy strengthened as per OCC comment.</p> <p>Water policy amended as per Thames Water comments.</p>

Possible Policy: Water and Waste.

“Developers will be required to demonstrate that there is adequate wastewater and Water supply capacity both on and off the site to serve the development and that it would not lead to problems for existing or new users. 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, prior to approval of the development.”

4. Policy HN Sustainable Communities:

BNDP needs to build on CDC’s SLP Policy BSC1 B89b;

“Cherwell District Council recognises that there is a possibility that Oxford may not be able to accommodate the whole of its new housing requirement for the 2011-2031 period within its administrative boundary. The urban capacity of Oxford is as yet unknown and untested but is the subject of on-going work.” Taking this as a reference there is no proven evidence that of the 750 dwellings divided between Category A and B villages (i.e. 35 villages.), noted in the Submitted Local Plan, that Bloxham would be required to accommodate any additional development other than the figure of 20 additional dwellings shown in the BNDP. BNDP needs to show clearly the amount of development since 2005 both built and approved. The plan also needs to show the amount of windfall approvals granted for this period of time and the amount of development given approval since the cut off date of March 2014. It is time that the “open season” on Bloxham was shown as speculative development that cannot be supported by the present infrastructure.

Infill could greater emphasis be placed on infill housing e.g. New homes on infill sites will be permitted where the proposal respects their immediate environments and their design maintains and contributes to local distinctiveness. Where the development comprises more than three units the homes should be grouped to allow a small landscaped area for use by the development residents whilst maintaining the privacy of the houses.

5. Policy HR BNDP needs to build on the CDC SLP Policies for Our villages and Rural Areas; C214

- “- whether best and most versatile agricultural land could be avoided
- whether significant adverse landscape and impacts could be avoided”

The visual landmarks that create the identity of Bloxham should be protected, such as the open aspect in front of Bloxham School, designated in this plan as a green space.

The visual aspect of this area of land provides not only a showcase of a classical building that looks beautiful in its surroundings it also enhances this area of Bloxham, but as a cricket pitch used by Bloxham School it has a significance for many residents and I am sure both current and former pupils of Bloxham School are aware of its impact. Residents enjoy the view of the buildings when walking on the Public Right of Way that runs through this area. To retain this would be in line with both The National Planning Policy Guidance (the Guidance) states “that land could be considered for designation even if there is no public access (e.g. green areas which are valued because of their

Noted – In the pre-pub plan we didn’t mention the 85 already permitted houses that can be legitimately counted. Because of the confusion (real or otherwise!) we have included this as a Theme 1 policy. See revised policy See also the greater detail now contained in the Sustainability Report.

See new Theme 2 policy on garden development

We have revised policies to protect the visual impact whilst leaving the school flexibility for appropriate further development.

wildlife, historic significance and/or beauty” , and with the NPPF.

Two recent approvals for developments in Bloxham have allocated tracts of green land for community use, as these areas were a major consideration in the granting of approval, these need to be shown as “Green spaces” to enable them to be retained as such.

Footpaths. The visual aspects from foot paths throughout the village and the surrounding fields need to be afforded protection and the BNDP needs to show only support for development that do not detract from such paths, or seek to change their outlook.

6. Policy HR BNDP needs to build on CDC SLP C214 and C227, especially the following points:

- if the necessary infrastructure could be provided locally.
- whether land considered for allocation is deliverable now or whether there is a reasonable prospect that it could be developed within the plan period or within the next five years. Recent applications have failed to meet the time scales set and yet have been renewed.
- Whether the development would have an adverse impact on the flood risk.
- Avoid significant environmental harm,
- Support the Neighbourhood Planning process.

7. Policy HAc that, there should only be support for developments that show adequate car parking within the curtilage of the dwelling. If this should prove to be a stumbling block then appropriate wording could be :-

New homes with one or two bedrooms should be provided with at least two car spaces on their plot. For new homes with three or more bedrooms each property should be provided with at least three car spaces on their plot. Where it is difficult to meet all the parking requirements on plot, for example proposals for terraced housing with narrow frontages, additional parking in bays or service roads in front of the properties will be considered acceptable to help meet the parking standards – providing they are built to "Secured by Design" standards and are clearly visible from the properties they serve.

The use of parking courts do not appear to be working in the village causing owners to park their vehicles on pavements, thereby blocking them for pushchair/wheelchair access, or parking on the road narrowing the width so as not allowing vehicle to pass safely. Minimum road widths on new developments are not suitable for the passage of refuse vehicles if vehicles are parked. This issue should be positively addressed/assessed for CDC Local Plan part 2.

8. Conservation Area: There needs to be an additional section and Policy covering the existing and future development in the Conservation Area of Bloxham.

9. Archaeology: There needs to be an additional section and policies covering the archaeology aspects of Bloxham together with protection of the surrounding Ridge and furrow fields.

10. Hedgerows: Would appreciate a section/ Policy for Greater definition given to the Enhancing, Protecting and Provision of new Natural Environment Habitats, Trees and Hedgerows;- Proposals

See pre-text to policy BL12

E.g. We will seek to include the country park and part of the Milton Rd site included in Policy BL1.

See new Theme 1 policy on space and views

See revised parking policies following recent pronouncements from SoS [Pickles](#)

See new Theme 2 policies on conservation area.

		<p>which are accompanied by a Tree and Hedgerow Survey will be supported when the designs demonstrate sympathetic development around trees of high or moderate quality in accordance with current BS5837 national best practice. Proposals will be supported that are landscaped and include planting trees that respect the local distinctive landscape character and the proposed development. Proposals will be supported that can demonstrate net gain in biodiversity in accordance with the DEFRA Biodiversity Impact Calculator.</p> <p>11. The Slade should the BNDP make reference to the Slade as a valuable Nature Reserve that the Parish Council are seeking to take responsibility for from OCC?</p>	<p>Much of this is already within the Local Plan and associated documents.</p> <p>See Theme 4 policy making the Slade a Local Green Space.</p>
123	sheila bailey	I support bloxham plan	Noted
124	david bailey	I support the bloxham plan	Noted
125	geoff Cox	I would like to express my appreciation and thanks to all of those people who have been involved in the preparation of this comprehensive document. A very considerable amount of work has been involved and the result, in my view, appears to properly reflect the way forward for our village.	Noted
126	Andrew Lester	I Fully support the plan	Noted
127	John Braithwaite	<p>South Newington Parish Council (SNPC) congratulates Bloxham on embarking on the neighbourhood planning process and producing a draft plan and wishes the village success with the remaining stages.</p> <p>SNPC trusts the notes below on the draft plan (Version 5.00) will be helpful. The paragraph numbers of the draft are used as reference.</p> <p>2.3. To Chipping Norton – The OCC ‘Oxfordshire Lorry Routes’ booklet published in February 2012 designates the A361 as a ‘Link to smaller towns’, it should not be used by long distance HGV traffic. Although the reference to the difficulties in South Newington is welcome it might be more advantageous to make a separate reference to the HGV issue and give the difficulties in Bloxham and South Newington as specific examples of the problems created by inappropriate use of the A361.</p> <p>There are as many bus services to Chipping Norton as to Banbury apart from one morning service terminating in Bloxham and a late evening service terminating at Milcombe. Having different comments in adjoining paragraphs about bus services to Banbury and to Chipping Norton therefore seems inappropriate.</p> <p>2.4. The Character of the Village – An important aspect of Bloxham is its role as a hub for services to the surrounding villages – primary and secondary schools, doctors and dentists, shops, post office, etc. Development within the village that overloads these services and makes them unavailable to the satellite villages will have an adverse effect on the sustainability of these villages as well as</p>	<p>This is now set out explicitly in the Sustainability Report</p> <p>This section has now been amended. (We note the level of this service is likely to be cut!)</p> <p>Noted – The negative impact of over-development of Bloxham on sustainability of satellite villages.</p>

Bloxham itself. South Newington would like to see more emphasis placed on the importance of Bloxham’s hub role and the effects of unbalanced development upon it.

Whilst Bloxham is on the Cotswold-edge its character and the appearance of the older buildings has more in common with other ironstone villages than those commonly thought of as ‘Cotswold’. Suggest this is made clear because it potentially has an important influence on the buildings design and building materials considered appropriate.

Noted – with thanks and we have now changed the description.

4.1, 6th bullet – SNPC would like to see a stronger statement about the problem of parking and road congestion by the shops in the centre of the village. (Compare with 5.2, Objective 2E and Policy ERF.)

See Theme 1 policies on parking and Theme 3 on retail – but no real solution!

6. Our policies

HN Contextual information, last bullet – Please also mention lack of space for children of satellite villages.

Noted

HT – “shall be encouraged” seems to be in contradiction to policy HN to limit development to only 20 more dwellings in the plan period. Would it be more appropriate to say something like “will be more favourably considered”?

We have amended Theme 1 housing number policy wording.

This will be fact but is an Oxon CC decision rather than a BNDP one.

CTb – Could provision for children from satellite villages (South Newington, Milcombe and Milton), for which Bloxham provides the nearest primary school, also be mentioned?

7. Bloxham projects

Oxfordshire CC and Cherwell DC, 1st bullet - Could provision for children from satellite villages (South Newington, Milcombe and Milton), for which Bloxham provides the nearest primary school, also be mentioned?

Projects no longer contains mention of schools.

Cherwell DC, 5th bullet – Should reinstatement of the bridge in Old Bridge Road (presumably an OCC responsibility) be mentioned in the context of Red Lion Gardens and it uses?

The reluctance of OCC to repair a key route in the heart of the conservation area over a period of 3 years is deeply felt – but cannot be incorporated into a planning policy.

128	Melanie Rayner	<p>I agree with the whole concept of the plan, particularly HN1-3, HR1-4, HA 1-4 and HC 1-3. Bloxham is a rural Village and any increase in housing should be designed to keep it as such, and not turn it into a small town. There are few villages in North Oxfordshire that are escaping development, but Bloxham has had way more than it's fair share already, and the village is being violated and abused by developers, who totally ignore the views of those living here, because they know it is a lovely place to live, and houses will sell at a high price. The village cannot support the large scale developments, and whilst we accept that we will have to have some development, it is time that the village should have a say in how this is implemented, and hopefully this Neighbourhood Plan will enable this to happen.</p>	Noted – support for BNDP policies.
129	Robert.Lloyd-Sweet (English Heritage)	<p>English Heritage: Thank you for your e-mail and letter of 8th January inviting English Heritage to comment on the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Policies. Before we set out our detailed comments on the Report, we have a couple of general comments.</p> <p>The nature of the locally-led neighbourhood plan process is that the community itself should determine its own agenda based on the issues about which it is concerned. At the same time, as a national organisation able increasingly to draw upon our experiences of neighbourhood planning exercises across the country, our input can help communities reflect upon the special (heritage) qualities which define their area to best achieve aims and objectives for the historic environment. To this end information on our website might be of assistance http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/get-involved/improving-your-neighbourhood/. I have also appended a list of sources of guidance on considering the historic environment, including a number of self-help tools for communities, which you may find helpful to consult.</p> <p>We appreciate the level of detail that has been provided on the village's historical context and resultant townscape (or perhaps more accurately 'village-scape') character, including the identification of a number of key positive features of the conservation area. The Council's conservation area appraisal was prepared in 2007 and provides an important resource for understanding the character of the conservation area, which would be relevant evidence for the Parish Council to consider in preparing the plan. We recommend ensuring that the policy in the neighbourhood plan refers to the Council's conservation area appraisal as a material consideration in determining planning applications and to require proposals for new development to demonstrate how the area's positive character features identified in the appraisal have been protected in its design.</p> <p>The preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan also provides an opportunity for the community to review the conservation area appraisal to determine whether it continues to provide a suitable basis for decision-making in the conservation area. This might include reviewing whether the issues identified previously are still the most pressing, or whether these have been resolved or new issues have arisen. The community may also use the neighbourhood plan to identify any potential changes to the</p>	Noted – See new Theme 2 policies on conservation area
			Noted

area covered by the designation, which they wish the Council to consider. We note that the document presently expresses the community's dissatisfaction with the impact some recent development has had on the character of the village and the conservation area. It would be helpful as a guide to the suitability of future development proposals for the evidence base of the plan to include a critical review of these recent developments to identify specifically what features (e.g. the materials, massing, scale, placement or spacing of buildings, green environment, or mixture of hard and planted surfaces, etc.) detract from the character of the conservation area. This could also be used to develop guidelines for new development, including identifying design features that these should include in order to be considered suitable, which may then be expressed as part of the plan's policies.

We note a number of spaces identified as potential local green spaces. One of the criteria that may justify the designation of local green space is that it should have a local historic significance, we recommend clearly identifying any historic significance these spaces may have for the community in order to provide a robust justification for their designation?

Cherwell District Council has recently embarked on a programme of local listing of historic buildings and other heritage assets of local significance, including publishing criteria by which these will be chosen. Preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan provides an important opportunity to identify any features that the community consider meet these criteria, and indeed to provide policies to ensure they are given proper consideration in planning decisions. We would recommend considering local listing for key historic buildings and places that make an important contribution to the character of the Parish but have not met the criteria for national designations such as listed buildings and scheduled monuments in the past.

We have noted that many Neighbourhood Plans in their early preparation overlook the presence of archaeological remains of interest within the area covered. Exploring opportunities to reveal more of the area's past through projects such as development of Parish history trails can contribute to the sense of identify of the community as well as providing opportunities for local businesses, including public houses and village shops. The County Historic Environment Record (maintained by the County Council) provides an accessible resource of information about previously recorded archaeological finds and remains within the parish, which you may wish to consult.

I hope these points are of assistance in drafting the plan but would be pleased to answer any queries they may raise or to provide any further information that may be available from English Heritage.

We have strengthened Theme 2 policies on rural character.

Noted

Noted – We have updated and published the BNDP Archaeology and Heritage assets document using your recommended resource (amongst others.) An addition we would seek is the Red Lion Garden for which details have already been provided to CDC as a heritage asset.

Theme 2 does set out in more detail the importance of preserving out historic rural character.

130 Mr & Mrs C Simms

Policy HR 1b
 Agree strongly with this statement. Bloxham is a lovely village with some beautiful homes. We need to make sure this generation leave its own legacy of homes that we can be proud of and not the bog standard red brick thin walled houses that are all over the country.

Noted: See especially Theme 2 policies on village character

Policy HRd

Take out 110 litres. Leave it as 'Housing shall be designed for maximum person/day water usage as set out in the Code for sustainable homes Level 3 or its successor' – This will leave it flexible to adapt to Central Gov Policy changes

CSH has bitten the dust I'm afraid but can quote the 2015 version of [Building Regs Doc G](#) on water efficiency or its successor

Policy CR

Why is this policy only seeking contribution towards 'pitch spaces'? Recreation is a lot more than just football. Football is only played by a very small proportion of the village and I would suggest the existing facilities are mainly used by residents from Banbury and the wider areas as well as Bloxham. The Community Policy should be widened to include all the recreation facilities the village needs to ensure a happy, healthy and cohesive community.

A NP focus has been on what residents have told us they want.

As well as pitches this policy should seek new developments to contribute to Play provision on 'whole village areas' rather than small on site play equipment. This provision should be for all ages of the community, from the very young, teenagers, and older community members

Noted
This appears in the Projects section of the plan.

Allotments

The recreation and leisure facilities report from Nov 2014 shows a real deficit in play space and allotments and a growing shortage of cemetery provision. This really needs to be highlighted and addressed within the Neighbourhood Plan

There are agreed criteria (planning obligations) for the size of development that prompt developer funding and this plan does not advocate enough houses for some of the above. (e.g. allotments.)

Policy CRb

Please remove the word 'moderate' from this policy. This word can be interpreted in many different ways and is therefore not appropriate in this policy. The New Management Committee at the Jubilee are currently looking at the future of the hall and this word is too restrictive to any future plans. The hall has been overlooked in recent years and with all the development in the village, the hall and play space now needs to be looked at and improved to make it 'fit for purpose' facility for a village of this size.

Noted – moderate has been removed from the Theme 4 policy on recreation.

The evidence for 3B in relation to 1 in 5 think Bloxham can support an additional venue may need to be revisited as there was a reference in the original questionnaire to the church becoming a community space. This may be a cause of confusion, and if this doesn't happen many people may

Phase 1 of the church development is reportedly going ahead.

		<p>have responded differently.</p> <p>Policy Cs What are 'very special circumstances'? This should be clarified. Selling a piece of land for £1million for housing could be considered 'very special' by the landowner.</p> <p>Policy CS1 Please amend the boundary of green space at Jubilee Park. We support the pitches being designated as protected green space but any future plans of the Jubilee should not be restricted by designating the area around the pitches as Green space.</p> <p>Other areas. We would like to see a policy to look at the traffic/parking problems outside the shops including construction of a layby or similar. If this was to be addressed it would stop that road becoming a single carriageway at key times of the day when cars cannot pass quickly and would resolve overnight the traffic problems that occur in this area and have a knock on effect all the way to the Milton mini-roundabout.</p> <p>On your question below we have ticked no for protecting the Rec. This is because as the Rec currently stands, it is not a great facility for anyone. The play equipment is substandard and ancient, and the field is only really used by footballers and dog walkers.</p> <p>It could be a great facility for all the village, with football and cricket pitches, tennis courts, wildlife areas and a play space for all ages. If it had all these then it would be worth protecting.</p>	<p>See reworded Theme 3 policy on this.</p> <p>Public support was not just for the pitches but for the park in general but we will leave space around the Jubilee Hall.</p> <p>Noted. We agree with the aim but no practicable solution has been forthcoming in the absence of more land for parking.</p> <p>Noted and understood but attempts to identify any better alternative have failed. The PC and Rec Trustees are currently addressing the poor level and quality of equipment.</p>
131	Roger & Susan ANowell	<p>An excellent plan; a skilful, distillation of a great many views. opinions and thousands of hours discussion.</p> <p>We are in total agreement with the plan and will support it in full</p>	Noted
132	Nick Rayner	<p>I have lived in this beautiful Oxfordshire village for over 25 years, and up until the last few years it had grown at appropriate levels and in line with what is sustainable. Over the last 3 years or so the level of speculative and wholly inappropriate developments has blighted our village. We are a rural community, but increasingly we are running the risk of becoming a suburb of Banbury not a separate village. I appreciate we need to develop local housing, but there are far more appropriate sites in the</p>	Noted : We have produced a Sustainability Report that sets out much of this..

		<p>region particularly some of the brown field locations. Bloxham is not a sustainable village on almost any front, our infrastructure and services are already stretched to breaking. The village has had more than its fair share of ad hoc speculative developments, and it needs to stop. Hopefully our NDP will help this process.</p> <p>Local development tends to be one of the main topics of concern in any local meetings or gatherings. Therefore I am fully supportive of the development and contents of our Bloxham NDP. Policies HN 1,2, and 3 are reasonable "rules" for any potential future small developments, particularly given the very high levels of recent years. Any developments should be strictly in line with the look and feel of a rural village environment (HR1), not outside any of the approved (planning consent given) development locations (as at Feb 2015), and supportive of our farming and rural heritage. All our green belt and farming lands should stay as that, Green Belt. It's what makes Bloxham different, and keeps us a village not a suburb.</p> <p>The BNDP has been a great catalyst for our village and the whole team led by John must be congratulated on an excellent piece of work. I really hope the local wishes, wants and needs that these locally developed plans were intended to convey and deliver within the national planning frameworks, are adhered to, and accorded appropriate gravitas by the Westminster politicians. We will see.</p>	<p>Noted – see especially policies BL3, BL13 etc on infrastructure.</p> <p>See new Theme 2 policies on rural character See Theme 2 and 4 policies on 1 on space, views and recreation.</p>
133	Mr & Mrs Hill	<p>Firstly, we would like to thank all those involved for giving up their time to produce this important document.</p> <p>We agree with the policies in the plan.</p> <p>Whilst we understand that Bloxham should take on new dwellings, this shouldn't be to the detriment of existing residents of the village. We agree with policy HN1 in particular as we feel that the village could not sustain another large development.</p>	<p>Noted – See Theme 1 policy on regard for existing residents</p>
134	Estelle Cotton	Please see below. (Provided info about agreeing with LGS proposals)	Noted
135	Peter Piddock	<p>We strongly feel that Bloxham has reached its optimum in housing provision, and that any further development will endanger the nature of the village and put an undue strain on the infrastructure</p> <p>*We include this entry although it arrived beyond the published deadline*</p>	<p>Noted: See recent Sustainability Report on village infrastructure.</p>
136	Rupert Kipping	<p>The infrastructure of Bloxham will not support any additional housing especially the roads; if any is planned it is important that it is of a similar standard and character to adjacent properties.</p> <p>There is a need for a communal hall seating about 200 people similar to that of Kings Sutton. I would like to see the Ex-servicemens Hall, Ellen Hinde Hall, Jubilee Park and the Baptist Church join together to build a new facility incorporating the different needs of each Charity for the mutual benefit of each and also the community.</p> <p>The 'commercial centre' is too congested causing constant traffic problems and we need a long term vision for the future.</p> <p>*We include this entry although it arrived beyond the published deadline*</p>	<p>See Sustainability Report on infrastructure.</p> <p>Noted - but - In the absence of positive suggestions of sources of land or funding for this scale of Community Hall we are unable to formulate policies upon it.</p>

137	Peter James Philip Barwell	<p>You make no note about Bloxham School being the largest business in Bloxham. This is a great asset to the Village.</p> <p>I think that it is quite wrong to create a permanent open space on their fields. You are preventing them from even building a pavilion on their own land in the future. We should protect the other parts of the village from further businesses</p>	<p>We have amended policies to give Bloxham School more scope for development. Please see response to comment 40.</p>
		<p>*We include this entry although it arrived beyond the published deadline*</p>	
138	H Sanderson	<p>New play grounds needed. What is the 106 money going to be used for.</p> <p>Why designate Bloxham School playing fields as green areas when the school may need them to expand. Trust them to do the right thing given that they provide so much for the village free of charge. Designate the footpath over hob hip a green area.</p>	<p>The PC and Recreation Ground Trust are working on a whole village strategy to upgrade the playgrounds - See projects section.</p> <p>Noted – Please see response to comment 40 on Bloxham School land.</p> <p>We have sought to protect the views from the footpath to Hobb Hill</p>
		<p>*We include this entry although it arrived beyond the published deadline*</p>	
139	Environment Agency	<p>Apologies, if there was any missed communications. From looking at the Neighbourhood Plan it appears that the development being proposed through the plan period is minimal (20 Dwellings). As such we would not have any significant concerns with what is proposed. Any foul drainage capacity issues could be dealt with at the application phase through upgrades to existing mains drainage infrastructure or other foul drainage solutions such as package treatment plants. We would also expect any development allocation to follow the principles of the NPPF and Cherwell Local Plan. We would not support development in Flood Zone 2 or 3 and any development within 8m of the main rivers. Thanks,</p>	<p>Noted See Theme 1 policies on flooding and drainage.</p>
140	Cherwell District Council	<p>Thank you for consulting the District Council on your pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan and for allowing a few extra days for this response. The Council supports collaborative working with Bloxham Parish Council in order to facilitate the progression of the Neighbourhood Plan (BNP). The progress being made by the Parish Council is welcomed.</p> <p>The following officer comments are provided further to the recent meetings held on 29 January and 12 February to assist the Parish Council in completing the Plan and securing its final approval. A number of general comments are provided followed by more specific observations. The comments are not intended to be critical but to help the Parish take the Plan forward. They are also made</p>	

without prejudice to other observations that may be made at the next stage of the Plan.

General Comments

1. Bloxham village has experienced significant growth in recent years. The aspiration of the Parish Council to seek to control and influence the development that takes place in the village is understood. Many of the Plan's overall objectives are supported.
2. It is evident from the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan website (<http://bloxhamneighbourhoodplan.co.uk>), and from recent meetings, that a great amount of time and work has been committed to preparing the Plan. The 'Working Group Reports' are particularly comprehensive and the significant efforts of Parish Council and others involved in producing the Plan are noted. The issues which the Parish Council is seeking to address in the Plan are clearly supported by a significant amount of research.
3. In the context of the amount of supporting information the Parish Council has gathered, the Plan's accessibility and brevity is to be commended.
4. It is considered that the Plan could be further improved through the use of clearer section breaks and the use of appendices for the presentation of contextual and other supporting information. This might include, for example, an appendix on the historic development of the village. In view of the amount of work that has been undertaken, a section on evidence gathering within the main body of the Plan may be helpful with cross-references to supporting documents.
5. To assist public understanding, it is suggested that explanation be provided of the current Development Plan context in Cherwell (current and emerging), specifically the relationship between the Neighbourhood Plan, the saved policies of the adopted Local Plan 1996 and the emerging Local Plan. A policy context section may help the lay-reader and could make brief reference to national policy and guidance.
6. It may be helpful to include some reference to the requirements of national policy in relation to neighbourhood plans as set out in paragraphs 183-185 of the NPPF. A neighbourhood plan should support the strategic development needs set out in the Local Plan, and plan positively to support local development. It is important to minimise any conflicts between policies in the Neighbourhood Plan and those in the emerging Local Plan.
7. In completing the Neighbourhood Plan, the Parish Council will I'm sure be mindful of the

Noted – we have tried to distil some of this content into a sustainability report.

We have revised the section layout. We have kept the historical section where it was as preserving and enhancing the rural historic character is a very major element of the plan

We have added boxes trying to clarify the relationship to the NPPF and the Local plan prior to each group of policies.

Noted: we have been constantly mindful of the need to try and keep up with the emerging Local Plan

We will proceed with a view to meeting the requirements of both

potential timetable for the completion and adoption of the new Local Plan. You will be aware that the Inspector's report is expected in Spring 2015 which would potentially enable the Plan to be adopted in the Summer, if found to be 'sound'. The Neighbourhood Plan would benefit from updating in places to reflect the latest position on the new Local Plan, the modifications and the examination hearings. It is of course a strategic decision for the Parish whether to proceed on the basis of the current adopted Local Plan or to wait for adoption of the new Plan.

the adopted plan but also the emerging plan

8. It is noted that the statutory 'Basic Conditions Statement' (version 1.02) is still in development. The completed statement should briefly explain how the vision, objectives and policies of the plan meet the prescribed Basic Conditions.

~~Noted~~

i) Using the NPPF's 12 core planning principles (NPPF, para' 17) to demonstrate that regard has been had to national planning policy is a sensible approach and one which was also taken by Hook Norton Parish Council. The use of cross reference to sections of the Plan may help expand on some of the examples given.

We have consulted the relevant statutory bodies who say, in their opinion, we do not need an SEA

ii) It is a legal requirement that, in the case of Neighbourhood Plans which will have a significant environmental impact, a strategic environmental assessment (SEA) must be made in which the effects of carrying out the plan, and the reasonable alternatives to it, are identified, described and evaluated. Regulation 2(4) of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2015, "...adds to the list of documents that a qualifying body must submit to a local planning authority with a proposal for a neighbourhood plan. The additional document which must be submitted is either an environmental report prepared in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, or a statement of reasons why an environmental assessment is not required. The amendment is intended to ensure that the public can make informed representations and that independent examiners are confident that they have sufficient information before them to determine whether a neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects. The amendment does not apply in relation to a plan proposal submitted to the local planning authority before these Regulations come into force" (Explanatory Memorandum, 2015 No. 20, para' 7.4). I would suggest giving further consideration to the advantages of undertaking SEA, both to plan-making and in using the outcome in completing the Basic Conditions Statement. Without an SEA, a statement of reasons why an environmental assessment is not required must be produced.

We have produced a sustainability report (not a Sustainability Appraisal.) This sets out why we do not need either an SEA or an HRA.

iii. The adopted strategic local policy which the Plan must in general conformity with comprises the saved policies of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 1996.

We would still hope CDC will offer a formal SEA screening opinion

National Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) makes clear that a draft Neighbourhood Plan, "...is not

tested against the policies in an emerging Local Plan although the reasoning and evidence informing the Local Plan process may be relevant to the consideration of the basic conditions against which a neighbourhood plan is tested” (Paragraph: 009, Reference ID: 41-009-20140306). It adds, “...Where a neighbourhood plan is brought forward before an up-to-date Local Plan is in place the qualifying body and the local planning authority should discuss and aim to agree the relationship between policies in:

- the emerging neighbourhood plan
- the emerging Local Plan
- the adopted development plan...”.

I am sure that the Parish is conscious of this and it is therefore suggested that section 3 of the Basic Condition Statement be expanded to include consideration of saved Local Plan policies unless a decision is taken to complete the Neighbourhood Plan following adoption of the new Local Plan. Please note, however, that saved, non-strategic policies of the current, adopted Local Plan will remain part of the Development Plan upon adoption of the new Local Plan. A list of policies to be replaced and retained is provided at Appendix 7 of the Submission Local Plan (as Proposed to be Modified). Officers would be happy to assist further in the considering the compatibility of policies at our next meeting if required.

9. In the context of 8.iii above, it suggested that the Neighbourhood Plan would benefit from some additional commentary within the main body on the relationship between the Plan and the key strategic objectives and policies of the modified Submission Local Plan, particularly those relating to housing development in the rural areas. It should demonstrate how the policies are in general conformity with the overarching development strategy of the emerging local plan. The evidence base used in the preparation of the local plan may be helpful in this regard. For example, it is suggested that the level of housing need in the district, as highlighted by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014 (SHMA) and the importance of maintaining a five year land supply should be emphasised.
10. In section 2 of the Plan, it is suggested that there should be differentiation between the factual context for the Plan and the issues and challenges which require interpretation. One approach would be to include a separate section on issues, challenges and opportunities after a contextual section but before the vision; for example the concern about over-development expressed in section 2.4. Section 3.2 could be expanded and used to achieve
11. A greater focus on recent built developments and the contribution to housing land supply since 2011 may also be helpful. A greater focus on planning appeals and other decisions in the

We have sought to be consistent with the strategic elements of both the adopted and emerging Local Plan

Noted and we have now included contextual information of the SHMA and the Local Plan Policy Villages 1

There is also more detail in the new Sustainability Report.

We have now provided a more detailed coverage of the issues in the Sustainability Report.

We understand that we have not made this clear and have amended accordingly. There is also additional information in the Sustainability Report.

We have added the fact that we will receive 85 houses on the Milton Rd

Parish may help illustrate some of the issues and challenges identified.

12. The Neighbourhood Plan will nonetheless need to consider how it will comply with Local Plan housing policies including Polices Villages 1 and 2 of the modified Submission Local Plan. Specific comments are provided below but it is suggest that local housing needs and the contribution of schemes approved since 1 April 2014 should be considered. In advance of the Inspector’s report on the Local Plan, and in light of the housing need identified in the Oxfordshire SHMA 2014, it is important that the Neighbourhood Plan demonstrates that it accords with the general approach of these policies.
 13. The Plan includes a number of references to ‘areas of high landscape value’ as identified in the adopted Local Plan. The policy approach of these areas was not progressed in either the Non-Statutory Local Plan 2011 nor in the Submission Local Plan. Reference should be made to the more up to date position contained in paragraphs B.245 – B.252 of the submitted Local Plan. Policy C13 of the adopted Local Plan will be replaced by Policy ESD 13 of the new Local Plan upon adoption. The local community’s view on locally important landscape may also be helpful.
 14. Whilst there are issues to examine regarding the appropriateness of further development and the short and longer term capacity of infrastructure / services and facilities, officers would emphasise that on a comparative basis, Bloxham is considered to be a more sustainable village than many with relatively good access to amenities and connectivity to Banbury. This was the general view held by Inspectors in recent planning appeal decisions. Some further reflection on this would be welcome without prejudice to the conclusions of the Local Plan Inspector.
- Specific Comments
15. There is duplication of paragraph numbering in section 2 but this appears to have been rectified on-line.
 16. Paragraph 2.2: a description of the locational context would be helpful.
 17. Paragraph 2.3: the reference to the lack of good connectivity here would benefit from some context / further explanation.
 18. Paragraph 2.3: where assertions are made, e.g. the level of HGV traffic, it is suggested that some cross reference be provided to the source (e.g. supporting document or consultation response).

as a Policy in order to clarify that the total number for the specified period is a minimum of 85

As the term is present in what is the adopted plan at the time of writing we still consider its inclusion is reasonable.

We note the CDC view which is based on a high-level report. We are of the view that more detailed consideration, especially of capacities, does not support that CDC view. We have produced a more detailed Sustainability report to evidence this.

We note the Local Plan inspector was also of the view the existing categorisation was not robust.

We will reference SUSTRANS report and BNDP Sustainability Report.

OCC HGV map has been included in Sustainability Report.

Noted

This section has now gone

- | | |
|---|---|
| 19. Section 3.1: some further explanation of the chronology of the consultation undertaken may be helpful. | Noted |
| 20. Section 3.2: there is perhaps here a mix of issues, challenges and objectives. Differentiating the objectives that emerge from the issues may be advantageous. | Noted see Theme 1 |
| 21. Section 4: it is suggested that the vision should feature more prominently in the Plan. This is of course a matter for the Parish Council but presenting the vision and objectives up front may have more impact and could be followed by sections providing the supporting context and detail. | We have revamped Plan accordingly |
| 22. Sections 5.1 & 5.2: some further consideration of how theme 1 is taken forward and articulated is suggested in view of the fact that under the new Local Plan the villages are required to contribute in meeting wider housing needs. | Noted
The housing policy is based upon trying to match development to sustainable growth. |
| 23. Section 6: the contextual information column in the table of policies might be further supported by reasoned justifications for the individual policies which draws on available information including the consultation feedback. The policies might be more readily explained outside of a tabular format and could be numbered e.g. H1, H2...etc. for ease of referencing. The material provided in Section 7 of the Plan could be helpful. More detailed contextual information could be presented in an appendix. | We are seeking to accept a proportionate share of the CDC emerging plan housing
The Sustainability Report makes clear – as do the many comments in this consultation feedback – that many elements of infrastructure are already very close to, at or beyond capacity. Note – the NPPF - |
| 24. Policy HN Housing Need:
i. the policy needs to be consistent with the strategy of the emerging local plan and how it contributes toward meeting the objectively assessed need. The policy could be seen as being too restrictive. It is assumed that the policy is intended to ‘cap’ development. If so, how would the policy deal with proposals for residential development likely to come forward from now until 2025 bearing in mind the NPPF’s presumption in favour of sustainable development unless any adverse impacts of doing so would demonstrably outweigh the benefits? Housing figures in themselves are not a ‘ceiling’ on development. Can it be demonstrated that more than 20 dwellings would lead to unacceptable harm? School capacity is cited but other reasons may be needed.
Overall, there is concern that this policy could be difficult to defend. An alternative might be to estimate the likely windfall potential across the Parish and to identify a criteria based approach for considering proposals. This would be similar to the approach taken at a district | It is important to ensure that there is a reasonable prospect that planned infrastructure is deliverable in a timely fashion.

Noted Policies BL1 and 2 (backed by the Sustainability Report) make |

- level in Policy Villages 1 of the new Local Plan.
- ii. the 'majority' of the provision is somewhat vague and could be challenged.
 - iii. there is concern that the wording of the 'note' could undermine the rest of the Plan.
 - iv. there is a need for a clear base date to be specified for the housing figures. Officers are presently able to provide the Parish Council with completions and permissions data as at 31 March 2014 including a site by site list of extant residential permissions. The contextual information presented might benefit from a distinction between small (less than 10) and large sites.
 - v. It might be helpful would be useful if large sites with planning permission are shown on a map. Policy Villages 2, of the submitted Local Plan as modified proposes an allocation for Category A villages, which includes Bloxham, of 750 homes. This is in addition to the rural allowance for small site windfalls and planning permissions granted for 10 or more dwellings up to 31 March 2014. It is also in addition to housing completions from 2011-2014 (see the Housing Trajectory in the emerging Local Plan). It is assumed that the Parish Council and local community have considered whether or not to include new allocations for large sites (10 or more homes) and concluded this would not be appropriate.

Some commentary on the consideration of allocations generally could be helpful and the Parish should not overlook the contribution of new permissions granted since 1 April 2014.

- 25. Policy HR - Rural Heritage Landscape:
 - i. Further consideration might be given to the relationship with policy HN discussed above. The two policies could, in principle, be merged.
 - ii. Some specific reference to the important contribution of the Bloxham Conservation Area and the duty to protect or enhance its character and appearance should be considered.
- 26. Policy HA - Appropriate Housing:
 - i. The wording of the policy might need to be reconsidered depending on the policy objective. At present the wording encourages housing but is open-ended. For example, does the policy relate to developments within or outside built-up limits?
 - ii. Explanation as to whether this policy relates to housing over and above that provided for in policy HN would be helpful, particularly as criterion 'd' refers developments of 5 or more homes including 'open market homes'.
 - iii. Criterion a: affordable housing: It should be recognized that there are limitations to the use of Section 106 agreements. Planning obligations entered into must be:
 - necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
 - directly related to the development; and

clear we are looking at a total of a minimum of 85 (Still almost 50% growth since 2004.)

We have now explicitly included the most recent Milton Rd permission as part of this plan.

We have now linked the policies on rural character with the importance of open space and vistas.

Note – new policy on the Conservation area.

Noted see amendment

Given the lack of people with a local connection on the Housing Register seeking affordable housing we have not felt moved to recommend a rural exception site.

We have removed the proposed "posterity link" between affordable

- fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

A distinction needs to be made between Section 106 affordable housing provision (arising from market schemes) and affordable housing provision gained through the development of a Rural Exception Site. National policy allows for the exceptional release of small sites for affordable housing within or adjoining villages in circumstances where planning permission would not normally be given and where there is a demonstrable local need for affordable housing that cannot be met in any other way.

In every case the needs of the particular village are assessed by the Council in partnership with the parties involved before a scheme is progressed. Occupancy controls can be imposed through a Section 106 agreement to ensure that the benefits of affordability (usually gained by the low land value derived from the exceptional basis of the scheme) are preserved so that they continue to meet local need of applicants with a village connection in perpetuity.

S106 affordable housing will be secured for the use of those who bid for properties and are nominated through the Council's Housing Register, and not necessarily will have a local connection, although the Council will still endeavour to secure 50% of the nominations to the new homes for those with a local connection.

The advice of the Council's Rural Housing Enabler may be helpful. A Parish specific Rural Exception Site policy for affordable housing might go some way to meeting the objective of addressing local housing needs.

- iv. Criteria b & d: needs to be framed with reference to Policy BSC 4 of the new local plan on housing mix. It should also accord with Paragraph 50 of the NPPF which seeks the delivery of a wide choice of high quality homes, to widen opportunities for home ownership, and to create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities through the provision of a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends, and the needs of different groups in the community, such as older people.
- v. Criterion c: Parking requirements and provision of parking are important considerations at planning application stage and development proposals need to be in line with Oxfordshire County Council parking standards. In development where affordable flats are proposed parking courts may be an appropriate and acceptable option. These comments are also relevant to Policy ERF.

27. Policy CR - Recreational Facilities: It should be noted that because the Plan does not

homes and those with a village connection.

We note See also Pickles [planning update](#). See also the recent BNDP Sustainability Report.

The amended plan under Theme 1 retains updated evidence based parking policies.

We understand that the proposed level of development will not bring major S106 contributions for recreation. It is unfortunate this was not better addressed at the time of recent large developments.

We have set out in more detail why the areas are special.

		<p>propose any housing development of a scale large enough it would not therefore be possible to extract contributions towards the cost of additional facilities including playing fields from developers during the Plan period. It would be helpful to illustrate any proposed allocations of land on a policies map.</p> <p>28. Policy CS – Local Green Space: the NPPF highlights (para’ 77) that Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. However, officers support the principle of seeking to protect playing pitches and other open space for recreational and amenity use (see NPPF, para’s 73 & 74). In pursuing any Local Green Space designation regard should be had to paragraphs 76 to 78 of the NPPF including whether the land it holds particular local significance and is demonstrably special to the local community. PPG advice should also be considered (Paragraph: 005, Reference ID: 37-005-20140306 to Paragraph: 022, Reference ID: 37-022-20140306). The PPG makes clear that Local Green Space does not need to be in public ownership but that landowners should be contacted at an early stage about proposals to designate any part of their land as Local Green Space.</p> <p>29. Appendix 9 - the evidence base: this should be more specific in detailing which parts of the local plan evidence base were heavily relied on.</p> <p>30. The Plan could make reference to the NPPF requirement to maintain a 5 year housing land supply and the Annual Monitoring Report in the Implementation and Monitoring Section.</p> <p>I trust you will find the comments helpful in your consideration of amendments to the draft Plan. I would be happy to discuss these further at our next meeting.</p>	<p>We have adopted a more flexible approach re Bloxham School land that should not preclude appropriate development that respects the importance of the visual impact of key spaces. See policies Theme 2 policies.</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted but viewed as a primary task for LPA</p> <p>Yes – very helpful – many thanks.</p>
141	Homes and Communities Agency	Thank you sending us a copy of your plan. I have forwarded it to our Rural and Communities officer who will contact you direct if we have any comments. Regards Peter	Noted
142	Highways Agency	Contacted Thank you for your email to Highways England. If your email does relate to an issue on Highways England's network it will be passed to the relevant team within Highways England and they will respond to you within a maximum of 15 working days.	Noted
143	Oxfordshire CCG	Contacted No response.	

Following the consultation the plan was amended and we engaged with various stakeholders once we were nearing the final version. Most were happy with the changes we had made.

We met with Bloxham School who, whilst appreciating the changes we had made, fell short of making any definitive comment either endorsing or objecting to the plan. See email below which followed the meeting on 25th June 2015

You replied to this message on 07/07/2015 21:20.

From: Neil Urquhart <bursar@bloxhamschool.com> **Sent:** Mon 06/07/2015 16:37
To: John Groves
Cc: Paul W. Sanderson
Subject: Bloxham Revised Plan

Dear John

I am sorry that it has taken to late this afternoon to provide you with some formal comment from Bloxham School in time for the Parish Council meeting this evening. Thank you also for coming with Jenny to brief Paul and me on the 25th June.

As we discussed at the meeting, we note the changes that you have made to the plan and, in particular, the reconsideration of which areas of the village will be recommended for designation as local green spaces. We also note that the revised draft plan places greater emphasis on protecting and enhancing rural heritage and, in particular, of preserving specific views. Appendix 4 includes views across our playing field to the main school buildings and from Hobb Hill across our Courtington Lane playing fields.

The School's position remains unchanged. We support the establishment of a neighbourhood plan but we will not support any undue restrictions on the ability of the School to carry out its business, now or in the future. Any future developments that we make will need to take account of the Grade 2 Listed Buildings status of parts of our site and the fact that much of our site is within the village conservation area. As shown by other recent projects, we have no wish to undermine this.

I cannot give the draft plan the unreserved endorsement from Bloxham School that you are probably seeking for tonight's meeting. Having taken informal advice, we are now in the process of engaging a planning consultant in order to provide a formal response to the Cherwell District Council consultation when the plan is submitted up.

I am sorry if you are disappointed by this reply but I hope that you understand that I have a duty to consider the potential needs of the School over the 15+ years of this proposed plan. Good luck with this evening's meeting and please do call me if you want to discuss this in advance. My mobile number is 07867 695550.

Kind regards

Neil

From: John Groves <finchamgroves@totalise.co.uk> **Sent:** Tue 07/07/2015 21:21
To: 'Neil Urquhart'

Dear Neil

Thank you for keeping us in the picture.

We look forward to reading your final response in the next consultation.

John

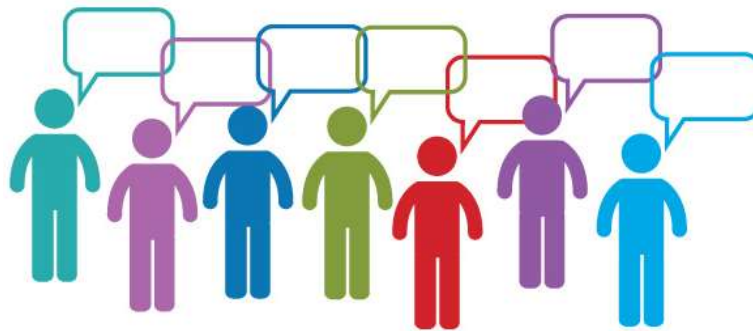
Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan



Consultation Statement

Appendix 2

Consultation diary



**This is regarded as an Appendix to the formal consultation Statement.
It is a simple diary of public and other engagement.**

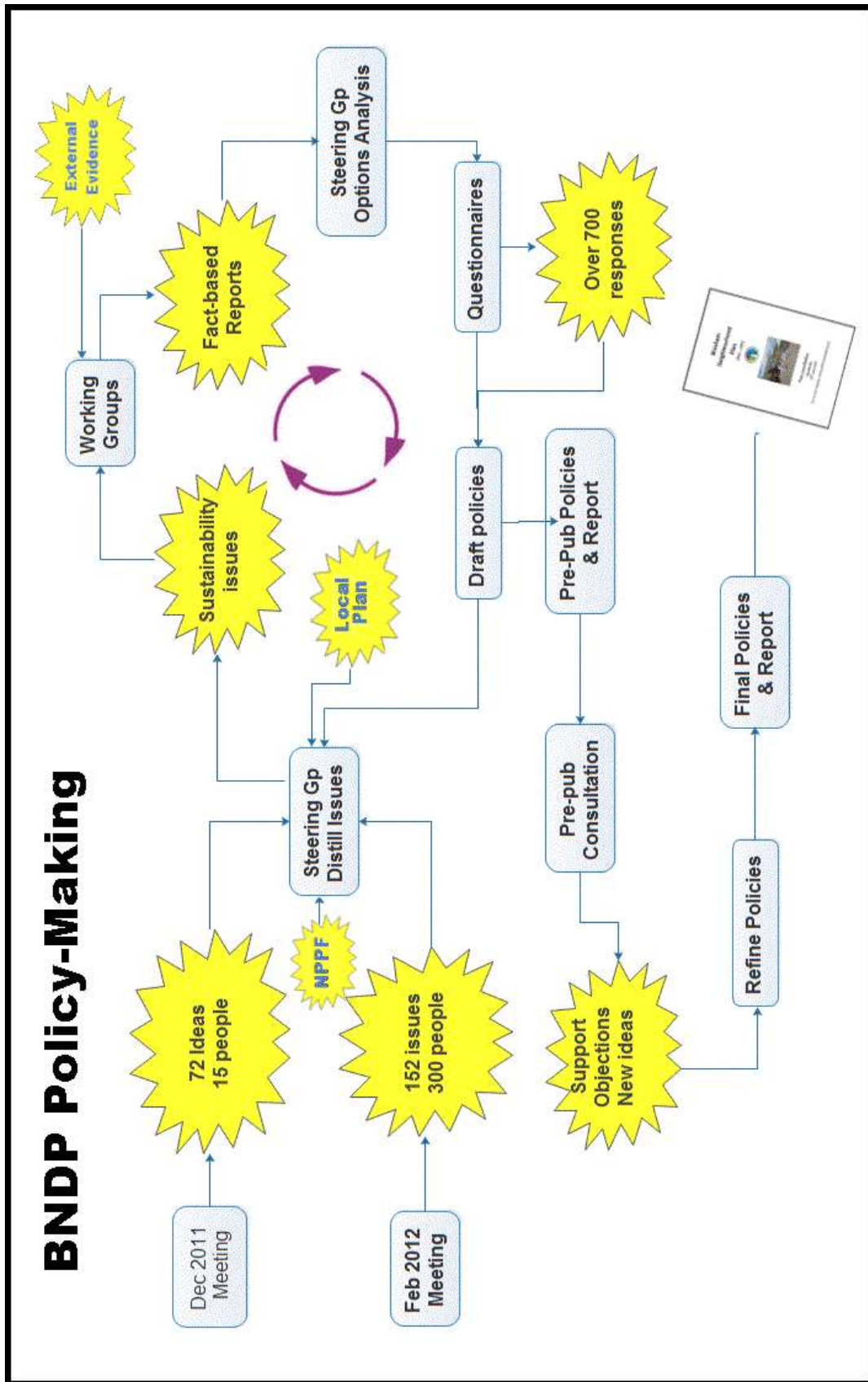
Submission Version
19th Nov 2015

Contents

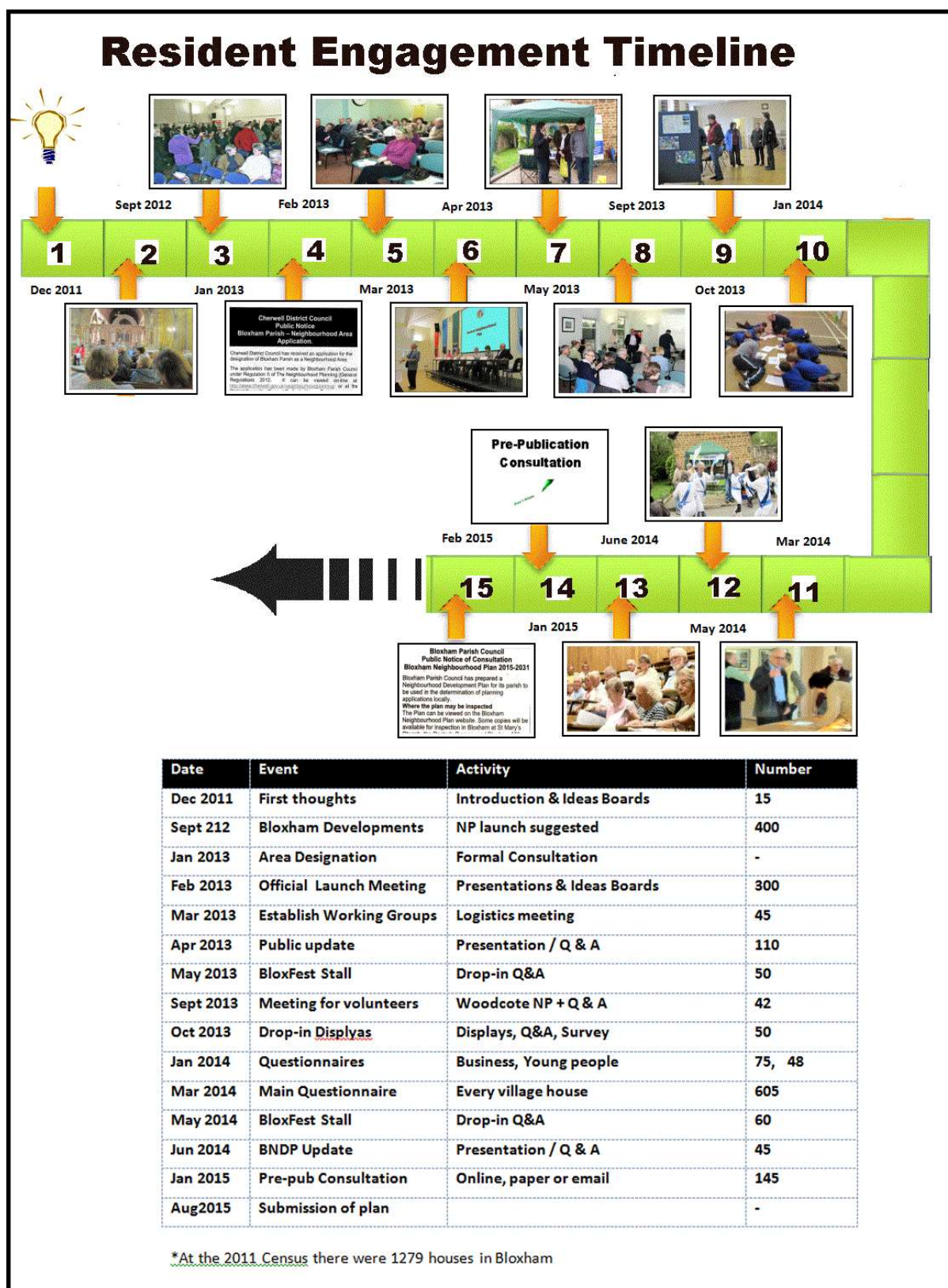
1. VERY FIRST THOUGHTS ABOUT A PLAN – 2ND DEC 2011.....	6
A. INTRODUCTION	6
B. PLANNING PROCESS EXPLAINED	6
C. WHAT NEXT	6
D. RESIDENT VIEWS	6
i. How would you like the village to be improved?.....	6
ii. What are the barriers to Growth and Sustainability for local business?.....	7
iii. What type of jobs should be encouraged in the village?	7
E. ENVIRONMENT.....	7
i. Type of Housing.....	7
ii. What do you value most about our local natural environment?	7
iii. Green space, cycleway and local walks.....	7
iv. What do you value most about our local natural environment?	7
v. What problems could be created by Local businesses?.....	7
F. TRANSPORT	8
i. How should we improve our public transport?	8
ii. How should we improve our walking & cycling routes?.....	8
iii. How can we improve the traffic in the village?.....	8
G. COMMUNITY	8
i. What health services are important locally?.....	8
ii. What do we lack in our village?	9
iii. What are the main issues concerning education in our village.....	9
2. MEETING ON 24TH SEPT 2012	9
A. INTRODUCTION	9
3. APPLICATION AND INITIAL CONSULTATION - 10 JAN 2013.....	10
4. MEETING ON 12TH FEBRUARY 2013	10
A. INTRODUCTION	10
B. SPEAKERS.....	10
C. IDEAS BOARDS	11
<i>Utilities – including broadband</i>	11
<i>Business and economy – including farming</i>	11
<i>Crime and reduction</i>	12
<i>Housing and landscape</i>	12
<i>Faith</i>	12
<i>Communication</i>	12
<i>Traffic and transport</i>	13
<i>Conservation and architecture</i>	13
<i>Medical and health</i>	13
<i>Education</i>	14
<i>Flood and sewage</i>	14
<i>Recreation, Leisure including Mums & Tots</i>	14
<i>Photos</i>	15
5. MEETING ON 5TH MARCH 2013.....	15
A. INTRODUCTION	15
B. THE GROUPS.....	16
C. DISCUSSION.....	16
D. PHOTOS.....	16
6. MEETING ON 30TH APRIL 2013.....	17
A. INTRODUCTION	17

B.	THE CONTENT	17
C.	PHOTOS - 30 TH APRIL 2013 MEETING	17
7.	MEETING ON 11TH MAY 2013 (BLOXFEST 2013)	18
A.	INTRODUCTION	18
B.	THE CONTENT	18
C.	PHOTOS.....	18
8.	MEETING ON 10TH SEPTEMBER 2013	18
A.	INTRODUCTION	18
B.	THE SPEAKERS.....	18
C.	THE CONTENT	18
D.	PHOTOS.....	19
9.	MEETING ON 12TH OCTOBER 2013.....	19
A.	INTRODUCTION	19
B.	THE QUESTIONNAIRE	19
C.	PHOTOS.....	22
10.	THE VIEWS OF YOUNG PEOPLE (JAN – APRIL 2014)	22
A.	INTRODUCTION	22
B.	THE NATURE OF THE ENGAGEMENT	22
C.	THE QUESTIONNAIRE	22
11.	THE BUSINESS VIEW (JAN – APRIL 2014).....	23
A.	INTRODUCTION	23
B.	THE NATURE OF THE ENGAGEMENT	23
C.	KEY FINDINGS	24
12.	MEETING ON 10TH MAY 2014 (BLOXFEST 2014).....	24
A.	INTRODUCTION	24
13.	THE FULL QUESTIONNAIRE (MARCH – APRIL 2014).....	26
A.	INTRODUCTION	26
B.	THE LOGISTICS	26
C.	THE OUTCOMES	26
D.	RELIABILITY	26
E.	PHOTOS.....	28
F.	OUTCOMES	28
14.	MEETING ON 12TH JUNE 2014	29
15.	ANOTHER CHANCE FOR RESIDENTS - 1ST DECEMBER 2014.....	29
16.	PRE-PUBLICATION CONSULTATION 10TH JANUARY 2015	30
	MEDIA INFORMATION ON THE CONSULTATION	30
	AVAILABILITY OF NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN	30
	DETAILS OF HOW TO MAKE REPRESENTATION	30
	SAMPLES OF THE INFORMATION USED.....	30
	RESPONSES THE PRE-PUBLICATION CONSULTATION.....	43
	<i>Method of response</i>	43
	<i>Valid Responses</i>	43
	<i>Who were the responses was from?</i>	43
	<i>Where were the responses from?</i>	43
	<i>The general nature of the individual responses</i>	44
	<i>Green Space Status</i>	46
17.	NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN HEALTH CHECK – JULY 2015	47

Summary of Policy-making Process



Summary of public engagement



1. Very first thoughts about a plan – 2nd Dec 2011

Organiser	The Parish Council	Place	Jubilee Hall Bloxham
Date	2 nd Dec 2011	Attendance	Approx. 15

a. Introduction

A meeting was held on the 2nd December 2011 at the Jubilee Hall to which all residents were invited to discuss the potential of Bloxham Village having a Neighbourhood Development Plan in line with the National Planning Framework (as proposed by the Government).

b. Planning Process Explained

Those attending were told:

- Cherwell District Council (CDC) are preparing their Local Plan and should have it ready for public consultation by April 2012. It is hoped that the final Local Plan produced by CDC will reflect the concerns raised by Bloxham.
- In line with its responsibilities CDC is also producing guidelines for Parish Councils in formulating their own Neighbourhood Development Plans, these should be available in February 2012.

c. What Next

- Once Bloxham Parish Council has had an opportunity to study the guidelines, it will host another meeting to gauge the interest and support for Bloxham's own Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- Neighbourhood Development Plans are important to residents of the village:- Such a plan should, at least, provide a means to assess/demonstrate the viability of any further housing development in the village, notably:
 - By showing the capacity for extra intake of pupils to either the primary or secondary school;
 - Having input to the design of new buildings, and material used;
 - Ensuring Local housing needs are met.
- This is an important issue. If Residents and Businesses operating in Bloxham wish to have a voice then there needs to be commitment towards the development of a robust Neighbourhood Development Plan to complement our existing
- Notice of a further meeting will be published in the Broadsheet (both paper and Website) the Parish Council's website and village notice Boards.
- Provisional dates are May/June 2012 this will allow for any views expressed to be fed back into the CDC Local Plan. Economy

d. Resident Views

i. How would you like the village to be improved?

- Shops to be built alongside the new housing developments to aid traffic by existing shops.
- Realisation that more housing without due regard to traffic problems would be a huge snarl up.
- Decentralise shopping away from the main road.
- Shops built alongside new developments, cuts carbon and eases congestion, reduces parking requirements.
- Weight restrictions on HGV are using A361.
- A shop near the Warriner with adequate parking.



ii. What are the barriers to Growth and Sustainability for local business?

- Space to develop & again parking, staff for current shops come in from outside so they also need to park
- Traffic flow & parking (not to mention the downturn in the economy and unavailability of £'s)

iii. What type of jobs should be encouraged in the village?

- Jobs for villagers, how about shops where staff proprietors live over the shop. Currently staff for the shops tend to come from outside the village.
- Jobs that generate gross national product- i.e. Make £ for the economy not services and money spending jobs.

e. Environment

i. Type of Housing

- High spec, large rooms, stone built, plenty of parking for 2-3 cars, green space & wide roads.
- Low cost housing, limited/no expensive housing.
- Social, small low cost, large high spec: all of these but sympathetically built, of local & traditional materials, with thought to people as well as profit.
- Sympathetically built in line with original conservation "look"
- Low cost housing built to fit rest of the village, Social Housing for local people, starter homes.
- Any new housing to be built in local stone with mixture of bedrooms from starter homes to four bedrooms.



ii. What do you value most about our local natural environment?

- Warriner 6th form to keep education consistency.
- Important to keep some green spaces in the village.
- Village circular walk including historical information.
- Green space, farming/Agriculture this village is still rural.
- The quiet and peace!

iii. Green space, cycleway and local walks

- That it is both physically & visibly accessible from within the village e.g. view of green fields & trees on Hobb Hill from A 361, Courtington Lane, Tadmarton Hill etc.;
- Do not build on Hobb Hill ever.

iv. What do you value most about our local natural environment?

- The rural environment is slowly being whittled away by housing.
- Not easy and I don't know how it can be achieved: - Bloxham is a popular village, finding ways of sustaining this is important. How do other villages achieve this?
- Used to have a bank!

v. What problems could be created by Local businesses?

- Traffic again
- Traffic
- More traffic, less parking for residents, greater pressure on A361 and current shops.
- More cars parked during the day preventing villagers parking.

f. Transport

i. How should we improve our public transport?

- More regular buses, smaller buses
- Perhaps smaller buses on a more regular basis.



ii. How should we improve our walking & cycling routes?

- Have dedicated cycle routes & a code of conduct.
- Enforce cycling etiquette especially on the High Street, dismounting for pedestrians on the pavement etc.
- Cycle route lanes

iii. How can we improve the traffic in the village?

- Traffic busy on the Barford road which is only a country lane - now joined with traffic from the Milton Road,
- Another busy route, not adequate for more traffic.
- Bus in morning between Chipping Norton and Banbury is full not even standing room for school kids.
- More speed limit signs within the main limit signs.
- Reduce speed limit to 20MPH, Restrict HGV access, improve public transport, (re-nationalise it for a start)
- Ban HGV's on the A361
- Reduce speed limit on the A361, ensure camera works.
- Build a by-pass for benefit for Bloxham and South Newington, forward thinking -20years!
- Build by-pass around the village.
- Cycle route lanes
- Reduce speed limit, traffic calming, possibly ban HGV's
- Buy the garden North of Red Lion for shops to ease parking.
- Better bus service (last bus from Banbury currently 6.10pm) to enable more people to leave cars at home.
- Pedestrian crossing/ lights at junction Courtington lane & A361, allow Chipperfield mums to cross in safety.
- Far more stringent measures re: - parking outside shops & village houses.
- Create more shops in areas of high density population within the village but away off A361, this would reduce need to use a vehicle and lower carbon footprint.
- Better parking by the shops, use green space opposite Bloxham school.

g. Community

i. What health services are important locally?

- Ability to pick up medicine from surgery rather than just prescription.
- GP's surgery for all residents.



ii. What do we lack in our village?

- New village hall/centre to accommodate local clubs, classes, theatre & parties.
- Build new village centre with parking that will house existing shops: Godswell Park, Driving range.
- A bank, a butcher & a baker
- Central community centre, shops, more small businesses.
- A single large versatile, good quality village hall and adequate parking.
- Bring back bank, hardware store and butcher.
- A large village hall.
- Flexible enough public transport, getting to Oxford, Witney, Deddington, requires tortuous route:- smaller buses
- Parking, decent village hall.

iii. What are the main issues concerning education in our village.

- All schools full, to grow with development.
- 6th Form college for Warriner, though' this would entail further traffic
- Need sixth form at the Warriner.
- No room in schools, which is only going to get worse.
- Roads accident waiting to happen, especially Courtington Lane due to overcrowded roads.
- Need sixth form for Warriner.

2. Meeting on 24th Sept 2012

a. Introduction

This meeting was scheduled for the Parish Rooms but around 400 people turned up and so it was moved into the Church.

The purpose of this meeting was not the Neighbourhood Plan. It was about how residents felt about the sudden avalanche of planning requests for three large estates.

We include it here because the content and discussion was very much focussed upon the need for appropriate, thoughtful development rather than the unplanned off-the-peg estates plonked into fields. To a significant extent, this is also what our neighbourhood plan is about.



3. Application and initial Consultation - 10 Jan 2013

Cherwell D.C. acknowledged receiving the Parish Council application to undertake a Neighbourhood Plan on 10th Jan 2013.

They published notice of the intention as shown.

The Council District Executive agreed, at a meeting on 3 June 2013, to designate the parish area as the 'Bloxham Neighbourhood Area' for the purposes of preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan by Bloxham Parish Council under section 61G(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended. It was decided not to designate the area as a business area under section 61H(1) of the Act as it is not primarily or wholly business in nature. The relevant designation information is set out below:

- a. Name of neighbourhood area: Bloxham
- b. Map of neighbourhood area: see below
- c. Relevant body: Bloxham Parish Council

Cherwell D.C. also informed statutory consultees of the intention.

Replies were obtained indicating no objections from

- English Heritage 15th April 2013
- Network rail (15 April 2013) 15th April 2013
- The Canal & River Trust 12 April 2013
- The Environment Agency 15th April 2015

The Council District Executive agreed, at a meeting on 3 June 2013, to approve the designation of the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan area.

**Cherwell District Council
Public Notice
Bloxham Parish – Neighbourhood Area
Application.**

Cherwell District Council has received an application for the designation of Bloxham Parish as a Neighbourhood Area.

The application has been made by Bloxham Parish Council under Regulation 5 of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. It can be viewed on-line at: <http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning/> or at the District Council's offices at Bodicote House, Banbury.

The application is advertised for representations as to whether there is any reason why the District Council should not make the area designation.

Representations can be made in writing to the Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy, Cherwell District Council, Bodicote House, Banbury, OX15 4AA, or by email to planning.policy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk no later than Thursday 7th March 2013.

The application is the first formal step in the preparation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan for Bloxham and seeks designation of the Parish boundary as the Neighbourhood Area.

A Neighbourhood Development Plan is a community-led framework for guiding the future development, regeneration and conservation of an area. In preparing the Plan, the Parish Council will be required to undertake community and stakeholder consultation.

The Plan must comply with European and national legislation and must have appropriate regard to national policy and be in general conformity with existing strategic local planning policy. The Plan will also be subject to an independent examination and a referendum. Upon completion, the Neighbourhood Development Plan will become part of the statutory development plan for the area.

Planning Policy
Cherwell District Council
Bodicote House
Banbury, OX15 4AA
Tel. 01295 227985VE



4. Meeting on 12th February 2013

Organiser	The Parish Council	Place	Warriner School Hall
Date	12 th Feb 2012	Attendance	Approx. around 300

a. Introduction

This was effectively a re-launch of the idea of a Neighbourhood Plan, which had been first set out in December 2011.

It was held in the Warriner main hall and despite the snow and bitter cold around 300 people turned out.

b. Speakers

- Phil Cavill (resident and chair of the Parish Council)
- Sir Tony Baldry (resident and MP)
- John Groves (resident)

The audience were taken through what creating a plan would entail and were subsequently asked to share their priorities for plan content.

c. Ideas Boards

There was also a team of people assigned “ideas boards” to collect resident views

SUBJECT	LEAD
Education	Roger Nowell
Flood & Sewage	Gloria Lester -Stevens
Medical & Health	John Groves
Traffic & Transport	Mike Morris
Recreation, Leisure including Mums & Tots	Ray Guzenda / Amanda Baxter
Business & Economy including Farming	Patrick Moore
Housing & Landscape	Mike Davey
Conservation & Architecture	Camilla Finley
Crime & Reduction	PCSO/Police
Faith	Vicar
Communication	

Although some of their suggestions were more suitable for as Parish Plan than a Neighbourhood Plan, this is not unusual and we note that many plans now include both Plans and projects. Projects tend to be things residents would like to do that do not strictly fall within the scope of the legal elements of a Neighbourhood Plan.

We list them below. Although some of the more cryptic comments have been “decoded”, they have not been evaluated or prioritised in any way.

Utilities – including broadband

- Faster broadband x 5
- Better water pressure x 2
- Electrical supply – reliability x 2
- Drainage at house level
- Mobile phone coverage x 4
- Mobile phone mast in village but where?
- Better village hall
- Street lights
- Reduce overhead cabling
- Alternative energy

Business and economy – including farming

- Hi-speed broadband
- Allotments
- Parking including at the schools
- Local food production – retain and encourage
 - Jobs
 - Grown local
- Access to grants for SME (small businesses)
- Electrical supply
- Location of shopping area – not on main road (Deddington) and not in housing area
- Small business zone on edge of village – encourage
- Support for small business – meetings, knowledge, etc.
- Farmers market – farmers involved in community and encouraging locally grown

Crime and reduction

- Increase neighbourhood watch
- Visible increase in police teams
- Handling of local crime
- Street lighting – more / less / maintain current levels
- Village police office / post
- Village ‘bobby’
- Maintain the low level of crime
- Hidden cams and CCTV

Housing and landscape

- More in keeping with village landscape / streetscape
- No more BRICK houses
- Really affordable – low earners and young
- Affordable housing and benefits from developers improving parking in and around Tadmarton Rd.
- Better design
- No ugly play areas
- What does affordable housing mean?
- 60% off very expensive is still expensive
- No more housing lumps on edge of village
- Eco housing
- Life time sheltered accommodation
- Stop expanding boundaries of village
- Specify in NDP exactly what we want and new houses to look like / density etc.
- NDP reflective of developing existing properties (extensions)

Faith

- St Mary’s
- Develop all church for wider community use (Christian)
 - Concerts
 - Farmers market
- Parish council community office
- Baptist church needs new site
- Facilities similar to Kings Sutton
- Memorial hall
 - Mums and tots
 - Sports
 - Café
 - Library
 - Catering
- Start a village and community event. (BloxFest!)

Communication

- For a village the size of Bloxham we should aspire to a public library / resource centre rather than relying on a library van
- All data regarding the plan should be stored in the cloud
- Faster broadband
- No mobile phone signal – Tadmarton Road
- A library with a warm welcome – opportunity to socialise

Traffic and transport

- Introduce a toll road to push HGV around village
- Better bus service including Banbury and Oxford
- Cycle path to Banbury
- Circular footpath would be good – esp. Grove road to Milton road clearly marked
- Limit the size of lorries going through the village
- Inset parking by shops to aid the traffic flow
- High volume of traffic
- Footpath to Banbury
- Speed control on Tadmarton Road by primary school
- Develop an effective 'snow plan' for the village – local tractor?
- Deliveries outside of rush hour for shops
- Pedestrian crossing on A361 where really needed, church, surgeries, Godswell, nursery etc.
- Road humps or traffic calming on Barford Road to slow traffic before roundabout
- Please no speed humps!
- A bypass
- Cannot park in front of my home during school hours on Tadmarton Rd
- 20mph speed limits
- An island outside the church in middle of road
- Traffic calming for school
- Proper layby for parking outside shops
- Fix potholes.
- Identify drivers speeding and or using mobile phones
- More parking at Warriner to stop blocking driveway to Chipperfield Rd

Conservation and architecture

- Establish a community orchard / market garden / School perhaps
- Houses with a sense of place
- Density of houses
- Conserve farmland in village
- Maintain our rural identity
- Use Cherwell's assessment of conservation areas -> Bloxham
- Help maintain historic homes and buildings in Bloxham
 - Support for those living in them
 - Respect for conservation area
 - Re-establish this conservation area and protect it
 - Stop parking on grass verges
- Develop Slade Reserve for community projects; Green Gym, New wildlife habitats, etc.
- Forest schools – primary school involvement
- Appropriate materials for any new build
- Not the hideous red / orange brick seen on estates
- Maintain the ambience and character of the village
- Play areas in new estates are not in keeping
- New appropriate designs
- Retain the pubs for the community
- Allotments and community parks

Medical and health

- Dispensing from the surgery x 6
- Maintain current good provision
- Pharmacy should be maintained – what would go in its place
- Long walk from surgery to pharmacy esp. for elderly

- Difficult to get appointment – long waiting
- Emergency support (local) – should we lose the HGH

Education

- Input from Bloxham (public) school – contribute to village and community
- Buy land to expand the primary school and provide more parking space
- Promote the ‘walking bus’
- Mini bus around Bloxham for the schools?
- Consider ways the school facilities can be used for the wider community – e.g. Library and farm at Warriner School
- Traffic – Courtington Lane and Tadmarton Rd
- Passing places to help
- Schools to operate Forest School
- Crossing for primary school on Tadmarton Lane
- Bigger school play grounds and car park
- More inter-school partnerships, and community
- More publicity for school events

Flood and sewage

- What is current capacity
- Decent water pressure
- Do we need a new pumping station
- Upgrade ditches to prevent surface water flooding
- Keep the drains clear
- Danger of future flooding from known water holding areas
- Lower the depth of the stream – under bridges a priority
- Create balancing ponds also great for wildlife
- Surface water in foul water drainage, Tadmarton Rd did not flood after highways cleared the pipes under road

Recreation, Leisure including Mums & Tots

- Develop Recreation Ground
- Tennis Courts
- Kissing gates to replace stiles
- More 'Slade' type nature reserves for the community
- Cycle routes to Banbury
- Skate Park
- Maintain Jubilee Park & Recreation Ground with improved drainage
- A decent community play area like the one at Steeple Aston. Not within a development but communal funded by grants & developments
- Completely re-develop Recreation Ground with picnic benches, new play equipment etc. (existing equipment been there for many years)
- Redevelopment of Re - we need a Steeple Aston type of Park
- Re-establish a village fete/event
- Start Farmers market
- Please, much better (more exciting) play areas
- Evening classes/weekend classes at the Warriner for adults or ask Bloxham School to contribute to the village in this way
- A Tennis Club on Jubilee field
- All weather pitch for use by football club/Warriner school
- Start a Cricket club for young children and adults
- Swimming pool at Warriner (repair?)

- County park
- Allotments for residents
- More clubs for other sports such as Rugby, Hockey, Netball etc. for children and adults

You will find that many of these appear in one form or another in the final neighbourhood Plan.

Photos

The following are a few photos of the event.



5. Meeting on 5th March 2013

Organiser	The Neighbourhood Plan	Place	Bloxham Mill
Date	5 th March 2013	Attendance	Approx. around 45

a. Introduction

This was a meeting held in Bloxham Mill and aimed specifically at people who had shown a willingness to be actively involved in the creation of a plan.

It organised them into groups and set out a briefs to which they should work.

b. The groups

What	Who	Purpose
Project coordinator	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain an overview by regularly liaising with the representative of each working group to keep plan-creation on-course - Represent the exec group as may be agreed at external meetings.
Steering group	1 Representatives from each working group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure the group meet according to an agreed calendar and work together as a team focusing upon the overall best interests of the village rather than on any personal or pressure group agendas. - identify necessary data-gathering activities needed to inform the plan and to formulate a public questionnaire - contribute to the framing of the questionnaire - contribute to the content of the draft plan
Working group members	According to uptake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assist the working group representative with the above to ensure coverage of main areas.
Working group consultants	According to uptake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be available to offer such specialist advice or contacts as they may feel confident to.

We ended up with a steering group and the following three working groups:

- Housing and Landscape
- Infrastructure and Business
- Recreation and community

The Steering Group would set the initial agendas, keep track of progress and maintain a 'steer' on the overall project.

The working groups would gather together an evidence base and make recommendations that the Steering Group would then assemble into a Plan.

c. Discussion

This was essentially about what is needed for a Neighbourhood Plan and how we would set about providing it.

d. Photos

A few photos of the event



6. Meeting on 30th April 2013

Organiser	The Parish Council	Place	Warriner School Hall
Date	5 th March 2013	Attendance	Approx. around 110

a. Introduction

This was the Annual Meeting for the Parish and was held in the Warriner School Hall. Around 110 people attended and The Neighbourhood Plan was the main item.

b. The content

In summary we:

- Set out the organisation that had been created.
- Told residents about the Local Plan and likely housing numbers for Bloxham
- Presented information about the SHLAA
- etc. etc.

There were some questions that were answered but no major attempt to get new opinions as we had yet work properly through those previously gathered.

c. Photos - 30th April 2013 Meeting



7. Meeting on 11th May 2013 (BloxFest 2013)

Organiser	The Neighbourhood Plan	Place	Bloxham
Date	11 th May 2013	Attendance	Approx. around 50

a. Introduction

The Neighbourhood Plan had a Gazebo at the Bloxham Festival. The presence was very informal.

b. The content

Information sheets were available for residents and team members were available to answer such questions as arose. The atmosphere was highly supportive from the 50 or so people whom people engaged.

c. Photos



(We were too busy to take photos except a brief period of rain – see above!)

8. Meeting on 10th September 2013

Organiser	The Neighbourhood Plan	Place	Bloxham Mill
Date	10 th Sept 2013	Attendance	Approx. around 50

a. Introduction

This was held at Bloxham Mill in a room of limited size. Some 42 people were accommodated with first call being given to members of the working groups although some other residents also attended.

The working groups had been underway for a few months and this was an opportunity for them to hear from someone who had progressed further down the road of creating a Plan.



b. The speakers

The main speaker was Geoff Botting of Woodcote: a village with many similarities to Bloxham – but quite a few differences also.

c. The content

Geoff took us through the struggle of having no prior model and offered some “distilled advice” that was subsequently circulated to all of the NP team.

There was a fairly extensive Q&A session at the end of the input.

d. Photos



9. Meeting on 12th October 2013

Organiser	The Neighbourhood Plan	Place	Ex-Servicemen's Hall
Date	12th Oct 2013	Attendance	Approx. around 50 of whom 37 completed forms

a. Introduction

This was a pop-up exhibition in the ex-Servicemen's Hall, which is sited centrally in the High Street Shopping area.

The intention was threefold:

- To display some of the work of the Housing and landscape Group – mostly maps and photos.
- To respond to questions from residents.
- To collect opinions from those who were also willing to complete a simple questionnaire.

b. The questionnaire

You can see a copy of the questionnaire at the Bloxham Neighbourhood plan website.

It checked the extent to which visitors agreed with the proposed design statements and asked what they would and wouldn't want to see in any new developments.

	What do you like about where you live now?	What would you like to see incorporated into any new development?	What would you like to see avoided in any new development?
100	Age and sense of 'village'	Access to footpaths	No cramped high-density housing.
100	Character and conservation status	Use of sympathetic building materials	Rows of identical houses
100	Character of streets in conservation area	Stone, styles in keeping	
100	Character, proper size gardens	Bigger gardens, energy efficient eco homes even if modern	Hideous mixes of materials, estates looking the same as every other, cul-de-sacs
100	Community feel, excellent doctors facility	In style with existing style of dwellings	High-density developments, more shops and businesses
100	Community feel, nearby services,	Plan how to get bins from garden to collection	Lack of off-street parking
100	Community feel, nearby services,	Plan how to get bins from garden to collection	Lack of off-street parking
100	Conservation area	More green space. Adequate parking space for working families	Ghetto style estates, unsympathetic design and materials especially in the conservation area
100	Conservation area and community events	Green areas, trees	No flats!
89	Country feel in conservation area	Keep it green	Don't make it urban
100	Country feel, open space	Green areas, small developments, trees	Big housing estates. Keep it small
100	Green areas & trees	Green areas	
100	Landscape views of church & village	More bungalows	No more high-density housing estates
100	Low density housing, community feel, green spaces, off-road parking	2 off-road parking spaces per house, green space	Anything the developers themselves wouldn't like next to them! Insulting lip-service play-areas, box-like high density estates that will become the slums of tomorrow.
78	Parking	Village feel	No more traffic
100	Quiet but easy access to main road	Keep within existing style of that area	Big developments, urban styles
100	Quiet friendly, close to services		Not serried ranks of identical houses
100	Quiet, near facilities	Green areas, play areas	Flats
100	Quietness, views of spire, recreation space, coherence of style, lack of traffic	Maintain and improve the rec and the Slade	No urban developments, no developments without pledge to improve existing infrastructure: roads, electricity etc.

100	Rural atmosphere of village centre		
100	Rural character		
100	Rural feel if I'd wanted to live in a town I'd have moved to one!	Space, sense of neighbourhood	Lack of parking, high density, buildings out of character
100	Sense of community, view of church, nearby park, front garden with off-street parking space.	Proper size gardens, safe walk to schools	Anything that requires attenuation ponds! Land that ruins the views of others, estates that exit onto busy roads where there are already traffic flow problems
100	Sufficient space, quiet		Protect Hobb Hill
100	The range of different house types		Brick boxes
100	Trees, access to countryside on foot	Views, access to countryside, general look and feel	No more commuter traffic – but with very few jobs in Bloxham how can this be achieved!
100	Unspoiled	No jarring contrasts	Inappropriate building materials
78	View of Bloxham school		
100	View of fields	Green spaces maintained wherever possible	
100	Views of Bloxham school	Use of stone and or matching brick	Little box' estates
100	Views of green fields	Buildings with character	Standard 'cad' boxes – just like those everywhere else.
100		3 bed spacious bungalows with proper gardens for empty-nesters and rural feel with off-road parking.	No more 2 bed terraced houses, no more houses with inadequate parking
100		Front and back gardens not overlooked	Should not be more than 2 storey high
89		Gardens	No more ugly houses
100		Slow down and reduce traffic	No more traffic on a361
100	Unspoiled, nice gardens front & back, off-road parking at the house	High quality infill, real not reconstituted stone, traditional roof materials	Embargo on: 'town-coloured' materials, inadequate parking, any more large scale developments – stick to local plan allocation.

This is not meant to be a statistically valid survey but it did tell the housing group that they were 'on the same wavelength' as at least this random sample of residents

c. Photos



10. The views of young people (Jan – April 2014)

Organiser	The Neighbourhood Plan	Place	Various
Date	Jan – April 2014	Responses	48 responses

a. Introduction

Attempts were made to gather the views of the younger residents of the village. Strategies included visits to the local secondary school and to young people’s organisations.

b. The nature of the engagement

Basically it was an attempt to get young people to complete a simple questionnaire either online or on-paper. We had a total of 48 responses. Ages ranged from 11 – 18.

c. The questionnaire

This was mostly done online via Google forms. It was largely multiple choice but also had a number of free-response questions regarding what they most liked and disliked about the village. You can see reports of the full results online but key issues with them were:

- The children in the survey got to school mostly by vehicle. This may not be typical as many of the respondents sixth formers. We’ll get better data from the main questionnaire.



- Cycling was recognised as being an unsafe means of getting around the village. Interestingly the older the student the more they rated it unsafe!
- Pathways to school were considered as of inappropriate width by a small majority. This likely depends whereabouts in the village the respondents live.
- About two-thirds thought more development would have a negative impact on the village. Around 11% thought it would make it better.
- There was a clear dislike of the urban nature of the housing that has been imposed upon the village with this attracting many comments in the “What do you most dislike” question.
- Likewise in the question about appropriate style of new housing only 6% wanted modern town style house designs. The majority clearly wanted a more rural ambience to be preserved.
- They favoured creation of more sustainable housing especially with regard to energy efficiency: less so for water.
- They also strongly thought houses should ‘design-in” adaptability for the old and disabled.
- They made surprisingly little use of the recreation grounds with the Jubilee being more highly used than the rec.
- In terms of spending money on the improved recreation a MUGA topped the list followed by improved play areas and an AstroTurf pitch. A skateboard park was low down the list and there was limited enthusiasm for a cricket pitch.
- They appreciated the rural / medieval aspects of the village and were actively hostile to the things that destroyed this: namely traffic and inappropriate developments.
- They also appreciated the fields and the availability of walks around the village.
- They glean their information from a mixture of paper media and online social networking.

11. The Business View (Jan – April 2014)

Organiser	The Neighbourhood Plan	Place	Various
Date	Jan – April 2014	Responses	75 responses

a. Introduction

Members of the Infrastructure and Business group attempted gathering a list of local businesses but this was surprisingly difficult.

- There are a small number of retail businesses
- Some work out of Bloxham Mill
- There are three schools including a primary, a secondary and a public school
- The vast majority are low visibility businesses many working from home with minimal publicity.



b. The nature of the engagement

On paper, online and by word of mouth we advertised the existence of an online business questionnaire created with Google Forms. It attracted 75 responses.

You can see the questionnaire and responses at the Bloxham NP website and also the Infrastructure and Business working group report.

c. Key findings

1. Bloxham contains a lot of barely visible businesses.
2. Most are companies or sole traders
3. About a third have a business operated from home.
4. Most business operate in business premises owned or leased by the business.
5. Knowledge-based businesses (like consultancy and IT) are the most common in Bloxham.
6. There are also a significant number of property maintenance and construction businesses.
7. There are quite a few creative / artistic businesses.
8. Around 80% of businesses employ ten or less people
9. Around 67% of businesses employ 3 or less people.
10. Bloxham has a good spread of ages of business from recent start-ups to 25 years plus.
11. The geographical reach of Bloxham businesses is large 50% trading internationally.
12. The internet is important to 94% of Bloxham businesses and very important to 80%.
13. Lack of a resilient electricity supply poor internet speed and reliability and patchy mobile reception are all issues for Bloxham businesses.
14. Parking and congestion in the village is considered an issue by the majority of Bloxham Businesses.
15. There is a high level of support for NP policies aimed to make working from home more effective.
16. Businesses would seek the following to be improved in order to make Bloxham more attractive to start-ups / expansion: broadband, traffic and parking, more (cost-efficient) premises, better mobile reception.



12. Meeting on 10th May 2014 (BloxFest 2014)

Organiser	The Neighbourhood Plan	Place	Bloxham
Date	10th May 2014	Responses	Around 60

a. Introduction

The Neighbourhood Plan Team had a gazebo in Old Bridge Road from 8.30 – 5:00 on the very windy day of the 2014 Bloxham Festival (BloxFest.) It was staffed by a rota of volunteers.

Time	Person 1	Person 2
8:30 - 10:00	Geoff Mollard	John Groves
10:00 - 11:00	Carmen Guard	Steve Phipps
11:00 - 12:00	Ian Holroyd	Mike Morris
12:00 - 13:00	Jenny Yates	John Groves
	Richard	Edward
13:00 - 14:00	Baggaley	Baggaley
14:00 - 15:00	Pat Moore	Robert Aplin
15:00 - 16:00	Pat Moore	John Groves



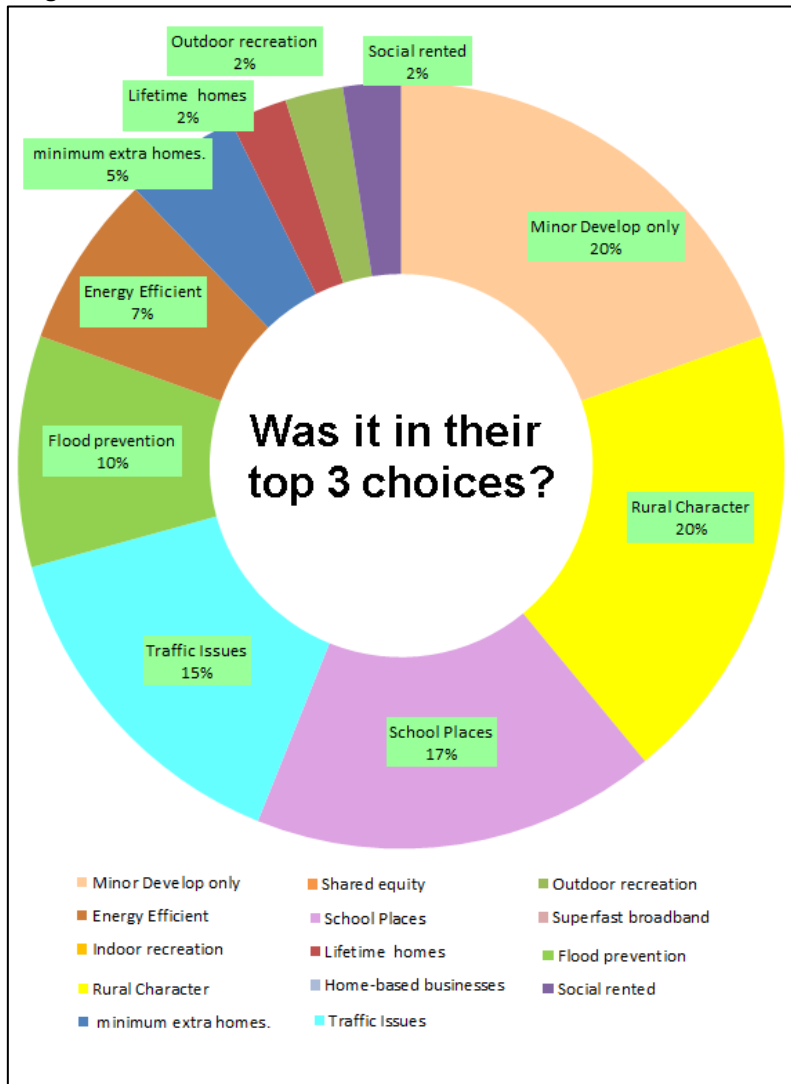
At this stage we were still awaiting the questionnaire outcomes from ORCC and there were no new emergent policies to seek opinions upon. Given this our prime aim was to be available to informally discuss any issues residents wished to talk about. Some did additionally engage in an activity of arranging 14 statements in priority order. The results are shown below but there is no pretence that this represents statistically useful data!

Unsurprisingly the outcomes reiterate the key concerns of residents:

- No more large estates
- Preserve the rural character of the village
- Match primary school capacity to

accommodate the children from new developments already agreed.

- Do something about traffic.



13. The Full Questionnaire (March – April 2014)

Organiser	O.R.C.C. & Neighbourhood Plan	Place	Bloxham
Date	March – April 2014	Responses	Around 605 (45%)

a. Introduction

The questionnaire was agreed by the Steering Group and submitted to The Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (O. R .C.C.) for advice on style and checking that it did not contain leading questions.

b. The Logistics

The copies were distributed to all homes and businesses in the village (1340) using a team of volunteers. The importance was advertised via the village media.

We had explored collection via street captains but the nature of the village (mostly families with all adults out at work) along with the confidential nature of the content being sought made this seem likely to place a huge demands of multiple visits by volunteers tasked with collecting them.

Reluctantly we settled for a “Freepost” system despite the fact this is known to generate much lower returns.

c. The outcomes

- Our population size is 1340 (houses.)
- Our returns were 605
- Our response rate was 45.1%

As it happens O.R.C.C. were surprised by high return rate for a postal survey and had to request extra time to process all the questionnaire forms. Their view was that 35% would normally be considered good.

d. Reliability

There are two key measures¹ : Confidence Level and Margin of Error
Surveys usually aim for a 95%+ confidence level and 5% margin of error.

- 95% confidence level means the whole population had responded there’s a 95% chance the result would be the same as obtained from your sample
- 5% margin of error means that if the whole population had responded the %age voting for any particular choice would be within +/- 5% of the %age obtained from your sample

The percentage of responses that you need for a 95% confidence level drops as the population size increases.² (Indeed a number of recent studies conclude that the expense of increasing the response rate frequently is not justified given the difference in survey accuracy³)

Population Size	Responses Needed	Population Size	Responses Needed
10	10	700	249
100	80	800	260
200	132	900	270
300	169	1,000	278
400	197	2,000	323
500	218	5,000	357
600	235	10,000	370

¹ <http://www.snapsurveys.com/blog/good-response-rate-random-survey-sample/>

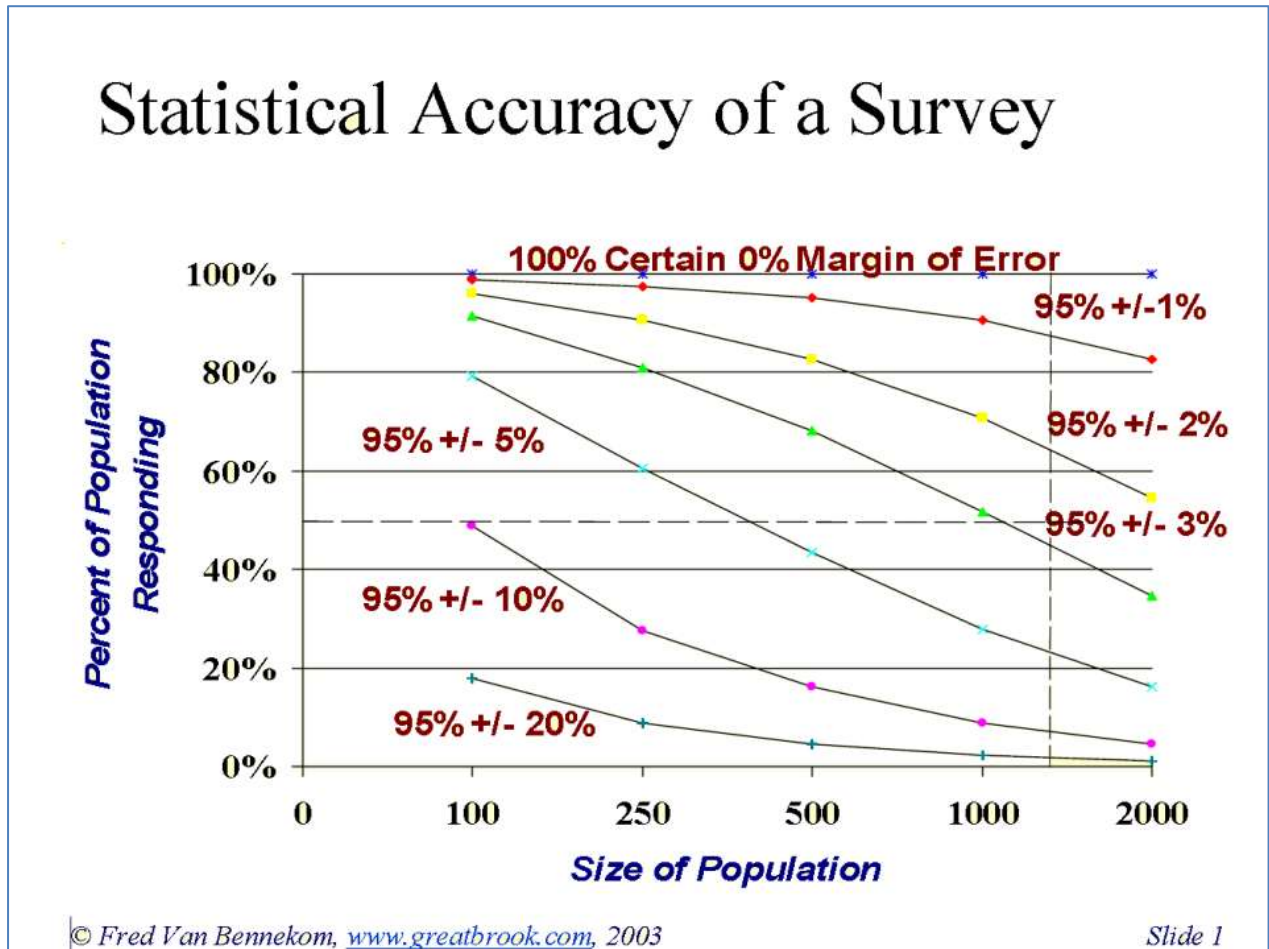
² http://www.greatbrook.com/survey_accuracy.pdf

³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Response_rate

The Table indicates any question answered by more than 300 people is statistically going to meet the 95% confidence level.

The margin of error depends on both the sample size and the degree of variation between people's answers. (The more people agree the lower the margin of error as a result of low response rate!)

The graph that follows makes very conservative assumptions about the extent of agreement. It shows with our population (1340) and response rate (around 50%) the margin of error will be less than 3%. (Calculation gives an answer of 2.95%)^{4 5}



We can have considerable confidence in the survey results. Indeed we would have met the normal criteria for survey reliability (95% confidence, 5% margin of error) with half the response rate we actually achieved.

⁴ <http://www.comres.co.uk/poll-digest/11/margin-of-error-calculator.htm#>

⁵ <http://www.custominsight.com/articles/random-sample-calculator.asp>

e. Photos

It's hard to photograph a survey! Here's a shot of some willing helpers engaged in the distribution arrangements!



f. Outcomes

The detailed results of the questionnaire are available separately on the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan website.

The data has been heavily drawn upon to formulate the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan.

14. Meeting on 12th June 2014

Organiser	Bloxham Parish Council	Place	Bloxham
Date	12th June 2014	Responses	Around 45



This was the Annual Meeting for the Parish which, as it turned out, coincided with the opening ceremony and first match of the World Football Cup!

The main input of the Annual Meeting was a presentation about the results of Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire. A simplified copy can be found upon the BNDP web-site.

This was followed by a Q&A session for parishioners a summary of which will be included in P.C. the minutes of the meeting.

15. Another chance for residents - 1st December 2014

Organiser	Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan	Place	Bloxham
Date	1st December 2014	Responses	

By now the working groups and steering group had achieved a high level of agreement as to the desired contents of the Neighbourhood Plan. It was decided to publish this to the village in December ahead of the official pre-submission consultation period in January so that any major local objections might be taken account of.

People were told that if they had any strong personal interest in the policies they should (also) make their comments in the official consultation period.

16. Pre-Publication Consultation 10th January 2015

Media information on the consultation

a. Bloxham Broadsheet	Read by 95% of residents
b. Bloxham Broadsheet online website	Typically 5000 page-loads per month
c. Bloxham Broadsheet Facebook	Popular posts reach 1800 users
d. Bloxham Parish Council website	Usage unknown
e. Bloxham Parish Council Facebook	The page has over 400 'friends'
f. Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan website	Typically 500 page-loads per month
g. Banbury Guardian	Read by 47% of residents
h. email	To all those who have signed up
i. email	To all known Bloxham businesses
j. Letters	To businesses with unknown email
k. email	To statutory consultees
l. email	To developers with a known interest
m. Village noticeboards & village P.O.	Anyone reading them!

All media offered:

- Consultation dates;
- The address or hyperlink to online copies of the Plan and its summary;
- The address or hyperlink to an online response form;
- The address to send email responses to;
- The whereabouts of boxes to receive written replies;
- Social media posts linked to website pages with information and online forms.

Availability of Neighbourhood Plan

Copies were available online 24/7. Paper copies were available to read at:

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| • Parish Council Drop-ins | Jan 10 th and Feb 22 nd 2015 |
| • The Post Office | Jan 10 th and Feb 22 nd 2015 |
| • The Church | Jan 10 th – Feb 22 nd 2015 |
| • The Doctors' surgery | Jan 12 th – Feb 22 nd 2015 |
| • Bloxham Mill | Jan 10 th – Feb 22 nd 2015 |
| • Bloxham Pharmacy | Jan 10 th and Feb 22 nd 2015 |

Details of how to make representation

Three methods available

- 1) By online Form
- 2) By email
- 3) On paper

Samples of the information used.

The pages that follow show just a few examples of the sort of information that went out to people.

Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan consultation: 10 Jan - 22 Feb 2015

Please note - your full name is required and will appear alongside your comment in a consultation report.

* Required

Forename and surname *

Required - WILL be published

Address and postcode *

Required - full address will NOT be published

Organisation Name

Optional: Use if commenting on behalf of an organisation - WILL be published

email address

Optional - will NOT be published

Your comments *

Comments can be general or specific. If commenting upon specific policies please include the policy numbers - see policies list below. WILL be published.

Which of these green-spaces should be protected from housing or business development?

Optional - You do not have to answer this but it would be helpful. Please tick one box per line.

	Yes	No	Don't know
The Recreation Ground ('The Rec')	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Jubilee Park	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Red Lion Gardens	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The green area fronting Bloxham School	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The rugby field running up onto Hobb Hill	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Slade Nature Reserve	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Submit

Online
Form

By email to people_on_NP and PC email lists. (Apologies if you are on both and get 2 copies!)

Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan

Completion of the Plan is getting nearer! Don't miss this chance to influence the changes. Tell us what you like and don't like about the policies. We'll listen carefully.

When is the formal consultation period?

This formal consultation period will last from
Saturday 10th January 2015
to
Sunday 22nd February 2015.

January 2015							February							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31									

Can I comment before the formal consultation period?

We have to document and take account of the comments received in the formal period consultation period but the NP Group will do this for ALL resident comments received from the start of December through to 22nd Feb 2015. If your comment is on an issue that could have major consequences for you as an individual then legally it will be best to submit it during the formal consultation period.

Where can I see the Plan?

On computer

You can download copies to read on-screen or to print out from:



[Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan website](#)
[Bloxham Parish Council website](#)
[Bloxham Broadsheet online website](#)

On paper

A summary is in the December Bloxham Broadsheet.



You can see (but not take away) a full copy of the plan at the Parish-Council drop-ins at the ex-SMH. We will also make copies available at other places such as: the mobile library, the doctors, the church etc.

How can I comment?

You must give your name, address and contact details. We'll have to publish your name and comment but not your contact details.



Online at the websites mentioned above.

Email. Use the email address below.

consult@bloxhamneighbourhoodplan.co.uk

E-MAIL

On paper in:

Collection boxes at the doctors, St Mary's church, Bloxham Pharmacy and elsewhere.

Thank you for helping shape your village.

Delivered to every house in the village mostly on Jan 10th

Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group still have to finalise the legal detail of the plan but we are at a stage where we can once again share emerging policies with residents and other interested parties.

We set out below a simplified summary of what the policies seek to set in place.



1. Accommodate a further 20 dwellings between the start of this plan and 2031.
2. Accept only small developments and appropriate infill - not large estates.
3. Schedule most further development to take place after 2025
4. All developments should make a positive contribution to the rural character of the village. This to include size, style, materials, spacing and respect for trees, hedgerows and landscapes.
5. All development should avoid significant adverse effects upon existing properties.
6. Street lighting should be effective but not intrusive especially at the village edges.
7. The overall target number of dwellings should include high quality, non-estate houses and bungalows to accommodate those who may seek to downsize.
8. Developments of 5 or more dwellings should include some open-market dwellings designed for those with mobility problems.
9. All houses should have adequate parking on-site rather than on-street or in parking courts.
10. Flood hot-spots should be avoided and sustainable drainage systems adopted wherever appropriate.
11. Houses should be designed and built such that they do not flood in the event of temporary drainage failure.
12. Developments should have better water and energy efficiency ratings than those demanded by the basic building regulations.
13. Development applications should demonstrate they are located where they will not significantly exacerbate village traffic congestion.
14. Buildings designed or modified to facilitate home-working will be supported as long as there is no negative impact upon neighbours.
15. New dwellings should be pre-equipped to accommodate superfast broadband.
16. New mobile phone masts and equipment will be supported provided steps are taken to minimise impact upon the local character of the village.
17. Land currently generating employment will be safeguarded by insisting on attempts to sell for business use before permission for housing development is considered.
18. Applications for new or expanded retail facilities in High St / Church St will be considered only if accompanied by clear arrangements to mitigate additional on-street parking.

Continued on page 13

12

**Paper
Edition of
Bloxham
Broadsheet
Dec 2014**

P13 Continues giving details of how to comment etc. similar to previous page.

BLOXHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – Goes out for public consultation on Saturday and ends on February 22.

Any individual or organisation can comment on any aspect of the plan.

All comments will become public and will be used to inform the final changes.

Please go to the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan website (<http://bloxhamneighbourhoodplan.co.uk>) where you can see a copy of the plan.

There is also a quick and easy on-line form where you can make your comment.

Paper copies of the plan and a response form will be available around the village (the church, doctors, Bloxham Mill etc) but doing it online will speed up getting the plan approved.

To learn more visit the Parish Council 'drop-in' event at the ex Servicemen's Hall on Saturday from 10.30am-3pm.

Villages Column
of the Banbury
Guardian

Thursday
January 8th

PUBLIC NOTICES

Public Notices
Section of
Banbury
Guardian

Thursday
January 8th

Bloxham Parish Council Public Notice of Consultation Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2031

Bloxham Parish Council has prepared a Neighbourhood Development Plan for its parish to be used in the determination of planning applications locally.

Where the plan may be inspected

The Plan can be viewed on the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan website. Some copies will be available for inspection in Bloxham at St Mary's Church, the Doctor's Surgery and Bloxham Mill along with response forms and boxes for these when completed.

Alternatively visit us at the Parish Council "drop-in" at the ex-Servicemen's hall on Sat 10th Jan 2015 10:30-3:00 to see the plan and ask any questions about it.

How to make representations

Any person or organisation may comment on the Plan. Comments can be made by completing an online response form on the website above.

Alternatively you can email consult@bloxhamparishcouncil.co.uk. Paper forms are available as above. All comments will become publicly available. The consultation period runs from **Saturday 10th January 2015 until Sunday 22nd February 2015**. Changes that result from representations will appear in a post-consultation version of the Plan on the above website in due course.



**Drop-in Event
Ex-SMH
Jan 10th
10:30 – 15:30**

**A second “drop-in”
was organised for
February 14th
10:30 – 12:30**

43 people signed the visiting register. (Several didn't!)

Policies

Visual Summary

Here's a visual summary. Use the buttons at the bottom to step through it or make it bigger.



**For those unable to
attend a slide-share
version was made
available [online](#).**

How to respond on paper

- There are also paper reply forms in various places around the village.



250 paper copies of the Plan + Response forms were made available at various village venues

Your Village – Your Choice

Would you like a say in things such as the number and size of new developments. Would you like developers to pay proper regard to the needs of residents on matters such as availability of school places for young families, houses for an ageing population, avoiding urbanisation, protection of our recreation spaces and provision of proper parking.

Make sure you have your say in the Neighbourhood Plan Consultation – even if it's just a single sentence. Do it at the [Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan website](#). It need only take a minute or two. Ends Feb 22nd 2015

Make the force be with us



A reminder was delivered to every house in the village via the February 2015 edition of the Bloxham Broadsheet.

Village views sought for Bloxham's plan

Development and protection of community is under spotlight

By STAFF REPORTER
editor@banburyguardian.co.uk
01295 227792

Bloxham's draft neighbourhood plan limits the number of new houses in the village to just 20 in the next 15 years.

The relatively small amount of development aimed for has been calculated because of an unexpectedly high number of new homes given planning consent on appeal.

The new blueprint for Bloxham to 2031 demands that the village's rural character be preserved and that 'creeping urbanisation' is avoided.

Residents have until February 22 to comment on the draft plan and all are invited to a consultation meeting at the Ex-Servicemen's Hall on Saturday, February 14, from 10am-1pm where they can ask questions and find out more about the plan.

Parish council chairman Geoff Mollard said: "The village has seen huge growth in recent years and still has 255 permissions for houses in the coming few years.

"Because of this the plan is advocating only 20 extra dwellings over the next 15 years, but with the existing permissions this will still make Bloxham one of the fastest growing villages in the district."

Bloxham's planned growth will mean the village will expand by 41 per cent in just six



Neighbourhood plan coordinator John Groves with parish councillors Sue Slater, Jeny Yates and Stephen Phipps

years and the community is worried that infrastructure is not being improved and may not be able to cope.

'There is concern that development is outpacing infrastructure'

Mr Mollard said: "There is great concern at the way development is outpacing the supporting infrastructure. Loss of water and electricity are all too common. Traffic levels and narrow pavements discourage walking and cycling.

"The primary school, which the county council says it will not expand, will not be able to accommodate all Bloxham children from the coming developments and there are also

concerns with the capacity of Bloxham's health facilities.

"The village has seen a number of flooding incidents and the plan seeks to insist developers avoid building in flood-prone areas and design dwellings that can survive temporary drainage problems."

Mr Mollard said the plan wants developments to be actively designed to encourage 'micro businesses' where people can work from home.

"We also seek to avoid selling off land associated with employment for housing use," he said.

"We recognise the increasing demand recent expansion will make for proper sport and

recreation facilities and the plan supports an additional all-weather sports area and an upgrade to the Jubilee Hall.

"The plan remains engaged in identifying spaces that are important to the village, either because of recreational use or visual impact, with a view to adding additional protection."

Anyone wanting to see a copy of the plan can go to bloxhamparishcouncil.co.uk or collect one from the business centre, doctors' surgery, pharmacy or post office.

Forms with responses, comments and recommendations for changes to the plan can be posted back via boxes at the same locations.

Local Newspaper Coverage of the pre-consultation

Banbury Guardian 22nd Jan 2015

Village views sought for Bloxham's plan

Development and protection of community is under spotlight.

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Bloxham's planned growth will mean the village will expand by 41 per cent in just six years, worried that infrastructure is not being improved and may cope.

Mr Mollard said: "There is great concern at the way development is outpacing the supporting infrastructure. Loss of water and electricity are all too common. Traffic levels and narrow pavements discourage walking and cycling.

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For a copy of the plan can go to bloxhamparishcouncil.co.uk or collect one from the business centre, doctors' surgery, pharmacy or post office.

Forms with responses, comments and recommendations for changes can be posted back via boxes at the same locations.

This is an OCR scanned version of the BG text and so may have the occasional mis-scanned character.

Banbury Guardian 22nd Jan 2015

Guardian Country

BLOXHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – Have you responded to the consultation yet? It closes on February 22.

There's another 'drop-in-and chat' session at the ex-Servicemen's Hall on Saturday, February 14, 10.30am-12.30pm when you can view an exhibition and ask questions as to what it's about.

● Around 250 copies of the full plan have been collected by people within the village.

● If you have finished with your copy please return it as we have now run out. You can pop your comment form into one of the boxes at the same time – or do it online at (<http://bloxhamneighbourhoodplan.co.uk>). At this site, as well as the copies of the plan, there are also summaries, slide-shows and a quick and easy on-line form for you to make your comments.

BODDINGTONS

Rosemary Sheppy
Sears Farmhouse, Hill Road, Lassar End
01237 291270; philip.rosamary.agnes@bt.com

PARISH CHURCH – On Sunday there will not be a service at Boddington but everyone is invited to services at the Churches in the Five Villages Benefice. Tomorrow (Feb 8) the Rector will be saying Morning Prayer at Boddington at 9am and everyone is invited to this short service.

METHODIST CHURCH – On Sunday there will be a service at the School at 10.30am and Michael King will lead Service at 6pm.

WOMEN'S INSTITUTION – meet for a Pot Luck Supper on Wednesday, February 11, 7.30pm. Prospective members are invited to share in this popular event and should contact Simone Botham on 01237 291270 for more detail.

Villages Column of the Banbury Guardian

Thursday February 5th 2015 and Feb 12th



N. Plans were distributed and announcements made at the meeting at The Warriner School on Sunday 8th Feb 2015



Parish Drop-in event. Sat 14th Feb 2015

BANBURY GUARDIAN

Thursday, February 19, 2015 www.banburyguardian.co.uk

NEWS 1.37

NEWS IN BRIEF

Gardeners meet up at village hall

Boddington and District Gardeners' Association will meet on Wednesday at 7.30pm at the village hall. Sue McNally, gardener at Sulgrave Manor, will speak on herbs and medicinal uses. Members and visitors are both welcome.

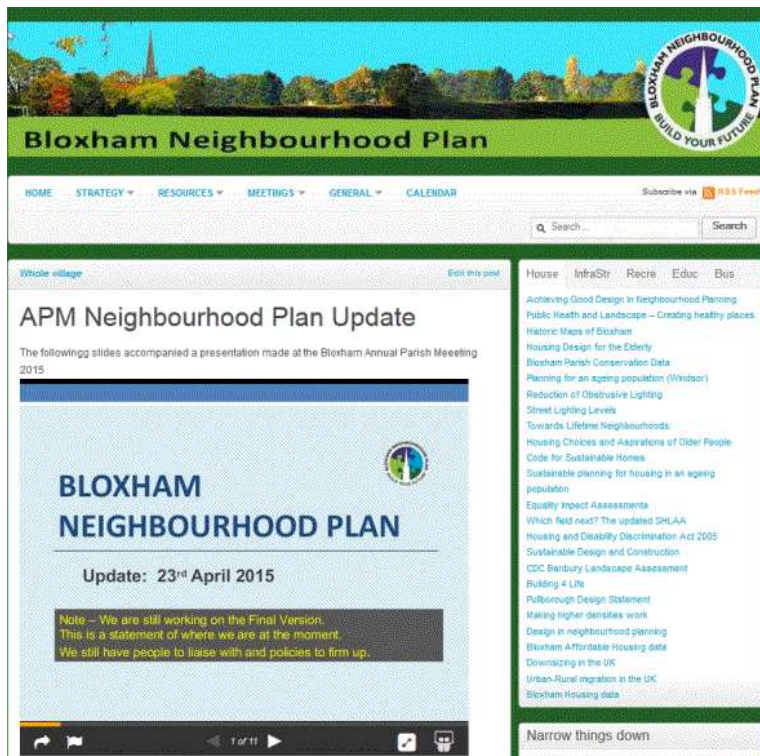
Last chance to shape Bloxham

People are urged to help shape Bloxham's next 15 years before the consultation period for the Neighbourhood Plan ends next Sunday. There are no more paper copies, so to read the full plan or a summary, see <http://bloxhamneighbourhoodplan.co.uk>

News in Brief
Banbury Guardian
Feb 19th 2015



A presentation on the outcomes of the consultation and how this was influencing the revised policies was made at The Annual Meeting for the Parish on 23rd April 2015 at the Warriner Lecture Theatre.



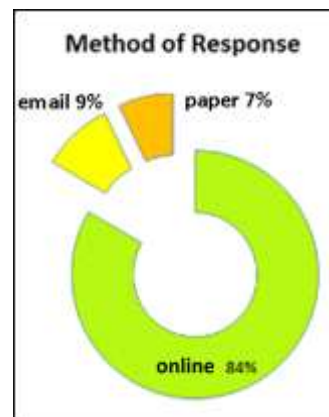
Copies of the above presentation were also available on a number of village websites

Responses the Pre-publication Consultation

Method of response

Three methods of responding were on offer.

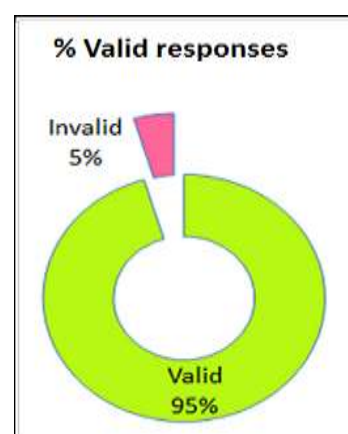
- on paper
- email
- online form



Valid Responses

The consultation ran for a fixed period and to discourage false responses it was made clear that the following was required: forename, surname and address or postcode. Respondents were told only the name and comment would be published. Some failed to provide the required information or responded too late.

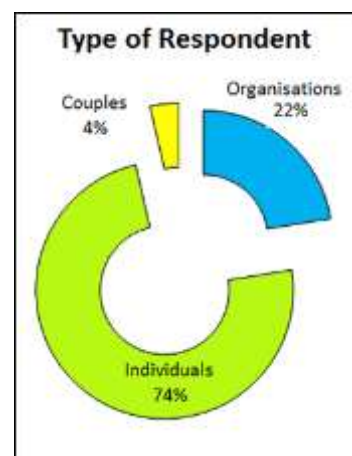
We have looked at the implications of including or excluding data from these “invalid” responses and actually, they make no real difference to the overall conclusions.



Who were the responses was from?

Basically responses came from either individuals or organisations.

- Most responses were from individuals
- Some of the responses that we will class as being from ‘individuals’ were in fact clearly marked as representing the views of two people (normally Mr & Mrs.)
- Some responses were clearly marked as representing the views of organisations.



Where were the responses from?

Many of the “organisational responses” were from addresses outside of the village.

Only three of the individual responses were clearly from outside of Bloxham. One was a former resident who lives nearby. Another was an employee of Bloxham School and the third from an individual who had represented Bloxham as a county councillor in the past.

The general nature of the individual responses

Residents had previously been given the opportunity to engage in a detailed largely ‘closed question’ questionnaire upon which the plan had been based. This had received a very high response rate.

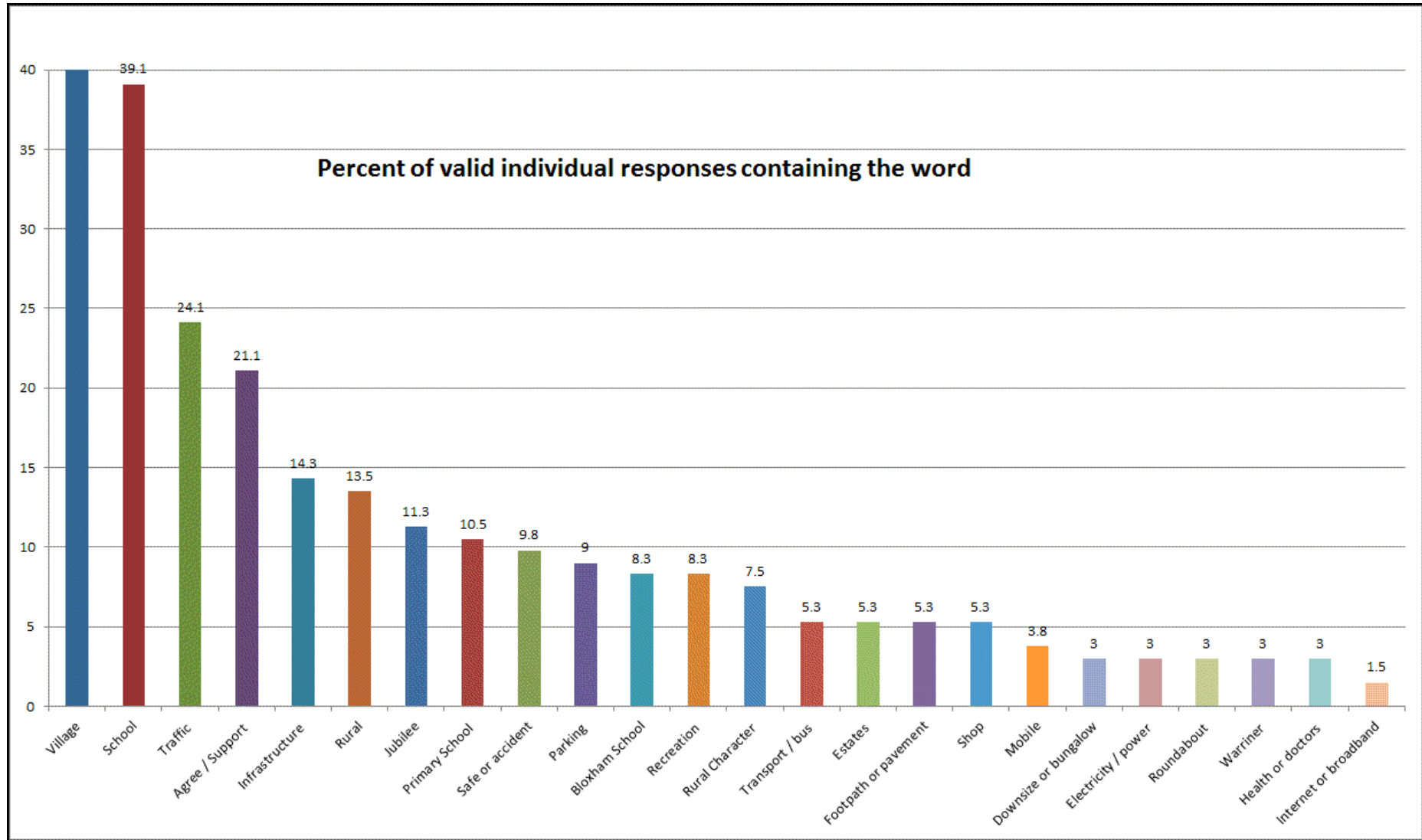
This consultation was of a very different nature. The emphasis was on a totally free-response text-box where people could be as general or specific as they wished.

The vast majority of responses from individuals were general simply confirming support or agreement for the plan. The only response containing the word “disagree” was, “There is nothing in the plan I can disagree with!”

Caution

Certain words seemed to recur through the responses. We show this in graphic form on the next page. Because of the open-ended nature of the consultation, along with statements of support for all policies, many clearly shared the concerns but will not appear in the Table or chart below. Nonetheless it is informative briefly to note the relative frequency of their occurrence: Something to be kept in mind when preparing the final version of the plan!

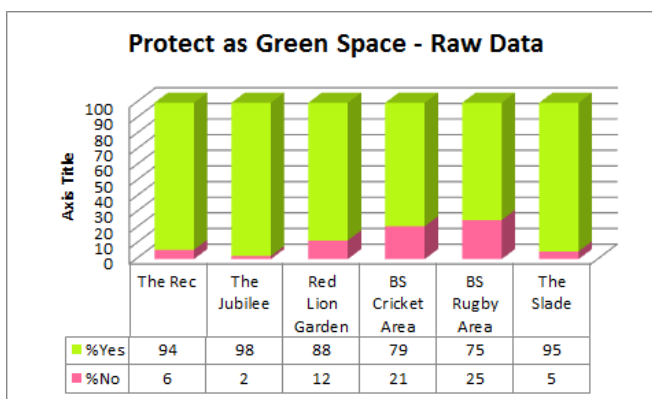
Word(s)	Context	Total %
Village or rural or estates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Village” appeared in 40% of responses usually with the emphasis village not town. • “Rural” featured in 15% of responses • “Estates” –always as in ‘no more large estates’ – a further 5%. 	60%
Traffic, safety, accident , parking or roundabout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic” appeared in 24% of responses and is ALWAYS an issue at all consultations. • Parking appeared in 9% • The words “safety or accident” in 10% of responses always within the context of traffic or parking • Roundabout featured in 3% 	46%
Schools Esp. Primary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “School” appears in almost 40% of responses. • 8% of which refer to Bloxham School (see below) • A few % with regard to sports pitches. • The remainder are concerned at the verified absence of school places for village families at the primary school. 	30%
Jubilee	“Jubilee appears in over 11% of responses either in the context of supporting expansion or of suggesting that, given the growth rate of the village, the term “moderate expansion” might be unduly constraining.	11%
Bloxham School	“Bloxham School” occurred in 8% of responses all of which were supporting the school in resisting green-space status upon areas that it owns. This ‘category’ also accounts for quite a few of the late or invalid responses. (E.g. where people did not provide their full name.)	8%



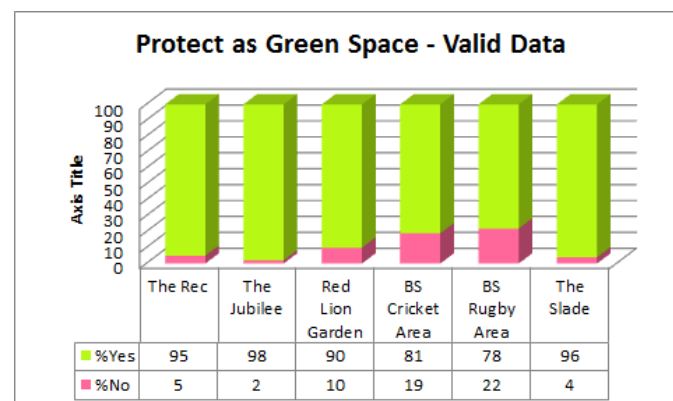
Green Space Status

The main element of the consultation was free response but we did also ask for views upon conferring green-space status upon certain areas flagged up in previous consultations / discussions. This topic elicited concern from some with regard to the longer-term implications for Bloxham School. As this was the only truly quantitative question in the consultation whether one counts “invalid” responses or counts responses from couples as 1 or 2 responses might be raised. In actuality it makes little difference but we show all the results below:

Raw data includes all responses – including responses that are invalid by virtue of lacking a surname or being submitted late.

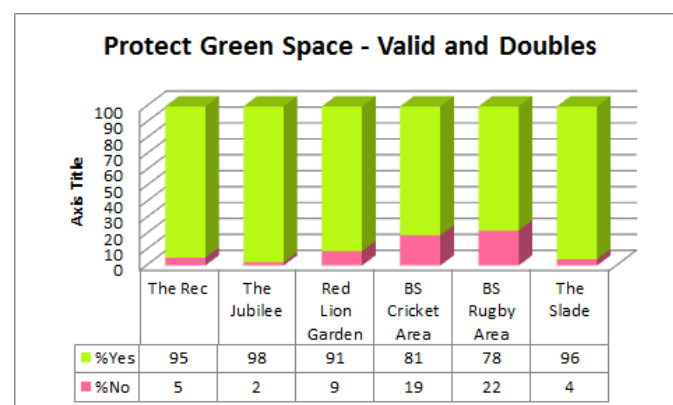


Valid data excludes late or badly completed responses.



Valid and doubles excludes invalid data and double counts responses that are specified to have come from two people.

Whilst it is clear that there is support for protecting all of these areas there are also some concerns to avoid inappropriate constraints upon the future development of Bloxham School. On other areas the NP receives over 90% support.



Our response to the pre-consultation comments are explained in the main consultation statement.

17. Neighbourhood Plan Health Check – July 2015

The Neighbourhood Plan was submitted via NPIERS for a health check. The resulting Report can be seen on the BNDP website.

This proved a very constructive procedure in flagging up possible improvements by removing ambiguity or providing additional evidence within the plan itself rather than just the evidence base..

As a result of this we have:

- Made clearer the rationale behind the SEA opinion (p16 -> in the Basic Conditions). At the time of writing we are still negotiating with CDC to provide a screening statement.
- Included a “flow-chart” of the policy-making process and an engagement timeline in both the Consultation Statement and the Plan;
- Included additional information on the situation regarding primary school capacity in the Plan rather than just the evidence base documents;
- Included a colour-coded map to “timeline” Bloxham developments;
- Added more data about local businesses;
- Added %ages to questionnaire and consultation data where possible;
- Added a chart on ageing population in Cherwell;
- Drew more attention to the level of detail contained in the the Working group reports in the BCS. Also added membership info in the appendix;
- Shifted most maps and other appendix info into the main body of the plan to create a better information flow;
- We tackled the “adopted or emerging Local Plan” question by adding a paragraph explaining we had been working at ensuring compliance with both. The Local plan has now been adopted and we have tried to update documents to reflect this.
- Added a summary to the Basic Conditions Statement;
- Tried to make clear via the plan-making flow-chart that issues emanated from the community. The Steering Group and Working Groups sought to address these within the context of the NPPF, the adopted and emerging Local Plan and the gradually assembled evidence base represented by the three main BNDP reports.
In reality, of course, there was a constant cycle of publishing information and receiving feedback leading to progressive refining of questions and policies.
- Once again asked Cherwell DC for a screening opinion on the Strategic Environmental Assessment. This is now being taken forward.

Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan 2015 -2031



Basic Conditions Statement

Submission Version
19th Nov 2015

Contents

SUMMARY	3
1. INTRODUCTION	4
LEGAL FRAMEWORK	4
<i>The Qualifying body</i>	4
<i>The Area</i>	4
<i>The period for which the Plan is to have effect</i>	4
<i>Scoping of this plan</i>	5
<i>Basic Conditions</i>	5
2. CONFORMING WITH THE NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK	6
3. CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	9
A. OVERVIEW AND ANALYSIS REGARDING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	9
B. CONCLUSION REGARDING CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	11
4. A LOCAL PLAN IN TRANSITION	12
5. CONFORMING WITH STRATEGIC ELEMENTS OF THE LOCAL PLAN	12
A. OVERVIEW AND ANALYSIS REGARDING CHERWELL STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES.....	12
B. CONCLUSION - CONFORMITY WITH THE LOCAL PLAN STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES.....	15
6. COMPLIANCE WITH EU AND OTHER OBLIGATIONS	15
SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL.....	15
STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA)	16
A. <i>Initial Responses from Environmental Consultees</i>	16
B. <i>Comparison with the SA/SEA of the Cherwell Adopted Local Plan (2015)</i>	19
C. <i>Cherwell Planning Authority Screening Opinion.....</i>	24
HABITATS REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT	24
HUMAN RIGHTS	24
7. THE EVIDENCE BASE.....	24
8. OVERALL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	25
APPENDICES.....	26
APPENDIX 1. PROCESS OVERVIEW	26
APPENDIX 2. THE BNDP INTERNAL REPORTS	27
1. <i>Housing and Landscape Report.....</i>	27
2. <i>Infrastructure and Business report.....</i>	27
3. <i>Recreation Report</i>	28
4. <i>Sustainability Report</i>	28
5. <i>The Questionnaire Report</i>	29
6. <i>The Archaeological Report</i>	30
APPENDIX 3. SPECIALIST REPORTS	30
1. <i>The SUSTANS Report: Walking and Cycling in Bloxham</i>	30
2. <i>The Bloxham Conservation Area Appraisal</i>	30
3. <i>The Oxfordshire Playing Fields Report.....</i>	30
4. <i>Local Heritage assets: The Red Lion Garden</i>	31

SUMMARY

Section	Content
Section 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sets out how this Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan fits into and complies with the legal framework.
Section 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Considers the extent to which The Plan conforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) core planning principles.
Section 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Draws attention to the existence of a Sustainability Report.• It also draws attention to three major BNDP reports that offer a large part of the evidence upon which the sustainability report is based.• Section 3 also focuses upon the contribution of The Plan to sustainable development by looking at how each of the 13 major headings in the NPPF is addressed by the Themes and Policies in The Plan.
Section 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sets out the fact that at the time of writing the emerging Local Plan (Part 1) seemed likely to become the Adopted Local Plan prior to examination of this Neighbourhood Plan. It was formally adopted on 20th July 2015.• This document now references the Adopted Local Plan (2015) but other relevant documents may retain reference to the Adopted Plan (1996) after the emerging Plan has already assumed adopted status.
Section 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Looks at BNDP conformity with the Strategic Objectives of the Adopted Cherwell Plan (2015) and finds a good fit.
Section 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We worked with the Cherwell Planning Authority to be sure that they had the information they needed to formulate an SEA screening opinion.• We also have checked the plan against the Local Plan SEA and have emails obtained directly from the Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage that make clear they do not consider an SEA is necessary.• Our plan is consistent with the strategic objectives of the Local Plan and upon applying the Cherwell SEA approach to examine our own neighbourhood Plan no negative environmental consequences emerge.• We consider the need for an HRA but with no sites of European interest within 20km we deduce any impact is extremely unlikely.• We consider human rights are unlikely to be diminished by a community Plan with an awareness of the need for social and economic inclusion and widespread engagement and support.
Section 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offers a very brief bibliography of the evidence base.
Section 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Conclusion is that the BNDP meets the basic conditions.

1. INTRODUCTION

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The Qualifying body

Bloxham Parish Council is a qualifying body as defined by the Localism Act 2011. They submitted an application to undertake a Neighbourhood Plan to Cherwell District Council (CDC) on 8th January 2013. This was advertised as required and approved at the Cherwell District Council Executive meeting held on Monday 3 June 2013.

The Area

Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan area comprises of the parish of Bloxham as shown on the map below. The Plan proposal relates to the Bloxham Neighbourhood Area and to no other area. There are no other neighbourhood plans relating to this neighbourhood area.



The period for which the Plan is to have effect

The period for which the Plan is to have effect is from 2015 to 2031. This will bring it into alignment with the period of the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan (2015).

Scoping of this plan

What is being proposed is a neighbourhood development plan

The plan proposal relates to planning matters (the use and development of land) and has been prepared in accordance with the statutory requirements and processes set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012.

Policies do not relate to excluded development

This neighbourhood plan proposal does not deal with county matters (mineral extraction and waste development), nationally significant infrastructure or any other matters set out in Section 61K of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

The Plan does not identify specific development land.

In recent years, Bloxham has been developing at around 12 times the rural average rate. We considered that attempting to identify preferred locations in this fast-changing situation would likely see our assignments overtaken by events: an assumption that has turned out to be correct.

Consequently, we have not identified land. Instead, we have set out key principles and policies to be considered when examining the appropriateness of applications for new Bloxham developments.

Basic Conditions

In order to meet the Basic Conditions, a neighbourhood plan must:

- 1) Have regard to National Policy and advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- 2) Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development
- 3) Be in general conformity with the Adopted Local Plan of Cherwell District Council (CDC)
- 4) Be compatible with EU obligations.

The sections that follow this introduction address the foregoing Basic Conditions

2. CONFORMING WITH THE NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

NPPF Core Planning Principles are set out in paragraph 17 of the NPPF and largely echoed in the National Planning Policy Guidance. They are summarised in the Table that follows:

NPPF Principle	Bloxham Themes	Bloxham Policies
Genuinely planned, empowering local people to shape their surroundings.	Appraisals, surveys and consultations led to the identification of issues and the formulation of objectives and policies to deliver the community aspirations.	
A creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve places.	All Themes address this NPPF Planning Principle.	All Policies address this NPPF Planning Principle.
Drive Economic Development & The delivery of homes, businesses and infrastructure.	<p><i>Theme 1</i> - Delivering the houses the village needs</p> <p><i>Theme 2</i> - Protecting and enhancing our rural heritage</p> <p><i>Theme 3</i> - Promoting economic vitality</p> <p><i>Theme 4</i> - Ensure a safe, healthy cohesive community</p>	This NPPF principle is deeply embedded into, and distributed across, the policies associated with each of the four themes.
High quality design and good standard amenity for all existing and future occupants	<p>Themes 1 and 2 focus upon the importance of design.</p> <p>Development that integrates into the natural and historic setting in a period of changing climate and demographics is central to this Plan.</p> <p>Likewise, ensuring a good standard of amenity, including recreation, health and education, by proper regard to the feasibility of improved infrastructure has influenced policies across all Themes.</p>	<p>Once again, this principle is widely embedded. Examples include:</p> <p>Compliance with the Conservation Area Appraisal recommendations. BL10</p> <p>Designs that facilitate economic activity. BL13-15</p> <p>Designs that cater for the changing demographic. BL8</p>

NPPF Principle	Bloxham Themes	Bloxham Policies
Promote the character and beauty of the countryside and support thriving rural communities within it.	<p>Themes 1 and 2 have much to say about character and beauty.</p> <p>Themes 3 and 4 strive to ensure ongoing economic and community vitality within that setting.</p>	<p>Examples include policies to :</p> <p>Contribute to the rural character. BL11</p> <p>The importance of space in rural street-scenes / vistas. BL12</p> <p>Encourage micro or small business. BL13-15</p> <p>Protect and Improve recreation facilities. BL17-19</p>
Climate change, flood risk and reduced carbon usage	<p>Theme 1 addresses the need to minimise and mitigate the impacts of climate change.</p> <p>(Bloxham is a flood hot spot.)</p>	<p>Examples include policies to:</p> <p>Avoid areas most prone to flooding. BL7a</p> <p>Have SuDS whenever appropriate. BL7b</p> <p>High water efficiency BL6</p> <p>Encourage low-carbon travel. BL3</p>
Conserving and enhancing the natural environment	<p>Theme 2 seeks to enhance our rural heritage. This includes protecting important green spaces and seeking opportunities for biodiversity enhancement.</p>	<p>Examples include policies to:</p> <p>Protect important recreation spaces BL17</p> <p>Protect key spaces, views and vistas including public rights of way BL12</p> <p>Seek to improve biodiversity BL11i</p>
Using brownfield land	Bloxham no longer has any obvious available brownfield land.	
Conserving heritage assets in proportion to their value	<p>Theme 2 is about preserving and enhancing our rural heritage. This applies particularly in the area of the Church and Bloxham School.</p> <p>(Bloxham Church is rated one of the top 100 in England.)</p>	<p>Examples include policy</p> <p>Development should preserve and enhances the character and historic form of the area BL10-12</p>

NPPF Principle	Bloxham Themes	Bloxham Policies
Promote mixed use development	Theme 3 includes recommendations for mixed use of homes as places for work where appropriate.	<p>In addition to accommodating the affordable housing specified in the Local plan there are policies to</p> <p>Support live-work accommodation BL14</p> <p>Include open-market dwellings for older residents BL8</p>
Actively manage patterns of growth & focus significant development in sustainable locations.	Theme 1 includes an in-depth assessment of the match between ongoing development and increased infrastructure demands.	<p>Demonstrate capacity to educate primary aged children within the village BL9d</p> <p>Ensure school age and the mobility impaired, have safe access to village services. BL3</p>
Health and social and cultural well being	<p>Theme 4: Ensure a safe, healthy cohesive community.</p> <p>(This is especially important in view of recent rapid village expansion.)</p>	<p>Examples include policies to ensure:</p> <p>Scheduling development to minimise school capacity issues BL1-2</p> <p>Supporting joint-use recreation facilities. BL19</p>

3. CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The overriding principle of the NPPF is that of sustainable development.

This is generally taken to mean *meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*

a. OVERVIEW AND ANALYSIS REGARDING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

At the outset, we stated we were not intending to identify land because we were of the opinion that if we did so our Plan would likely be overtaken by events.

At the 2011 census, our village consisted of 1279 dwellings. Since then it has seen permissions for almost 300 new dwellings. At least 225 of these are due for completion during the period of this plan.



The Sustainability Report contains more detail of the fact that Bloxham is recommending a number of new dwellings that both fits with the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan (2015) Policy Villages 1 and at the same time addresses the need for sustainability. This is based upon the very detailed studies of present and prospective infrastructure capacities contained in reports within the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan evidence base.¹

The conclusions include quite definitive statements from independent experts on some important matters such as education and connectivity.

The NPPF identifies three key dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These are further expanded within the 13 headings of the NPPF that follow.

NPPF Policy	Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan
1. Building a strong, competitive economy	Bloxham is an entrepreneurial village with an estimated 250+ businesses being run in or from Bloxham. Our policies relating to economic vitality seek to protect existing employment land and make it easy for new micro and small businesses to set-up and develop provided they respect the landscape and the amenity of others. We also seek to improve the digital infrastructure which businesses tell us is a factor that would help their growth.
2. Ensuring the vitality of town centres	The vitality of the village High Street is limited, not by population, but by traffic congestion arising from very limited nearby parking. There is no available nearby land to solve this challenge although better use of existing privately owned frontages might achieve some very minor improvement. We will monitor the retail situation as the village expands.

¹ [Post Consultation Documents on the BNDP website.](#)

NPPF Policy	Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan
3. Supporting a prosperous rural economy	The visual impact of the main Bloxham School Building set in a lush green setting offers an impressive entrance to the medieval heart of the village. This is quickly followed by views of one of the top 100 churches in England and the adjacent village museum. All attract visitors, local, national and international. Bloxham also hosts increasingly important literary and music festivals. Maintaining a 'rural sense of place', (Theme 2) is critical to maintaining ongoing visitor interest and keeping it a desirable location for small businesses.
4. Promoting sustainable transport	The main, but narrow, road through the village is a very busy and a designated lorry route. A recent Sustrans report documents the many impediments to low carbon travel either within or beyond the village. The Plan (Theme 1) recommends seeking opportunities gradually to address some of the connectivity issues including the impact of on-street parking.
5. Supporting high quality communication infrastructure	Broadband speeds are low and an impediment to business but this should be resolved within the Plan period. Mobile phone coverage has been mapped and is poor across most of the village- even outside of buildings. The Plan (Theme 3) encourages mobile service providers to upgrade equipment.
6. Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes	Many of the homes that will be delivered in the duration of this Plan will result from prior unplanned permissions that take no account of the needs of those residents seeking open-market housing to downsize to pre-empt or respond to reducing mobility. The Plan (Theme 1) attempts partially to re-balance the situation by requiring a proportion of additional dwellings that take account of this both in terms of design and connectivity.
7. Requiring good design	There is a huge emphasis in the Plan (Themes 1 & 2) upon the need to create a visually attractive environment that incorporates innovation and avoids uniformity whilst employing architecture and landscaping in keeping with the local character and history. The Plan is particularly concerned to avoid the situation where poor examples from the past are used as a precedent to justify a 'lowest-common denominator' future.
8. Promoting healthy communities	The Plan (Theme 4) includes a focus upon providing improved indoor and outdoor recreational facilities to catch-up with recent rapid expansion of the village. There is a commitment to protect existing recreation spaces and public rights of way and to support schools in projects that will lead to joint-use recreation agreements with the community. The Plan also seeks not to exacerbate pre-existing problems of lack of school capacity by careful scheduling of additional dwellings. We also seek to protect some key views and spaces that are highly valued by the community.

NPPF Policy	Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan
9. Protecting green belt land.	Bloxham is set in an area that has been described in earlier Local Plans as of 'high landscape value' but it is not green belt and so this does not apply.
10. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change	Bloxham is a flood hot spot and the Plan seeks that where feasible developers avoid the most at-risk areas. It encourages site-specific flood risk assessments and sustainable drainage systems even for minor developments wherever appropriate. (Theme 1) Encouragement is given to low-carbon development and sustainable travel. (Theme 1)
11. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment	The maintenance of a soft-rural feel by retention of trees and hedgerows is emphasized in the Plan (Theme 2) and the importance of space in preserving a rural environment is made clear.
12. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment	We emphasize (Theme 2) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character. We seek that they are 'in-keeping' with the more rural of nearby dwellings and of designs that complement and enhance the rural character of the village.
13. Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals	This does not currently arise.

b. CONCLUSION REGARDING CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Policy Villages 1 recommends most development be focused into the urban centres but that some will go to the more sustainable villages.

Bloxham expects to deliver around 220 new homes within the period of this plan.

Developments approved after March 2014 will count towards the Adopted Local Plan (2015) recommendations on housing numbers. Bloxham will be contributing around 85 such dwellings which we believe to be fully consistent with the aforementioned Policy Villages 1.

The plan represents a new dawn offering a framework for future development that will contribute to the local housing stock whilst complementing the character of the village and according with the needs and aspirations of the local population.

4. A LOCAL PLAN IN TRANSITION

For much of the time of writing these neighbourhood plan documents the adopted Local Plan was the 1996 Cherwell Local Plan. In July 2015 the Adopted Local Plan was approved.

We have attempted to update all the statutory documents to take account of this but in some of the evidence base documents it may occasionally be necessary to do the following:

For “The Adopted plan (1996)”	read as	“The Past Plan (1996)”
For “The Emerging Plan”	read as	“The Adopted Plan (2015)”

Our strategy throughout has been that to seek compliance with the Emerging Plan – now Adopted Local Plan (2015) – whilst also ensuring we compliance with the Past Plan (1996)

5. CONFORMING WITH STRATEGIC ELEMENTS OF THE LOCAL PLAN

a. OVERVIEW AND ANALYSIS REGARDING CHERWELL STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The Adopted Local Plan (2015) offered 15 strategic objectives grouped into the three broad areas:

1. Developing a Sustainable Local Economy SO 1-5
2. Building Sustainable Communities SO 6-10
3. Ensuring Sustainable Development SO11-15

We list the Adopted Local Plan (2015) Strategic Objectives below and indicate how Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Policies are consistent with them.

Cherwell Adopted Local Plan (2015) Strategic Objectives		Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Themes & Policies	
SO 1	To facilitate economic growth and employment and a more diverse local economy with an emphasis on attracting and developing higher technology industries	Theme 3. Policies encourage high-level jobs such as business consultancy, web-design etc.	✓
SO 2	To support the diversification of Cherwell's rural economy	Theme 3 Policies encourage start-up and expansion	✓
SO 3	To help disadvantaged areas, support an increase in skills and innovation, improve the built environment and make Cherwell more attractive to business by supporting regeneration	Theme 1-4 policies on demographic change, economy and community seek to advance opportunities for all.	✓
SO 4	To maintain and enhance the vitality, viability, distinctiveness and safety of Cherwell's urban centres.	Bloxham is not urban but policies do seek all of these qualities.	✓
SO 5	To encourage sustainable tourism	Theme 2 seeks to preserve the attractive rural character of the village: something essential to maintain the flow of visitors.	✓
SO 6	To accommodate new development so that it maintains or enhances the local identity of Cherwell's settlements and the functions they perform	Theme 1 seeks to accommodate an appropriate share of rural development (105 dwellings) Theme 2 seeks to preserve or enhance the character of the village.	✓
SO 7	To meet the housing needs of all sections of Cherwell's communities, particularly the need to house an ageing population and to meet the identified needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show people, in a way that creates sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities.	Theme 1 seeks to address the ageing population. A satellite village within a mile of Bloxham is accommodating additional traveller sites and a show people site is located within the southern boundary of the Parish.	✓ na

Cherwell Adopted Local Plan (2015) Strategic Objectives		Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Themes & Policies	
SO 8	To improve the affordability of housing in Cherwell and to provide social rented and intermediate housing to meet identified needs whilst ensuring the viability of housing development and a reliable supply of new homes	Theme 1 Bloxham will be accommodating the recommended percentage of affordable homes	✓
SO 9	To improve the availability of housing to newly forming households in rural areas.	Theme 1 and 2 Bloxham has been and continues to be one of the fastest growing villages in the area for several years.	✓
SO 10	To provide sufficient accessible, good quality services, facilities and infrastructure including green infrastructure, to meet health, education, transport, open space, sport, recreation, cultural, social and other community needs, reducing social exclusion and poverty, addressing inequalities in health, and maximising well-being.	Theme 1 addresses avoidance of major incoherence between development and infrastructure capacity. Theme 2 touches upon green infrastructure and Theme 4 at community Health	✓
SO 11	To incorporate the principles of sustainable development in mitigating and adapting to climate change impacts including increasing local resource efficiency (particularly water efficiency), minimising carbon emissions, promoting decentralised and renewable or low carbon energy where appropriate and ensuring that the risk of flooding is not increased	Theme 1 addresses both flood resilience and water efficiency and also seeks to encourage low carbon transport.	✓
SO 12	To focus development in Cherwell's sustainable locations, making efficient and effective use of land, conserving and enhancing the countryside and landscape and the setting of its towns and villages.	Theme 1 seeks to accommodate a number of dwellings consistent with sustainability during the Plan period. Sustainability is dealt with in more detail in a separate Sustainability Report.	✓
SO 13	To reduce the dependency on the private car as a mode of travel, increase the attraction of and opportunities for travelling by public transport, cycle and on foot, and to ensure high standards of accessibility to services for people with impaired mobility.	Theme 1 seeks to improve low-carbon connectivity upon which Bloxham scores badly – especially for the increasing numbers with impaired mobility.	✓

Cherwell Adopted Local Plan (2015) Strategic Objectives		Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Themes & Policies	
SO 14	To create more sustainable communities by providing high quality, locally distinctive and well designed environments which increase the attractiveness of Cherwell's towns and villages as places to live and work and which contribute to the well-being of residents.	Theme 2 has policies upon conserving and enhancing our distinctive environment.	✓
		Theme 3 has policies that encourage live-work accommodation and better digital infrastructure	✓
SO 15	To protect and enhance the historic and natural environment and Cherwell's core assets, including protecting and enhancing cultural heritage assets and archaeology, maximising opportunities for improving biodiversity and minimising pollution in urban and rural areas.	Theme 2 has policies on protecting cultural heritage and improving biodiversity.	✓

b. CONCLUSION - CONFORMITY WITH THE LOCAL PLAN STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

We have considered how the policies of our Plan relate to each of the Cherwell Adopted Local Plan (2015) strategic objectives and do not find any major disparity,

6. COMPLIANCE WITH EU AND OTHER OBLIGATIONS

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

Neighbourhood Plans do not have any obligation to provide a sustainability appraisal. Our plan does not identify specific areas of land. Rather it offers a set of principles which must be properly considered when evaluating the cumulative impact of any proposed new development each of which is likely to require its own Sustainability Appraisal.

Whilst we do not offer a formal sustainability appraisal, we do draw your attention to a comprehensive Sustainability Report that covers much the same ground. There is also a huge amount of evidence contained within three BNDP reports outlined more fully in Appendix 2. These have been living documents up to the point of submission.

All the above documents are all available to download from the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan website.²

² [Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan website – Post Consultation Documents](#)

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA)

We have considered compliance with SEA topics throughout the planning process.

- A. We have sought opinions from The Environment Agency, National Heritage and Natural England as to whether or not our plan needs an Strategic Environmental Assessment;
- B. We have analysed our own plan by looking at how it fits into the combined Cherwell Local Plan SA / SEA process and whether it might result in any worse environmental outcomes.
- C. We worked with Cherwell Planning Authority to be sure that they had the information they needed to formulate an SEA screening opinion. They found no significant environmental effects were likely and that did not require an SEA.

A. Initial Responses from Environmental Consultees

From: Lloyd Sweet, Robert <Robert.LloydSweet@HistoricEngland.org.uk> Sent: Fri 10/04/2015 09:22
To: John Groves
Cc:
Subject: RE: English Heritage opinion please

Dear John

Whilst potential impacts on sites designated under legislation derived from the European Union would be a factor to consider in determining whether the preparation of a plan or programme required Strategic Environmental Assessment, impacts on sites or areas designated under domestic legislation, as well as some non-designated heritage assets, should also be considered as potential significant environmental impacts depending on their nature. This includes impacts to listed building, scheduled monuments or conservation areas, protected under statute, as well as sites recorded on other national registers maintained by Historic England (Registered Parks and Gardens, Battlefields and Wrecks) and even some non-designated heritage assets of regional or national importance or area forming a cluster of heritage assets that, potentially, derive a greater significance through their relationships with each other and combined interest.

Taking into consideration the evidence base presented in the neighbourhood plan documentation to date, including the District Council's Conservation Area Appraisal, that the neighbourhood plan will not be allocating specific sites for development and that the number of dwellings to be identified as appropriate for the plan area is limited to 20 (in addition to those sites already permitted for development). I am happy to confirm that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental impacts within the areas of interest to Historic England and in our view will not require Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you require any further information

Yours sincerely

Rob Lloyd-Sweet

Rob Lloyd-Sweet | Historic Places Adviser | Historic Places | South East
Direct Line: 01483 252028
Mobile: 07825 907288

From: Plan Cons Area Team (Thames Valley) (NE) <Consultations.ThamesV: Sent: Thu 02/04/2015 16:26
To: finchamgroves@totalise.co.uk
Cc:
Subject: Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan

Dear Mr Groves,

Firstly my apologies for the delay in getting back to your enquiry below, but I have now had the opportunity to look at your request and check against our own datasets.

Having checked though our records, Natural England agree with your comments below that there are no designated sites of interest for Natural England, and you have referenced that Cherwell District Council have intimated that they will not be undertaking a screening opinion for the Parish, together with the Cherwell Habitats Regulation Assessment has stated no Likely Significant Effect on Natura 2000 sites.

In view of the above, Natural England can agree that a Strategic Environmental Assessment is no required for the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan.

I trust that this is sufficient for your purposes, but should you have any questions or queries or wish to discuss any aspects of this application please do not hesitate to contact.

Yours sincerely

David Hammond
Lead Advisor
Sustainable Development & Regulation
Thames Valley Team
Tel: 0300 060 1373

E Mail: david.hammond@naturalengland.org.uk


**Natural England,
Area 1C Nobel House,
17 Smith Square, London SW1P 3JR**

We are here to secure a healthy natural environment for people to enjoy, where wildlife is protected and England's traditional landscapes are safeguarded for future generations.

In an effort to reduce Natural England's carbon footprint, I will, wherever possible, avoid travelling to meetings and attend via audio, video or web conferencing.

RE: For Attn of Mr Jack Moeran

Planning-Wallingford <planning-wallingford@environment-agency.gov.uk>

 You replied to this message on 23/07/2015 16:42.

Sent: Thu 23/07/2015 15:55

To: John Groves

Dear Mr Groves,

Thank you for your email below. Our response is amended below:

We note that the development being proposed through the plan period is minimal (20 dwellings plus existing approved developments). As such we would not have any significant concerns with what is proposed and agree with Natural England that SEA is not necessary in this instance.

Thanks,

Jack Moeran
Planning Advisor

jack.moeran@environment-agency.gov.uk
01491 828367

Conclusion – Statutory Consultees

None of these statutory consultees was of the opinion that our proposed plan should require an SEA

B. Comparison with the SA/SEA of the Cherwell Adopted Local Plan (2015)

In view of the above opinions, we have concluded this Neighbourhood Plan does not require a formal Strategic Environmental Assessment. (This is also consistent with the National Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph: 027 Reference ID: 11-027-20150209)

The BNDP is consistent with the Adopted Local Plan (2015). As such, it should be covered by the Cherwell SEA findings. To check out the veracity of this statement we have explored how BNDP policies fare when slotted into the Cherwell joint SA / SEA approach to the Adopted Local Plan (2015).

The Table that follows is taken from the Cherwell Adopted Local Plan (2015) but has additional columns which cross-reference to the Bloxham Themes and Policies.

Key ■ Contribution that equals or exceeds that of the Local Plan ■ Negative contribution

Page 524

Cherwell SA Objective	SEA Topic	BNDP Theme	BNDP Policies	BNDP Contribution
1. To ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent, sustainably constructed and affordable home.	Population & Human Health	Deliver the houses the village needs	BL1 & 2	
2. To reduce the risk of flooding and resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment	Water & Soil, Climate Factors and Population & Human Health.	Deliver the houses the village needs	BL7	
3. To Improve the health and well-being of the population & reduce inequalities in health.	Population & Human Health and Material Assets.	Ensure a safe, healthy, cohesive community	BL17-19	
4. To reduce poverty and social exclusion.	Population & Human Health and Material Assets.	Deliver the houses the village needs	BL8	
5. To reduce crime and disorder and the fear of crime	Population & Human Health	Deliver the houses the village needs	BL4	
6. To create and sustain vibrant communities and engage cultural activity across all sections of the Cherwell community	Population & Human Health and Material Assets	Ensure a safe, healthy, cohesive community	BL17-19	
7. To Improve accessibility to all services and facilities	Population & Human Health and Material Assets	Deliver the houses the village needs	BL3-5	
8. To improve efficiency in land use through the re-use of previously developed land and existing buildings, including the re-use of materials from buildings, and encouraging urban renaissance	All	-	-	

9. To reduce air pollution including reducing greenhouse gas emissions and ensure the district is ready for its impacts	Air	Deliver the houses the village needs	BL3-5	
10.To conserve and enhance and create resources for the district's biodiversity	Biodiversity Fauna & Flora	Protect and enhance our rural heritage	BL11	
11.To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the district's countryside and historic environment	Cultural Heritage & Landscape and Biodiversity Fauna & Flora	Protect and enhance our rural heritage AND Ensure a safe, healthy, cohesive community	BL10 – 12 BL17	
12.To reduce road congestion and pollution levels by improving travel choice, and reducing the need for travel by car/ lorry	Air, Population and Human Health	Deliver the houses the village needs	BL3-5	
13.To reduce the global, social and environmental impact of consumption of resource by using sustainably produced and local products	Climate Factors	Protect and enhance our rural heritage	BL11d	
14.To reduce waste generation and disposal, and achieve sustainable management of waste	Water and Soil and Climate Factors	Deliver the houses the village needs	-	
15.To maintain and improve the water quality of the district's rivers and to achieve sustainable water resources management.	Water & Soil and Biodiversity Fauna & Flora	Deliver the houses the village needs	BL6-7	
16.To increase energy efficiency and the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources in the district.	Climate Factors	-	-	
17.To ensure high and stable levels of employment so everyone can benefit from the economic growth of the district.	Population & Human Health and Material Assets	Promote economic vitality	BL13-15	

18.To sustain and develop economic growth and innovation, an educated/ skilled workforce and support the long term competitiveness of the district.	Population & Human Health and Material Assets	Deliver the houses the village needs	BL9d	
19.To encourage the development of buoyant, sustainable tourism sector.	Population & Human Health	Protect and enhance our rural heritage	BL10 - 12	

Key ■ Contribution that equals or exceeds that of the Local Plan ■ Negative contribution

CDC list of SEA Topics	CDC SA objective covering the SEA topic	Bloxham Policies covering the SEA topic	BNDP Contribution
A. Biodiversity	3, 10, 11, 15	BL11, 12 and 17	
B. Population	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 17, 18, 19	BL1 -2	
C. Human Health	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 17, 13, 19	BL17-19	
D. Fauna	3, 10, 11, 15	BL11, 12 and 17	
E. Flora	3, 10, 11, 15	BL11, 12 and 17	
F. Soil	2, 8, 14, 15	BL7	
G. Water	2, 8, 14, 15	BL6-7	
H. Air	8, 9, 12	BL3-5	
I. Climatic Factors	2, 3, 13, 14, 16	BL3-5	
J. Material Assets	3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 17, 18, 19	BL3-5 and BL13-15	

Key ■ Contribution that equals or exceeds that of the Local Plan ■ Negative contribution

Conclusion regarding CDC Strategic Environmental Assessment Topics

The impact of the proposed plan with regard to the Cherwell list of SEA topics is always either neutral or positive.

C. Cherwell Planning Authority Screening Opinion.

We worked with the Cherwell Planning Authority to be sure that they had the information they needed to formulate an SEA screening opinion. This is submitted as a separate document and assesses whether the BNDP is likely to have significant effects on the environment.

The criteria for determining the significance of effects are listed in Schedule 1 (9 (2) (a) and 10 (4)(a) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

A range of criteria were examined with regard to:

- a. the scope and influence of the document and
- b. the type of impact and area likely to be affected

This screening opinion concludes that the BNDP is not likely to have significant effects on the environment and that a full SEA is therefore not required.

HABITATS REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT

We consider the need for an HRA. Again, we start from the Cherwell D.C. Adopted Local Plan (2015) which states, “The HRA process found that only the Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC) might be affected by the Local Plan, and the four other European sites within 20km of the District boundary were very unlikely to be affected.

We are over 20 km from the Oxford Meadows or any site of European interest and so conclude that no HRA is required for our plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan will not impact the integrity of any European site and does not require a Habitats Regulation Assessment.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The BNDP consultation strategy demonstrates wide-ranging engagement and a consultation programme that has successfully engaged the widest cross-section of local people and offered them multiple opportunities to contribute to the policies that have emerged.

Such a genuinely community driven plan does not diminish the human rights of either Bloxham residents or others who may be affected by it. Indeed, it seeks actively to enhance them by seeking proper concern that homes, areas and connectivity are properly designed for people of all ages, incomes and mobility levels.

7. THE EVIDENCE BASE

The Plan itself contains footnotes to numerous sources of evidence; likewise, the sustainability report.

The main evidence base is contained within three major reports that are readily available in the ‘post-consultation documents’ section of the website.³

They are:

³ [BNDP Website Post consultation documents](#)

- Housing and Landscape Report⁴
- Infrastructure and Business Report⁵
- Recreation Report⁶

These documents emanate from working groups but have been regarded as living documents that might be updated right up to the date of submission.

The reports run to around 500 pages and contain a similar number of references to other documents that have contributed to this plan. The emphasis is upon issues and evidence. They are drawn heavily upon in formulating policies but are not of themselves policy documents. They are also the evidence-base from which the sustainability report has largely been distilled.

More detail upon their content about the membership of the groups producing these is contained in Appendix 2. The full reports are readily available from the BNDP website.

This Neighbourhood Plan progressed alongside the Emerging Local Plan and use the growing Cherwell D.C. Local Plan evidence base⁷ was extensively drawn upon.

8. OVERALL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This Basic Conditions Statement is submitted to accompany the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan and sets out the information as required under s15 (1) of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The Statement shows that in each regard, the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan meets the requirements. It is concluded that our Neighbourhood Plan should progress to Examination and Referendum.

⁴ [Housing Report](#)

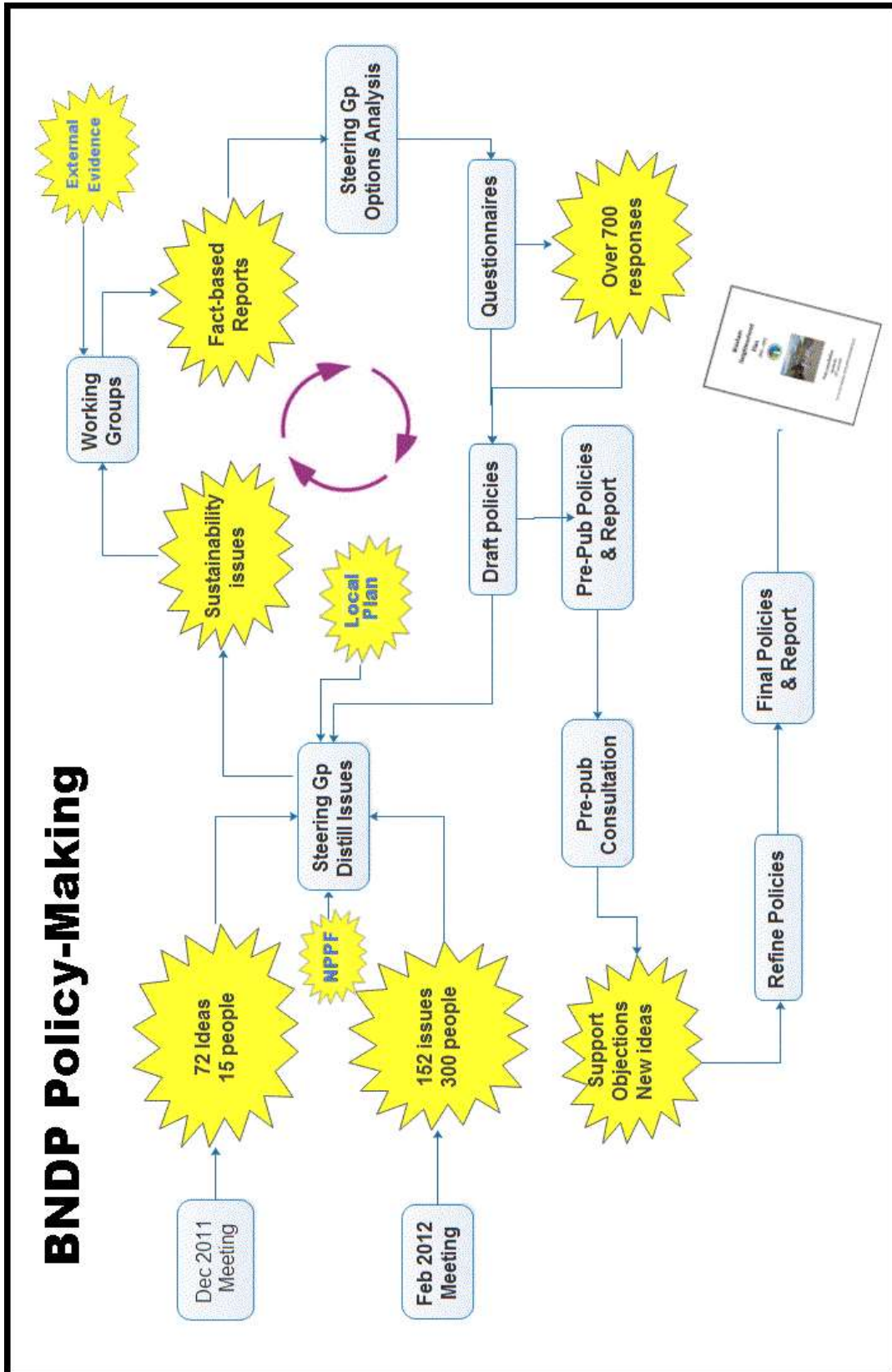
⁵ [Infrastructure and Business report](#)

⁶ [Recreation Report](#)

⁷ [CDC Local Plan evidence -base](#)

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1. PROCESS OVERVIEW



APPENDIX 2. THE BNDP INTERNAL REPORTS

There are numerous documents that provide the evidence upon which the BNDP is based. Key amongst these are three internal reports from Groups⁸ about which we provide outline summaries below.

These reports inform rather than define policies.

Key issues emerged from the views expressed at the many public consultations.

The Steering Group distilled the issues paying due regard to the “goodness of fit” with NPPF and the adopted Local Plan.

Thus began a cyclic process of working groups producing and updating reports the factual content of which the Steering Groups drew heavily upon to formulate robust evidence-based policies. The sustainability report is also largely distilled from these documents.

1. Housing and Landscape Report

Initially prepared by: BNDP Housing Working Group

Section	Topic	Page	Group Members	
1)	Demographics and housing	10	Lizzie	Arden
2)	Housing Need and Availability	29	Lucy	Baker
3)	An Ageing population?	44	Heather	Clews
4)	The location of new dwellings	50	Michael	Clews
5)	The Rural Nature of Bloxham	59	Mike	Davy
6)	Housing Densities and Bloxham	64	Andrew	Dixey
7)	Quality of Housing	70	Mary	Groves
8)	Design statements	79	Roger	Nowell
9)	Mapping the village	81	Stephen	Phipps
10)	The Variety that is Bloxham	97	Sue	Slater
11)	Heritage assets	105	Malcolm	Timms
12)	Habitats, SEAs HRAs etc.	114	Jenny	Yates
13)	Bloxham Retail Facilities	122		
14)	BNDP Questionnaire Responses upon housing	129		
15)	Young people’s views on housing.	148		
16)	Questions from the Parish Plan on Housing	159	50% male	50% female

2. Infrastructure and Business report⁹

Initially prepared by: BNDP Infrastructure and Business Working Group plus others* who were called upon where they had specialist knowledge to offer on certain areas.

Section	Topic	Page	Group Members	
1	Medical provision in Bloxham	13	Eleanor	Cozens
2	Educational provision	29	Rodney	Kane
3	The utilities - electricity	55	David	Keable
4	The utilities – gas	65	Paul	Kelly

⁸ Note – There was inevitably some degree of “coming and going” in the various groups to accommodate people’s changing commitments.

⁹ Data from this report makes a major contribution to the content of the sustainability Report

5	Broadband	69	Peter	Lawson
6	Mobile phone reception	75	Patrick	Moore
7	Traffic in Bloxham	80	Mike	Morris
8	Flooding	106	Les	Worthington
9	Business in Bloxham	122	David	Yates
10	Some economic data about bloxham	128	Jon	Carlton*
	Data from the Parish Plan	142	John	Reardon*
			91% male	9% female

3. Recreation Report

Initially prepared by: BNDP Recreation Working Group

Section	Contents	Page	Group Members	
1	Background Context	5	Robert	Aplin
2	Vision, Issues and Challenges	7	Amanda	Baxter
3	the prevailing context	8	Clare	Boomer
4	Overview of available facilities	10	Carmen	Guard
5	What are Green Spaces – General Background	11	Ray	Guzenda
6	Where are the Bloxham Green spaces	13	Ian	Holroyd
7	Green Space formulae and general data	16	Susanna	Howard
8	Green Space Areas - category by category	21	Bob	Joiner
9	Play Areas – Leaps, laps & neaps	27	Rupert	Kipping
10	Sports Pitches	35	Juliet	Long
11	Local Green Space – protecting key spaces	38	Alan	Miller
12	School Sports Facilities	40	Bee	Myson
13	Indoor Spaces	42	Melanie	Rayner
14	BNDP Questionnaire Results relating to recreation	51	Alison	Stevens
15	Bloxham Organisations	56	Sarah	Tillett
16	Who owns or farms local land?	59	David	Tyrrell
17	Areas of recreation land.	60	44% male	56% female

4. Sustainability Report

Prepared by members of the BNDP Steering Group

The concept of sustainability has been deeply embedded into the whole neighbourhood planning process. This document contains relatively little in the way of new facts but represents what was an ongoing attempt to distil and assess those issues and findings pertinent to arriving at sustainability-based policy choices.

Section	Topic	Page	Steering Group members	
0	Non-Technical Summary	5		
1	Bloxham NDP Context	6	Phil	Cavill
2	Sustainability	7	Mike	Davy
3	Influences upon this BNDP sustainability report	8	John	Groves
4	The General Process of creating this report	10	Ray	Guzenda
5	Bloxham Sustainability Issues	11	Geoff	Mollard

	Housing	12	Mike	Morris
	Heritage	12	Stephen	Phipps
	Landscape/Visual Impact	13	Sue	Slater
	Travel and connectivity	13	Sarah	Tillett
	Flood Risk	14	Jenny	Yates
	Business and the Economy	15		
	Community Cohesion	15		
	Health and well-being	16	70% male	30% female
	Crime	16		
	Access to services	17		
	Air Quality	17		
	Resources	18		
	Biodiversity and habitats	18		
	Waste & Recycling	19		
	Water	19		
6	Potential Infrastructure Upgrades	20		
7	Village Categorisation.	21		
8	BNDP Themes Objectives and Policies	29		
9	Checking Sustainability	31		
10	Overall Conclusions	31		
11	Monitoring	32		
	Appendices	32		

5. The Questionnaire Report

This is a report that carefully combines data from 4 separate questionnaires:

1. The BNDP Business Questionnaire
2. The BNDP Main Questionnaire and Housing Need Survey
3. The BNDP Young Person Questionnaire
4. The Bloxham Parish Plan.

The Business Questionnaire

- Questions were derived mostly from “ideas boards” that were available at numerous well attended public meetings (See consultation document) or from issues the infrastructure and business working group had raised.
- Information about the questionnaire went to around 200 businesses by email or leaflet.
- Although a paper option was available it was completed entirely online.
- There were 70 responses.(ca 35%)

The Main Questionnaire and Housing Need Survey

- Questions derived mostly from “ideas boards” ORCC provided advice on avoiding leading questions. Most were multiple choice in format but there was also the opportunity for open-response questions which many took up.
- It went to all houses in the village Bloxham 1 paper copy per household. Spare copies were available upon request of which there was only one.
- It was totally anonymous and processed by the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (ORCC).

- It had an unexpectedly high return rate for a postal questionnaire of 45% which makes it statistically very reliable.

The Young person's questionnaire.

- This was essentially a slimmed down and simplified version of the Main Questionnaire.
- Local clubs for young people participated and the local secondary school encouraged Bloxham pupil to take part.
- Fifty two people decided to participate. This is a disappointingly small sample but despite the range of ages gave rise to a surprising degree of consistency on issues that were important to them.

The Parish Plan Questionnaire

- This was carried out the year before work on the BNDP started.
- A paper copy was delivered to every house in the village and hand-collected.
- There was a very high return rate of 76% which again prompts high confidence.
- It is occasionally referred to where it provides evidence on issues that were not covered by the BNDP Main questionnaire.

6. The Archaeological Report

Much of the information regarding cultural and archaeological heritage is available within the Conservation area document. This report was carried out by a member of the Steering Group and simply draws together some additional archaeological data (especially below-ground finds) from various sources.

It is not explicitly drawn upon within the BNDP Policies.

APPENDIX 3. SPECIALIST REPORTS

1. The SUSTANS Report: Walking and Cycling in Bloxham

There was a broadly held perception by local residents that planning documents often expressed overly optimistic views upon the quality of low-carbon connectivity within and beyond the village. We did not have expertise in this area amongst group members and so commissioned SUSTANS to provide an objective report from a disinterested party. The report makes clear the many seemingly intractable challenges for people trying to get safely around the village on foot or bicycle.

2. The Bloxham Conservation Area Appraisal

This was produced by Cherwell D.C. and is a key document in terms of setting out what is and is not acceptable within the conservation area.

3. The Oxfordshire Playing Fields Report

This was commissioned by the BNDP to evaluate the quality and quantity of recreational provision in Bloxham. It makes clear the need to protect the recreation spaces that we have and makes recommendations upon how various groups might work together to improve overall provision within the village.

4. Local Heritage assets: The Red Lion Garden

This is not directly related to the BNDP. It is a report drawn up drawn up and submitted to Cherwell DC as a bid to register the garden as a heritage asset.

It is included here as this Plan also seeks a level of protection for this garden.

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Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan



Appendix 1 Sustainability Report

Please note - this is not a formal Sustainability Appraisal.
It is one of a number of reports making up the BNDP evidence
base.

Submission Version
19th Nov 2015

Who said what about Bloxham's Sustainability

Cherwell DC	JUNE 2015	15/00604/OUT	<p>Rural North Oxfordshire, especially Bloxham is in danger of being lost to overbuilding on Greenfield sites.</p> <p>Bloxham is struggling to retain its identity.</p> <p>Overdevelopment of Bloxham, whether by CDC or at appeal, has had a severe impact on village infrastructure.</p> <p>The A361 through the village is already an extremely busy road that meets a bottleneck in the centre of the village, and already failing under the strain of rush hour traffic.</p> <p>summary these are an over-concentration of new housing in Bloxham village causing harm to the rural character and quality of the village and undermining a more balanced distribution of housing growth across the rural areas</p>
Oxon CC	Feb 2015	Pre-publication Consultation	<p>Further housing development in the short-medium term would bring a significant risk that even some children living within the village, applying on time for a school place, may not be able to secure a place at the school. This would be detrimental to community cohesion and sustainability.</p>
Thames Water	May 2015	15/00604/OUT	<p>Thames Water believes that the sewer network downstream of this development is approaching capacity</p>
Sustrans	April 2015	Walking & Cycling in Bloxham	<p>Particular challenges are presented by the A361, where there are numerous pinch-points caused by narrow and discontinuous footways, and parking outside the shops, compounded by heavy traffic including HGVs</p> <p>The A361 has a 50 mph speed limit between Bloxham and Banbury, and is very busy with all types of traffic - including HGVs, buses and coaches - making it unsuitable for cycling at present.</p>
Cherwell DC	May 2015	15/00604/OUT	<p>Bloxham has seen a higher level of growth compared to other Category A villages</p>
Bloxham Parish Council	Dec 2014	Local Plan Examiners hearing	<p>Bloxham can no longer be classed as a service village. It can no longer provide primary school provision to all residents let alone satellite villages. It is frequently not practicable to park at the local shops so people carry on into the Banbury supermarkets or organise home deliveries.</p>
S.Newington Parish Council	Jan 2015	Consultation	<p>Development within the village that overloads services and makes them unavailable to the satellite villages will have an adverse effect on the sustainability of these villages as well as Bloxham.</p>
Local Plan Inspectors report	May 2015	Local Plan Inspection report	<p>"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."</p>
Road Safety Foundation Report	Nov 2015	Link on BNDP Website	<p>Persistently higher risk roads are those rated high and medium-high risk in both survey periods. (The A361 Chipping Norton to Banbury comes 8th highest in the UK.)</p>

Contents

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY	5
<i>Key:</i>	<i>5</i>
1. BLOXHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONTEXT	6
A. BLOXHAM	6
B. PREPARATION OF THE PLAN	6
C. THE CHERWELL CONTEXT	6
D. THE OXFORDSHIRE CONTEXT	6
2. SUSTAINABILITY	7
A. SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL (SA)	7
B. STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA).....	7
C. HABITATS REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT (HRA).....	7
3. INFLUENCES UPON THIS BNDP SUSTAINABILITY REPORT.....	8
A. NPPF CORE PRINCIPLES	8
B. CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN (2015) SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL (LPSA).....	8
C. CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN VILLAGE CATEGORISATION	8
D. THE CHERWELL RURAL AREA INTEGRATED TRANSPORT & LAND USE STUDY REPORT	9
E. THE BNDP REPORTS ON HOUSING, INFRASTRUCTURE AND RECREATION.....	9
F. PERTINENT POLICIES, PLANS AND PROGRAMMES	9
4. THE GENERAL PROCESS OF CREATING THIS REPORT	10
5. BLOXHAM SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES.....	11
A. INTRODUCTION	11
B. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN VS NO NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN?	11
C. THE IDENTIFIED ISSUES.....	11
D. BASELINE SITUATION – THUMBNAIL.....	11
1. <i>Housing</i>	12
2. <i>Heritage</i>	12
3. <i>Landscape/Visual Impact</i>	13
4. <i>Travel and connectivity</i>	13
5. <i>Flood Risk</i>	14
6. <i>Business and the Economy</i>	15
7. <i>Community Cohesion</i>	15
8. <i>Health and well-being</i>	16
9. <i>Crime</i>	16
10. <i>Access to services</i>	17
11. <i>Air Quality</i>	18
12. <i>Resources</i>	18
13. <i>Biodiversity and habitats</i>	18
14. <i>Waste & Recycling</i>	19
15. <i>Water</i>	19
16. <i>Energy</i>	20
6. POTENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES	20
A. INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPERS.....	20
B. UNDERSTANDING INFRASTRUCTURE	20
C. INFRASTRUCTURE PROVIDERS	20
D. INFRASTRUCTURE SUMMARY	21
7. VILLAGE CATEGORISATION.....	22
A. WHY A MORE DETAILED LOOK AT SUSTAINABILITY?.....	22

B.	CRAITLUS-PLUS - UPDATE FOR BLOXHAM	22
	<i>Conclusion</i>	26
C.	PROPOSED NUMBER OF HOUSES FOR BLOXHAM 2015 - 31	27
	<i>Background context</i>	27
	<i>Conclusion</i>	28
8.	BNDP THEMES , OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES	29
A.	THEMES AND OBJECTIVES.....	29
B.	BNDP THEMES AND OBJECTIVES - CONSISTENCY WITH THE HIGHER PLANS	30
9.	CHECKING SUSTAINABILITY.	31
A.	SUMMARY OF THE SUSTAINABILITY FINDINGS.....	31
10.	OVERALL CONCLUSION.....	31
11.	MONITORING	32
12.	APPENDICES	32
1.	SUSTAINABILITY CHECK-LIST.....	32
2.	SCREENING UPON NEED FOR AN SEA	33
	<i>Response on SEA from English Heritage / Historic England</i>	33
	<i>Response on SEA from Natural England</i>	34
	<i>Response on SEA from the Environment Agency</i>	35
	<i>Cherwell DC SEA Screening Opinion.</i>	35
3.	SUSTRANS EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ON BLOXHAM CONNECTIVITY	36
4.	SUSTRANS REPORT ON BLOXHAM PAVEMENTS.....	37
5.	TRAFFIC HOTSPOTS	38
6.	CRASH-MAP DATA FOR BLOXHAM	39
7.	RECENT HOUSING PERMISSIONS IN BLOXHAM.....	40
8.	PROPOSED CUTS TO BLOXHAM BUS SERVICE	41
9.	BLOXHAM SURFACE WATER FLOOD MAP.....	42

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

1. Residents have identified sustainability issues of particular importance to them via meetings and questionnaires¹.
2. The team working on the Bloxham Neighbourhood Development Plan expanded this list to cover additional items important to obtaining consistency with the NPPF² and Local Plan³.
3. For each of the issues we have formulated questions that essentially represent a method of checking likely impacts against identified criteria. (See Appendix 1)
4. We have not identified specific land for development and so what our process entailed was examining the Neighbourhood plan scenario against The Local Plan alone.
5. We have done this for each policy but in the interest of brevity here we document results for the four main themes rather than every individual policy.
6. In every case, the BNDP Theme offers sustainability that either equals or exceeds that offered by the Local Plan alone. No individual Policy had demonstrably worse sustainability.

Key:

+	NP offers better sustainability than the adopted Local Plan (2015)
=	NP offers at least equal sustainability to the alternative adopted Local Plan (2015) alone or is not especially applicable to this particular N.P. theme
-	NP offers demonstrably worse sustainability than the adopted Local Plan (2015) alone.

No.	Sustainability Issue	Neighbourhood Plan Themes			
		Houses the village needs	Our rural heritage	Economic Vitality	Healthy Cohesive Community
1	Housing & Population	+			
2	Heritage		+		
3	Landscape/Visual Impact		+		
4	Travel and connectivity	+		+	+
5	Flood risk				+
6	Business and the Economy			+	
7	Community cohesion				+
8	Health & Well-being				+
9	Crime	+			+
1	Access to services	+		+	+
11	Air quality				+
12	Biodiversity and habitats	+	+		+
12	Resources				
13	Waste				
14	Water				
15	Energy				

¹ See Consultation document in [BNDP Evidence Base](#)

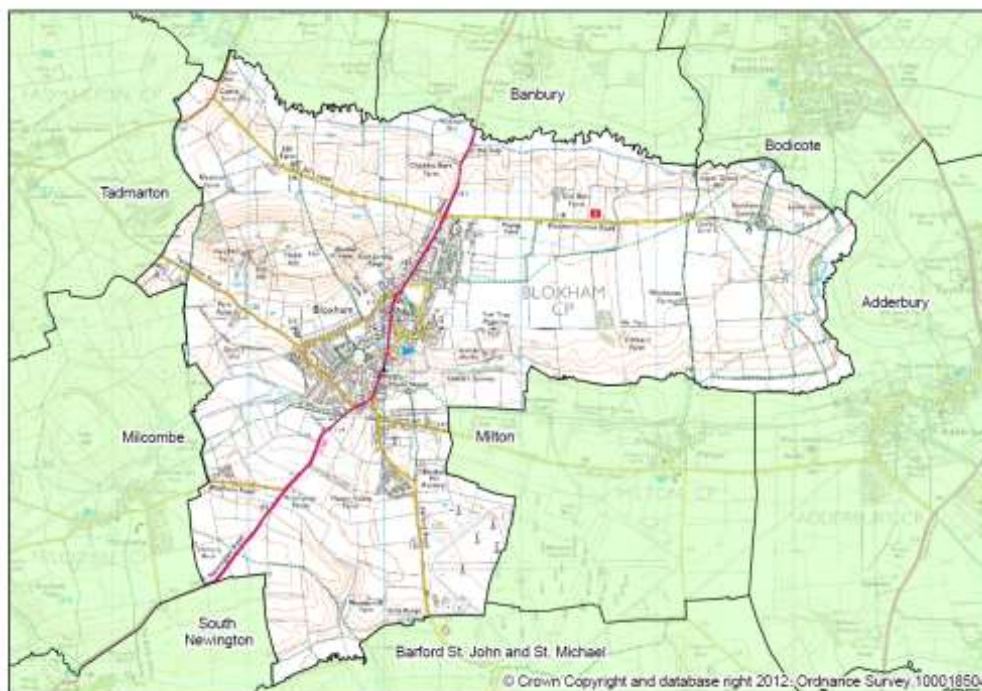
² [NPPF and NPPG](#)

³ Cherwell [Past Plan \(1996\)](#) and [adopted Local Plan \(2015\)](#)

1. BLOXHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONTEXT

A. Bloxham

- Bloxham is located in the north-west of Cherwell District some 7km from Banbury
- At the 2011 census, the population of Bloxham was 3374.
- The area covered by the plan is the whole parish of Bloxham.



B. Preparation of the plan

- The BNDP is being produced by the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.
- This group reports to the Parish Council which is the accountable body.
- The steering group is made up from volunteers who are residents of the parish.
- There have also been significant inputs from the wider community via working groups, meetings, questionnaires etc. This is more fully documented in the consultation documents.
- Cherwell District Council officers have also provided some advice and support.

C. The Cherwell context

Most of our plan was formulated at a time when planning in Cherwell was subject to the 1996 Local Plan. We were, however, fully aware of - and seeking to be consistent with - what was the emerging local plan. This latter has now become the adopted Local Plan (2015).

D. The Oxfordshire context

Oxfordshire County Council has responsibility for many aspects of the local infrastructure. In particular, they determine policy upon school places and highways both of which have especial significance with regard to the future development of Bloxham. They also have responsibility for important aspects of drainage although, at the time of writing, this responsibility seems to be in the process of moving to Cherwell D.C.

2. SUSTAINABILITY

The Bloxham Neighbourhood Development Plan (BNDP) has been prepared under the provisions of the Localism Act of 2011⁴ to guide the future development of Bloxham. It covers Bloxham Parish. A key aspect of its preparation has been consideration of sustainability: the likely impact of proposed policies upon environmental, social and economic outcomes.

A. Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

There is no requirement for neighbourhood plans to include a formal sustainability appraisal.⁵ We are not identifying specific locations for developments and **are NOT offering a formal SA.**

B. Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Regulations require that the SEA should describe the baseline environment in the neighbourhood in terms of:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| a) Nature conservation; | f) Soils and geology; |
| b) Landscape and townscape; | g) Water; |
| c) Heritage and archaeology; | h) Air quality; |
| d) Material assets; | i) Climatic factors. |
| e) Population and human health; | |

An SEA is only required of Neighbourhood Plans where the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects⁶. Deciding whether this is necessary is commonly referred to as a “screening” assessment. The requirements are set out in regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. These include a requirement to consult the environmental assessment consultation bodies: Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency.

- We submitted our draft plan to all three bodies at the pre-publication stage specifically asking for a formal opinion as to whether we need an SEA: each stated we did not. (See Appendix 2)
- We have also weighed the likely effects of the plan relative to the Local Plan alone. In all cases the environmental effects of the BNDP are equal to or better than the Local Plan alone.
- A pre-publication ‘health check’ recommended we seek Cherwell planning authority provide an independent SEA screening statement. Cherwell applied the SEA Directive criteria to examine the scope and impact of the BNDP. No significant environmental effects that had not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan were identified. Statutory consultees were re-consulted by Cherwell and they re-iterated the opinion that no SEA was necessary.

We conclude that under regulation 9(1) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004⁷ that the proposal is unlikely to have significant environmental effects and we are not required to provide an SEA.

C. Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

The NPPF is clear about the need to protect Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation.

The following are probably areas that might flag up the need for concern:

- a) Listed or proposed Ramsar sites;
- b) Special Areas of protection (SPAs)

⁴ [Localism Act 2011](#)

⁵ [Planning Advisory Service: NP and SA / SEA \(See also NPG para: 026\)](#)

⁶ [National Planning Guidance para 27](#)

⁷ [Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004](#)

- c) Special Areas of Conservation, (SACs)
- d) Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSIs)
- e) Natura 2000 sites (mostly SACs and SPAs)
- f) Oxon Biodiversity Action Plan Areas

Such areas and sites are identified in the Housing and Landscape report⁸ of our evidence base and Bloxham is more than 20km from any of them. We also note a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) was carried out on the adopted Cherwell Local Plan (2015) that concluded it would not lead to likely significant effects on Natura 2000 sites. Given that the Bloxham Plan is consistent with the Local Plan it seems reasonable to conclude that no detailed Habitats HRA is required.

3. INFLUENCES UPON THIS BNDP SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

The BNDP is strongly influenced by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Guidance (NPPG) and by the adopted Cherwell Local Plan (2015) and its supporting evidence base.

A. NPPF Core Principles

From the outset, our approach has been steered by the following 10 statements derived from the NPPF⁹ core principles.

1. Empower local people to shape their surroundings, setting out a positive vision for the future of the village.
2. Engage in a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the village.
3. Support sustainable economic development to deliver appropriate homes, business infrastructure.
4. Seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future residents and businesses
5. Recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of this rural village and its surrounding countryside and protect and enhance this.
6. Support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and encouraging energy and water efficiency.
7. Contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution.
8. Conserve heritage assets so that they can be enjoyed by future generations.
9. Manage growth to make the fullest use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus development sustainable locations.
10. Support local strategies to improve health, social cohesion and cultural wellbeing for all

B. Cherwell Local Plan (2015) Sustainability Appraisal (LPSA)

The LPSA includes the following:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 1. Sufficient homes | 10. Biodiversity |
| 2. Climate change and flood risk | 11. Countryside and historic environment |
| 3. Health and wellbeing | 12. Sustainable transport |
| 4. Poverty and social exclusion | 13. Use of local products |
| 5. crime and disorder | 14. Waste and recycling |
| 6. Vibrant communities | 15. Water |
| 7. Accessibility to all services | 16. Energy |
| 8. Efficiency of land use | 17. Employment |
| 9. Air pollution | 18. Economy |

C. Cherwell Local Plan Village Categorisation

Cherwell L.P. Part 1 has performed a high-level village categorisation (and update) which offers a 'broad-brush' assessment of village sustainability. This does not pretend to be either detailed or an

⁸ [Housing and Landscape report](#)

⁹ [National Planning Policy Guidance](#)

examination of environmental capacities. The detail is expected in the Local Plan Part 2 (which is not published at the time of writing) or in Neighbourhood Plans. All villages are to be considered for infill and conversions. Additionally more sustainable villages might also be considered for minor development. Important factors would be:

1. The size of the village and the level of service provision
2. The site's context within the existing built environment
3. Whether it is in keeping with the character and form of the village and its local landscape setting

Policy Villages 1 also notes that in the interests of meeting local housing need in rural areas, a limited allocation is also being made to enable the development of some new sites (for 10 or more dwellings) in the most sustainable locations. At this stage there is little indication as to how these might be allocated to the villages.

D. The Cherwell Rural Area Integrated Transport & Land Use Study Report

The Local Plan Categorisation draws heavily upon the CRAITLUS report.

CRAITLUS is also a high-level appraisal where categories are assigned without necessarily considering the capacity or detail of the infrastructure being described. The high-level criteria employed are:

1. Village Facilities
2. Public Transport Accessibility
3. Potential for Re-Routed Bus Services
4. Car Accessibility
5. Network Constraints
6. Travel Time and Distance

E. The BNDP Reports on Housing, Infrastructure and Recreation

These reports are much more detailed than the CRAITLUS report in the depth with which they look at the quality and capacity of the infrastructure. They are highly evidenced and indicate CRAITLUS may be appropriate for broad categorisations - which is what it was intended for – but does not work well at a deeper level for Bloxham where recent and ongoing development raise numerous serious sustainability concerns.

F. Pertinent Policies, Plans and Programmes

An illustrative list of important external documents pertinent to this sustainability report includes:

- a. [The Cherwell Local Plan \(1996\)](#)
- b. [Cherwell adopted Local Plan \(2015\)](#)
- c. [Cherwell Rural Areas Integrated Transport Land Use Study \(CRAITLUS\), 2009](#)
- d. [CRAITLUS Appendix](#)
- e. [Sustrans Walking and Cycling in Bloxham Report](#)
- f. [Bloxham NDP Evidence Base documents](#)
- g. [Bloxham Conservation Area Document](#)
- h. [Bloxham NDP Archaeological & Heritage data](#)
- i. [Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2030](#)
- j. [Connecting Oxfordshire: Local Transport Plan 2015-2031](#)
- k. [Oxfordshire's Rights of Way Management Plan 2015-2025](#)
- l. [Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment \(SHMA\) 2014](#)
- m. [Our District, Our Future A Sustainable Community Strategy for Cherwell 2010](#)
- n. [The Oxfordshire Local Investment Plan \(LIP\). Oxfordshire Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership \(SPIP\)](#)
- o. [Cherwell Low Carbon Environmental Strategy \(2012\)](#)
- p. [Cherwell Biodiversity Action Plan 2005-2010](#)
- q. [Cherwell District Council Housing Strategy \(2005-2011\)](#)
- r. [Cherwell's Housing Strategy for Older People 2009-2014, consultation draft-April 2009](#)
- s. [Cherwell Rural Strategy 2009-2014 \(April 2009\)](#)
- t. [Cherwell Recreation Strategy 2007-2012](#)

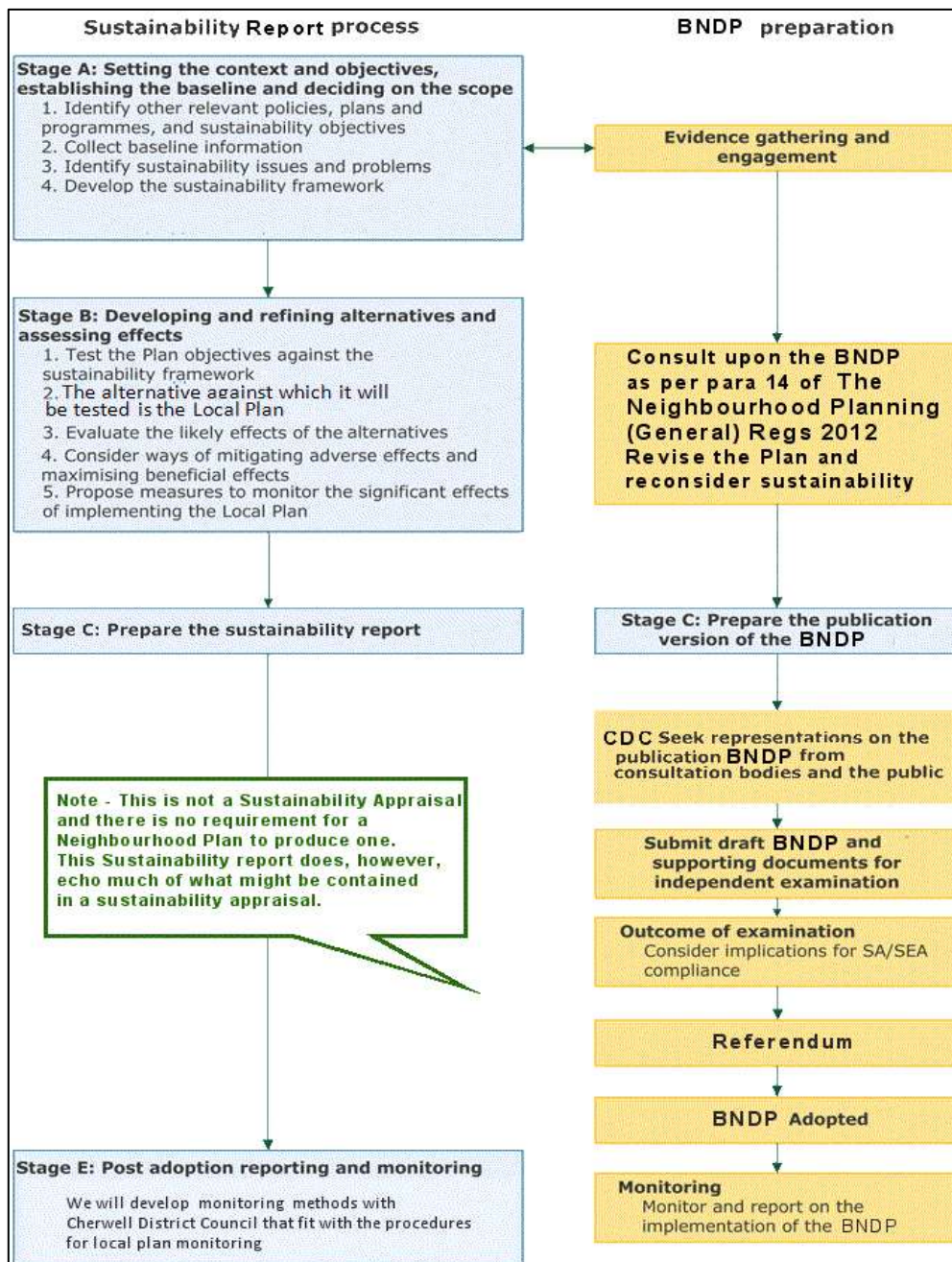
We will also make occasional use of footnotes on these pages to make access to evidence easier. More detailed data informing the sustainability has been incorporated into the three main pieces of documentary evidence informing this plan which contain around 400 additional references.

- BNDP Housing and landscape report
- BNDP Infrastructure and business report
- BNDP Recreation and leisure report

All are available from the documents section of the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan website:
www.bloxhamneighbourhoodplan.co.uk

4. THE GENERAL PROCESS OF CREATING THIS REPORT

Although this is not a formal sustainability Appraisal to a considerable extent its creation echoed the sustainability appraisal process.



5. BLOXHAM SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

A. Introduction

We have taken the following approach:

1. Establish the alternative(s) with which the BNDP policies will be compared;
2. Identify the issues and formulate criteria to draw upon when assessing sustainability changes;
3. Document the baseline situation going beyond the high-level CDC appraisal data where appropriate;
4. Create a grid of policy vs sustainability and record whether the BNDP policy impact is positive, neutral or negative relative to the alternative(s).

B. Neighbourhood Plan vs no Neighbourhood Plan?

In the absence of a Neighbourhood Plan development decisions in Bloxham would be controlled through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), National Planning Policy Guidance and the adopted Cherwell District Council Local Plan (2015).

We will look at the impact of the BNDP relative to both the past Local Plan (1996) and what at the time of writing was the emerging plan but has recently become the Adopted Local Plan (2015). I.e. we are comparing the likely outcome for identified BNDP sustainability issues in “Neighbourhood Plan vs No Neighbourhood Plan” scenarios.

C. The identified issues

The concerns of residents combined with an awareness of the preceding influences led to identification of the following sustainability issues for Bloxham.

These have been borne in mind throughout the planning process. Consequently, an awareness of them is woven deeply into our themes, objectives and policies.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Housing & Population | 9. Crime |
| 2. Heritage | 10. Accessibility |
| 3. Landscape/Visual Impact | 11. Air quality |
| 4. Travel and connectivity | 12. Biodiversity and habitats |
| 5. Flood risk | 13. Resources |
| 6. Business and the Economy | 14. Waste & Recycling |
| 7. Community cohesion | 15. Water |
| 8. Health & Well-being | 16. Energy |

D. Baseline situation – thumbnail

Here we examine the baseline situation for each of the sustainability issues identified above.

N.B. In this document we use statistics only where we think they clarify the point but you will find a mass of quantitative data contained in the reports on housing, infrastructure or recreation or the BNDP questionnaire results. All are available from the BNDP website¹⁰.

For each of the above issues we formulate questions that will allow us to consider the likely impact where planning is determined by the Local Plan with or without the neighbourhood plan. I.e. we are essentially using a criteria based approach to ascertain the impact of the neighbourhood plan.

¹⁰ <http://bloxhamneighbourhoodplan.co.uk/post-consultation-documents/>

1. Housing

1. Cherwell adopted Local Plan anticipates 750 planned and projects 754 windfall dwellings approved post-March2014 shared across the Category A villages with the majority being located in the more sustainable villages.
2. The extent of recent development in Bloxham means demand from those with a village connection is already largely satiated.
3. The distribution of dwellings across the rural areas does not appear in the adopted Local Plan Part 1. It will arise from the Local Plan Part 2 and via Neighbourhood Plans.
4. Cherwell has requirements concerning provision of affordable homes.
5. Do the types of new homes contribute to meeting the lifetime needs of all residents?

Do BNDP policies:

Ho1 Meet the housing needs of those with a village connection;

Ho2 Contribute to Cherwell DC's Policy Villages 1 allocation of houses to rural Cherwell;

Ho3 Contribute to Cherwell's requirements for affordable homes;

Ho4 Contribute to meeting the lifetime housing needs of a changing demographic.

2. Heritage

- a. The dominant feature is the church which is said to be amongst the top 100 in England.
- b. There are no scheduled ancient monuments, historic parks and gardens
- c. We have a very imposing public school that defines the northern gateway to the village.
- d. We have a large conservation area with many building dating back to medieval times.
- e. There have been various minor archaeological finds dating back to Roman times.
- f. There is a village museum.



Do BNDP policies enhance or protect:

He1 The historic character of the conservation area;

He2 Protect both designated and non-designated heritage assets?

3. Landscape/Visual Impact

- a. Even beyond the core conservation area Bloxham retains much of its rural character.
- b. Space, whether public or private, is a key component of this softer rural character.
- c. Materials and designs for dwellings and boundaries generally convey a rural feel.

Do BNDP policies enhance or protect:

- LV1 Key views from and of the conservation area including the historic Parish church and the stunning visual setting of the main Bloxham School building at the northern approach;
- LV2 Certain key vistas from the public right of way including Hobb Hill;
- LV3 Space within the village streetscape as an important element of rural character;
- LV4 Rural character by avoiding cumulative urbanisation resulting from use of inappropriate designs densities or materials?

4. Travel and connectivity

- a. Bloxham is not an easy place for pedestrians or cyclists. Streets are narrow and pavements alongside busy roads often inadequate or sometimes non-existent. Mobility impaired residents are particularly challenged and with an ageing population this gives rise for concern! (See Sustrans summary (Appendix 3) and map (Appendix 4)
- b. The Chipping-Norton to Banbury stretch of the A361 was listed as the 8th most dangerous road in England in the Road Safety Foundation (RSF) [2015 report](#). This busy road bisects the village and is an HGV rat-run from the M40 to the M5. The Bloxham mini-roundabout is already over-capacity and one of a number of traffic hot-spots. (See hot spots Appendix 5 and crash-map Appendix 6. It is also a TrafficMaster delays hot-spot.¹¹) Local employment is limited and we estimate 85% of residents who are not self-employed commute to Banbury or beyond for employment.
- c. Bus services are limited and Oxon CC is currently consulting on the nature of the cuts to this specific service. Given a-c) unsurprisingly levels of car ownership and use, even within the village, are much higher than both local and national averages.
- d. Parking facilities in the village are inadequate, in particular the A361 is a nightmare!
- e. Developments at the village periphery are well beyond the distance people will / can walk to the High Street and given lack of High St parking most drive on into Banbury for shopping.



Bloxham High Street Thursday 2:00 pm

¹¹ [Countywide congestion data map 2013-14](#)

Do BNDP policies ensure that new developments:

TC1 Protect or enhance low-carbon village connectivity for residents of all mobilities;

TC2 Offer adequate off-street parking avoiding problems within and around the development;

TC3 Avoid exacerbating existing traffic hot-spots?

5. Flood Risk

- a. Bloxham appears on flood-risk maps as a flood hot-spot and both fluvial and surface water flooding are recurring issues. (See Appendix 9)
- b. The village is built on areas of clay or ironstone both of which offer very poor drainage.
- c. The medieval part of the village does not have separate surface-water and foul-water drainage and so flooding incidents can be especially unpleasant!
- d. There are concerns about pumped drainage systems given the historically low resilience of the Bloxham electrical system (see section 16, energy.)

Do BNDP policies for all developments:

FR1 Encourage specific flood-risk assessments and sustainable drainage systems;

FR2 Avoid putting at risk the water supply or drainage of existing residents.

FR3 Involve fail-safe designs for electrically pumped drainage systems.



Bloxham Flooding

6. Business and the Economy

- a. Although most commute to Banbury and beyond for work a significant number are either employed or operate their own businesses working from home or within the village.
- b. There are four large workplaces: Bloxham Mill Business Centre, Bloxham School, Warriner School and the Primary School.
- c. There are shops, two pubs, a garage and a car workshop that provide some jobs.
- d. We estimate there are around 250 businesses run in or from Bloxham.
- e. The most often mentioned impediment to business is poor mobile phone coverage.



Bloxham – Four large workplaces

Do policies encourage:

BE1 Start-ups and microbusinesses:

BE2 Working from home where this is compatible with a residential area

BE3 Better digital communication, especially mobile coverage?

7. Community Cohesion

- a. There are a many clubs and activities but only around 30% of residents participate. There are currently two pubs and two active churches which contribute to community cohesion.
- b. New developments have their own play areas and whole village play areas are somewhat “tired.” This disincentivises recreational integration of the children of new residents
- c. Poor general village connectivity and a tendency for new developments to be cul-de-sac designs reduce integration opportunities for new residents whilst walking.
- d. There are good state schools but capacity, especially of the primary school, is already a problem. If this plan is implemented there should be sufficient places in the medium term but still problems over the coming 3-4 years (whilst catchment areas change) in accommodating every Bloxham family. Oxon.C.C. note, “ Further housing development in the short-medium term would bring a significant risk that even some children living within the village, applying on time for a school place, may not be able to secure a place at the school. This would be detrimental to community cohesion and sustainability.”

- e. 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.

Do policies:

CC1 Protect and enhance whole-village indoor and outdoor recreation areas;

CC2 Offer green corridors that further foster pedestrian connectivity;

CC3 Respect parental choice and minimise primary pupil out of village placements;

CC4 Improve the general satisfaction of people with their neighbourhood?

8. Health and well-being

- a. The residents of Bloxham have better health than the district and UK average¹².
- b. Residents score low on deprivation¹³ and high on the size and quality of accommodation.
- c. There is a good quality medical centre in the village although, like many, they are struggling to recruit enough GPs to share the load of the expanding population¹⁴. Obviously there are implications for the time to gain appointments and in Bloxham successive years of improvements in the percentage gaining an appointment on the same or next day has recently gone into steep decline with the figures used in the GP Survey report published in 2015 moving from 53% to 40%: significantly below the national average of 48%¹⁵.
- d. There is a dentist but likewise they seem not to have the capacity to match recent village expansion. They are still accepting patients but explaining they may well have to attend their Banbury surgery for treatment.
- e. There is a local pharmacy. It offers a “to the door,” normally next day, delivery service.
- f. Pre-school childcare provision is struggling to accommodate increased demand. A doubling of childcare was promised in a very recent election pledge¹⁶. It is not yet clear how or where the capacity to offer this will come about in Bloxham.
- g. We do not have data for resident participation in physical activity but suspect it is above average¹⁷. Recent village expansion has not provided any new pitches and this will shortly emerge as an increasing issue¹⁸.

Do policies:

HW1 Protect or enhance resident access to village pre-schools , health facilities and sport?

9. Crime

- a. Crime-maps confirm that by national standards Bloxham is a low crime area.
- b. Bloxham does suffer some crime such as anti-social behaviour and criminal damage.
- c. There are links between the parish council via Neighbourhood Action Groups and Neighbourhood Watch.
- d. There is a local view, supported by the police¹⁹, that parking courts encourage crime.

¹² [ONS Health](#)

¹³ [Deprivation Maps](#)

¹⁴ [RCGP GP shortages across England.](#)

¹⁵ [GP Patient survey national Report](#)

¹⁶ [BBC – Election pledges](#)

¹⁷ [Everybody active every day 2014](#)

¹⁸ [See BNDP Recreation report – Section 8: Green Space areas](#)

¹⁹ [Secured By Design Sect 16: Parking](#)

Are policies likely to:
Cr1 Reduce the likelihood of crime in Bloxham?

10. Access to services

Bloxham, like most of the UK, has an ageing population and we must therefore anticipate an increase in mobility issues. Considerations of access to facilities and services need to be made within this context.

- a. Research shows²⁰ that people in general are reluctant to walk more than around 500m to facilities: considerably less if encumbered with children or with mobility issues. This means the main facilities are likely to be accessible on foot only by a small proportion of residents who live predominantly in what approximates to the old conservation area. I.e. none of the newer estates.
- b. A recently commissioned Sustrans report makes clear connectivity is poor and parking is poor. Walking is not easy and mobility scooter users are simply unable to access services from many of the recent estates. Most central village facilities and services could accommodate mobility challenged users if only they were able to get there!



Do policies
AS1 Ensure genuine connectivity and access to services both an ageing population.

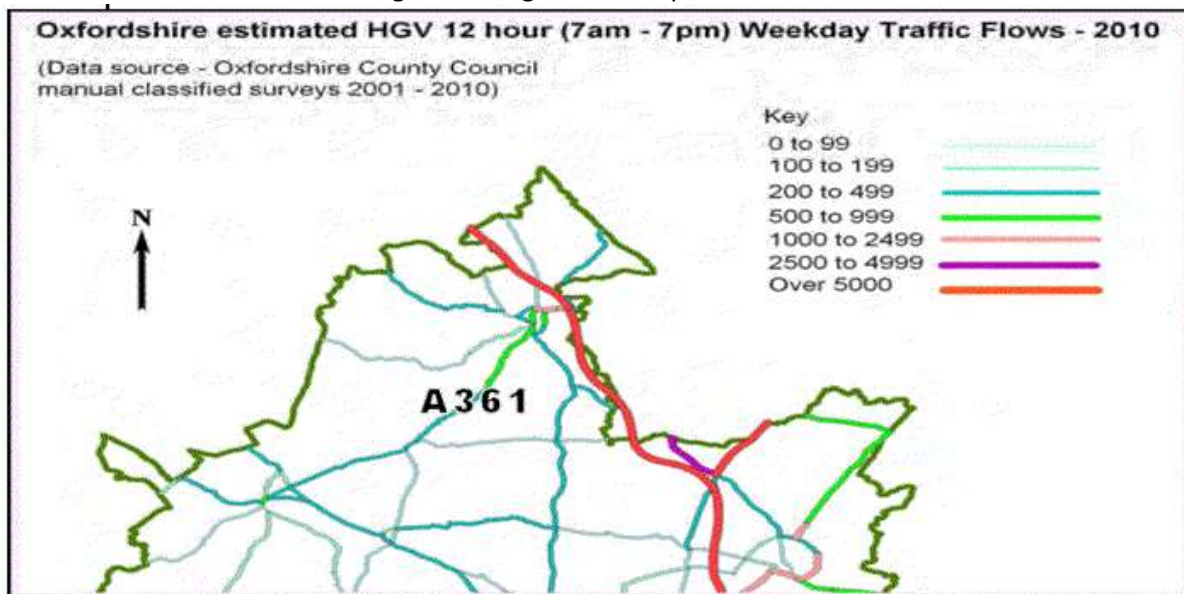


Bloxham from the south-east. A minority have genuine pedestrian access to fresh food.

²⁰ See Housing Report – Bloxham Retail Facilities

11. Air Quality

- The Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan shows that in addition to cars and an increasing number of 'white vans' the A361 carries between 500 and 1000 HGVs per day through the narrow village streets. This is raising increasing concerns about air-quality.
- We do not have measures of air quality but a study is currently being undertaken.
- Traffic is a hugely emotive issue in the village. Developments that minimise additional vehicle movement through the village are to be preferred.



The A361 has a flow of 500 to 1000 HGV per day

Are policies likely to:

AQ1 Reduce the likelihood of poor air quality in Bloxham?

12. Resources

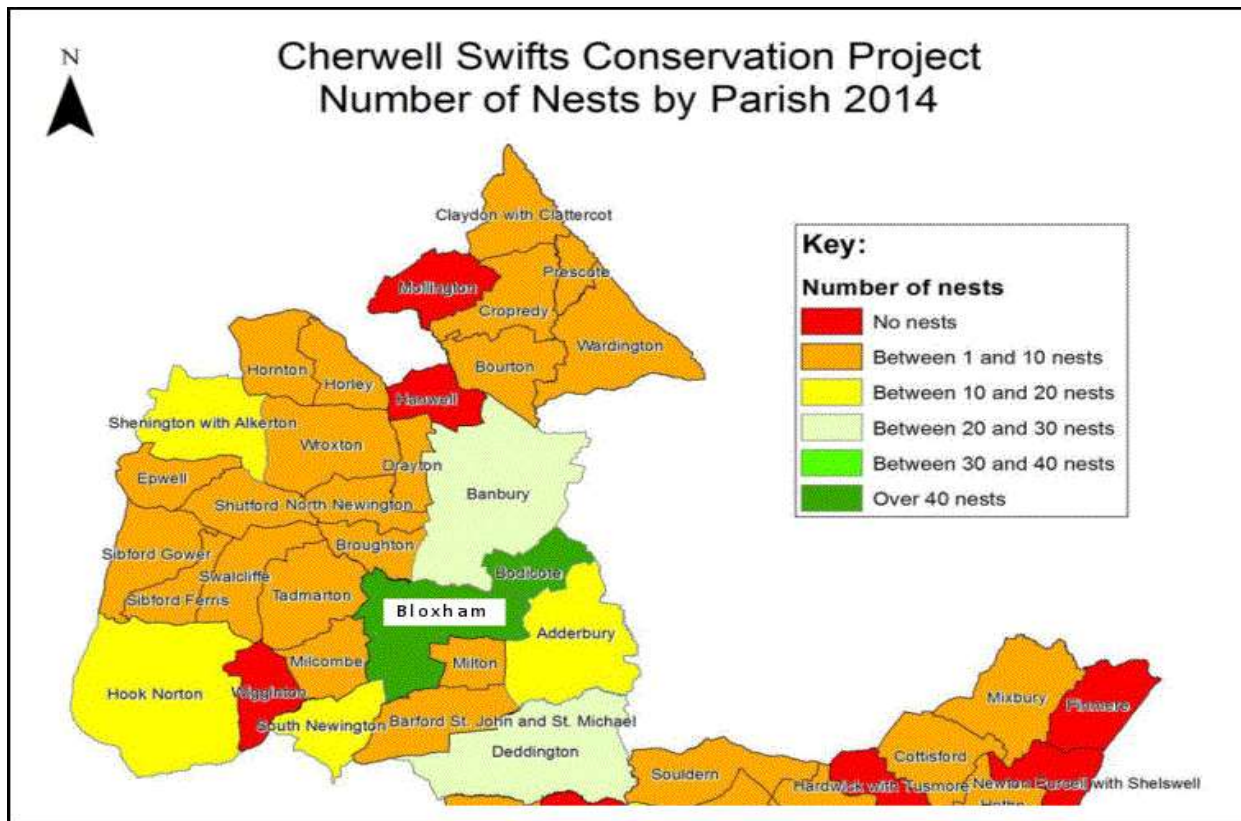
The village does not offer any major natural material resources beyond the value of its buildings, agricultural land, and historic character.

Do policies:

Re1 Take proper account of Bloxham's key resources?

13. Biodiversity and habitats

- Bloxham is 25km from any Ramsar or Natura 2000 sites.
- It is not in an ANOB or any other protected category but the past Local Plan (1996) describes it as an area high landscape value. (This term is not retained into the adopted plan.)
- Recent surveys show the village is a significant nesting area for swifts.
- Bats are also quite common but we do not have quantitative data on this.
- It has a nature reserve the bird-life of which has led to a national publication.
- A village hedgerow survey exists which identifies more significant hedgerows.
- There is also a significant quantity of ridge and furrow field within and around the village.



Do Policies:

BH1 Not endanger Natura2000 or other sensitive environmental sites.

BH2 Enhance or at a minimum avoid or mitigate loss of local biodiversity including trees, hedgerows, nesting areas for birds and bats and ridge & furrow fields.

14. Waste & Recycling

- a. Bloxham has waste recycling bins near the state secondary school that are well used.
- b. There is a two weekly recycling collection cycle.

Do Policies:

WR1 Decrease waste and encourage increased recycling?

15. Water

- a. Bloxham is in a district of water shortage.
- b. Bloxham is built on impermeable clay or ironstone and so more extensive water-harvesting might lessen both water-shortage and run-off flooding issues.
- c. Following the construction of a new pumping station in Milton (3km away) a year or so ago there have been multiple pipe-bursts along the Milton Road. Thames Water is building a new water main running from the Oxford direction to Milton but have no plans to continue the main into Bloxham: the village with greatest growth!

Do policies:

Wa1 Encourage high levels of water efficiency exceeding that in the basic building regulations?

16. Energy

- a. There is a reliable gas supply but the electricity supply comes at the end of a long power-line and the infrastructure and business report and BNDP questionnaires provide evidence of its unreliability, especially in bad weather. This is a cause for concern given the increasing use of pumped drainage on Bloxham developments. (We know Western Power Distribution is investing heavily in improving the capacity and resilience of the Bloxham supply although so far to only limited effect.)

Do policies:

En1 Encourage greater resilience of the electrical system

En2 Mitigate any flood impacts of electrical failures?

6. POTENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES

A. Infrastructure and developers

We know that there should be a positive approach to securing infrastructure rather than using any deficit as an excuse to avoid development.

The Parish Council has liaised on many occasions with Cherwell D.C. and Oxon C.C. to seek appropriate planning obligations to improve infrastructure as part of new developments

B. Understanding Infrastructure

In our efforts to ascertain baseline infrastructure and investigate potential improvements we have produced the BNDP Infrastructure and Business report which runs to almost 150 pages and includes around 200 references to other pertinent documents.

We have also commissioned expert reports, (e.g. On traffic and low-carbon connectivity) and have worked hard at liaising directly with infrastructure providers to understand how existing or emerging deficits might be improved.

C. Infrastructure providers

We have also been highly active establishing the situation regarding what is feasible and what is not.

Who we have liaised with

We have liaised directly with:

- The Environment Agency regarding better flood prevention;
- Thames Water regarding pressure and continuity issues;
- Western Power Distribution (WPD) regarding capacity and resilience of the power supply;
- Southern Gas Networks (SGN) regarding the impact of increased gas demand;
- Oxfordshire Broadband regarding better broadband;
- The Mobile Operators Association regarding mobile phone coverage.
- Cornerstone Telecommunications Infrastructure Ltd (CTIL) regarding O2 and Vodafone mobile coverage.
- Oxfordshire County Council regarding school capacity;
- Schools regarding joint-use pitch agreements;
- Oxfordshire Highways regarding: HGV routing, improvements to the mini-roundabout and several issues pertaining to pedestrian and cycle movement.
- The Health centre regarding ability to cope with increased capacity.

Infrastructure progress

On some of these we are seeing progress such as:

- The environment agency is now modelling flood prevention strategies;
- WPD are investing heavily in improving Bloxham’s electrical capacity and resilience ;
- SGN have modelled the consequences of additional demand;
- Superfast broadband should be available to most by the end of 2015.

Infrastructure constraints

Other issues are more intractable. For example:

- Oxfordshire Highways have not yet, as required as a condition of earlier developments, produced any strategy to address under-capacity and poor design of the mini-roundabout;
- The Sustrans report notes several pedestrian pinch-points along busy but narrow roads where improvements are unlikely to be feasible.
- There is no available land in the village centre that can be used to solve parking issues.
- Provision of additional primary school places is not deemed efficient or feasible by Oxon C.C.
- Bloxham surgery could, in theory, expand provision. In reality efforts to recruit additional doctors remain unsuccessful and hard data clearly shows increasing waiting times.
- Securing additional appropriate land for sports pitches seems not to be a realistic prospect.
- Thames Water were keen we added a policy requiring developers at the earliest stage of the application process to check water and drainage are actually possible without adversely affecting existing residents.
- Mobile phone operators seem highly resistant to any proper engagement. It seems that planned changes may improve speeds for those who already have good mobile coverage but do little to address “not-spot” issues suffered by a large proportion of residents and businesses.

D. Infrastructure Summary

1. Irrespective of the plan recommendations we can expect in excess of 220 new dwellings during the period of this plan that will make additional demands upon the infrastructure.
2. Improvements to many of the utilities (gas, electricity, water, broadband and mobile) are perfectly feasible subject to proportionate and timely action by the utility providers.
3. The situation with water supply, drainage and flooding remains an issue.
4. Connectivity whether vehicle, pedestrian or cycle is much less sustainable than higher-level reports such as CRAITLUS would infer. Despite discussions on improvements no solutions have been forthcoming. Cyclists within the village are already an endangered species. We predict that even extant permissions will further exacerbate safety concerns about the capacity and safety of existing footpaths potentially creating a negative feedback loop whereby ever fewer people see walking as a safe, viable option.
5. Education, especially of primary age pupils, is already a (hopefully temporary) issue leading to an unsustainable situation over the coming 3 – 5 years. If the dwelling numbers proposed in this plan are accepted then, along with planned changes to admission patterns and catchment areas a match between school capacity and village children should return after the first 3-5 years.

7. VILLAGE CATEGORISATION.

A. Why a more detailed look at sustainability?

1. The adopted Cherwell Local Plan (2015) Policy Villages 1 produces a high-level categorisation based largely on the 2009 CRAITLUS report and its recent desk-based update.
2. This categorises Bloxham as amongst the most sustainable Cherwell villages.
3. It uses a tick-box scoring system focusing largely upon the presence or absence of facilities
4. It does not consider the capacity of those facilities.
Examples of this would be:
 - has a school ✓ – without noting it's full and not suitable for expansion.
 - has shops ✓ – without noting they are out of walking range of potential developments
5. The CRAITLUS categorisation does not to work well in Bloxham where recent and rapid development has already heavily impacted the prevailing infrastructure giving rise to capacity issues on schools, connectivity, drainage and recreation such that affordable S106 mitigation contributions alone are increasingly unlikely to offer satisfactory solutions.

BNDP carries out this deeper examination as part of our neighbourhood planning process: see later.

B. CRAITLUS-Plus - Update for Bloxham

This document looks at the criteria used for the high-level CRAITLUS report and supplements it with the more detailed data from the BNDP work.

We do not present the detailed evidence here however such evidence is readily available in the three main BNDP reports on the documents section of the BNDP website.

The “BNDP CRAITLUS-Plus” system (last column takes an evidenced look at the impact of further development specifically in Bloxham.

+1 means the criteria is met with a positive result for village sustainability.

0 means the facility exists but the CRAITLUS criteria are not well met.

-1 means a significantly negative result for village sustainability

CRAITLUS-PLUS A more detailed look at sustainability in Bloxham

Criterion	CRAITLUS Yes / No	CRAITLUS Criteria	More detailed N.P. observations	
Children’s nurseries	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	It provides local education potentially accessible to the residents of a village	Nursery provision exists It is already finely balanced and most certainly will not have the premises capacity to accommodate all village children if / when the government enacts its pledge of 30 hrs childcare. ❖ Outcome – likely more peak-time vehicle movements into and out of the village for childcare which does not represent sustainable behaviour.	0
Primary schools	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	It provides local education potentially accessible to the residents of a village	Oxon C.C. note the school is full and not suitable for expansion. Additional pupils will have to be driven to other villages. Proposed changes in catchment area and the impact of “distance from school” criteria will gradually reduce the number of non-Bloxham students. In around 3 or 4 years from now – if we accommodate the levels of development proposed in this plan – then the school situation should return to sustainable. ²¹ Expansion beyond the level proposed in this plan will negatively impact both sustainability and community cohesion. ²² ❖ Outcome – Development beyond the levels proposed in this plan mean more peak-time vehicle movements to schools elsewhere: anti-sustainable.	-1
Retail/services/businesses	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Provide a service and could provide employment for local people	The biggest employers are the three schools. Many of their jobs will go to non-residents but they also provide some useful employment for residents. The majority - we estimate 85%- of those not working at home travel to Banbury or beyond for work. We also estimate around 250+ people run their own businesses often from home or the Bloxham Mill Business Park. This plan encourages home-working and start-ups. ❖ Outcome – employment in the village confers some sustainability.	+1

²¹ See Pre-publication consultation comments from Oxon CC Education.

²² Interestingly for Bicester the CDC Local Plan (2015) states all new developments should be within 800m of a primary school. In Bloxham only 1 out of the 5 most recent development permissions would have complied with such criteria.

Retail outlets (food);	☑	It provides essential items (food and drink) for residents, in particular for those not able to travel longer distances	<p>Only the High Street offers <i>fresh</i> food. (There is also a garage that offers a limited range of mostly processed, foodstuffs.)</p> <p>Research data on the maximum distance people will walk to do this type of shopping offers a figure of 400 to 500m which falls to 250m for adults who are elderly or those encumbered by young children.²³ This fits the observed reality of Bloxham. Most development land is at least 1km away on foot and often poorly connected.²⁴ Additionally High St parking is a nightmare which means people setting out by vehicle to use the High Street frequently end up driving by into Banbury for food shopping.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Outcome – The High Street offers neither pedestrian access nor easy parking for vehicle access. More vehicle movements to Banbury is not sustainable. 	0
Post office	☑	It provides a postal service particularly for older people	<p>We have a High Street post-office though not within walking distance of potential new developments – particularly for older people. (See above)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Outcome – most older people will NOT have realistic pedestrian access to the P.O. and so this criterion is not met. Not sustainable. 	0
Public houses	☑	It provides food and drink for local people and visitors	<p>We have two village pubs. There is also a third pub that residents hope may be re-opened one day!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Outcome – the pubs are an important element of community cohesion which contributes to social sustainability. 	+1
Recreational facilities	☑	Recreation areas provide facilities for local people, particularly for young people to play and socialise	<p>Extant permissions will leave Bloxham short of outdoor recreation space.²⁵ (Bloxham FC already travel to Banbury for practice.) We are seeking joint use agreements with schools as part of this plan to restore us to the recommended level. The P.C. is seeking to upgrade existing recreation areas with S106 money but no additional appropriate land seems likely to be made available for additional pitches.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Outcome – Additional demand for pitches will mean more travel to pitches elsewhere. This cannot be construed as sustainable behaviour. 	0

²³ [See Section on Bloxham retail in BNDP Housing and landscape report](#)

²⁴ [See Sustrans report of Bloxham](#)

²⁵ [See section on green-space formula and data in BNDP Recreation Report.](#)

community facilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	It provides a social focus for the community	We have a 'historically random' collection of rather small village halls ²⁶ none of which have adequate parking. Improving one of these forms part of this plan. No additional appropriate land seems likely to be made available for a Hall that properly matches the needs of a village with a population heading for 4000. ❖ Outcome – Planned improvements will provide a better but not wholly adequate solution. To a degree this can offer sustainable behaviour	+1
other services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dentist It provides dental treatment for the community	We have a dental practice and they do seek to accommodate all Bloxham residents but the rapid village expansion means that increasingly residents are asked to attend the Banbury dental surgery for treatment. ❖ Outcome – more vehicle movements likely. This cannot really be regarded as sustainable behaviour.	0
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Doctors It provides medical treatment for the community	We have a doctors' surgery that functions across Bloxham and Hook Norton both of which are expanding villages. The times for an appointment to be seen by a doctor have, according to figures published in 2015 GP survey, got significantly worse than either the previous 3 years or the national average. ²⁷ ❖ Outcome – extended delays in access to a doctor, probably resulting in more visits to A&E cannot be regarded as contributing to social sustainability.	0
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Secondary School It provides secondary education for the community	Warriner School is full but has a significant number of out-of catchment pupils. Bloxham families are unlikely to experience admission problems if we receive the housing numbers envisaged in this plan. (Satellite villages may not be so lucky.) Oxon C.C. has requested we include expansion of the secondary school in our final plan ²⁸ but they have been unable to indicate the scale or nature of this. Clearly they anticipate capacity issues in the wider locality.. ❖ Outcome - the secondary school should accommodate local families. In theory this represents sustainable behaviour although in practice - because of poor pedestrian connectivity - many still arrive by car.	+1

²⁶ [See section on indoor spaces in BNDP Recreation Report.](#)

²⁷ [See BNDP Infrastructure and Business Report](#) or [GP Patient survey for raw data](#)

²⁸ [See Pre-publication consultation response from Oxon CC](#)

Bus Service to urban centre	5.4km ☑	People have the opportunity to travel by means other than the private car to the urban centres and elsewhere	A bus service exists but is not well matched 21C lifestyles – especially employment where flexibility is now the rule. ²⁹ Although 17% make <i>some</i> use of public transport to get to Banbury for shopping or entertainment less than 5% use it to get to work ³⁰ . Weekend services are already limited on Saturday and non-existent on Sunday and recent Oxon CC announcements of sweeping cuts to this service ³¹ raise questions over reasonable public transport access to work in urban centres (See Appendix 8) ❖ Outcome – public transport – especially to work and to hospitals – is already frequently problematic and looks set to worsen. Nonetheless by rural standards we will regard this as conferring a degree of sustainability.	+1
Population	☑	A village is more sustainable if it has a higher population as this population is more likely to provide custom, helping to maintain a service or facility	Population may be a useful indicator of sustainability for small villages but is of limited application when considering villages the size of Bloxham ³² where further expansion at the periphery creates developments out of walking distance of services. With regard to retail High St footfall is limited not by population but by parking for which neither the BNDP, Cherwell DC nor Oxon C.C. have any proposed solutions. Additional population, far from improving the viability of services such as health, education and parking does the exact opposite.(See above) ❖ Outcome – expanding the population by placing developments beyond reasonable walking distance of services cannot be construed as likely to generate sustainable behaviour.	0
Score	13 ✓			+4

Conclusion

We do not intend defending the precise score obtained on BNDP CRAITLUS-Plus although we think we have actually assigned points rather generously! We simply point out that looking at the detail paints a drastically different picture of sustainability to the high-level CRAITLUS categorisation. We note also para 216 from the Cherwell Local Plan (2016) Examiners report³³ published after the above analysis. It states this with regard the CRAITLUS update: “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.” We consider this document a contribution towards that.

²⁹ [Guardian – Britain’s labour market flexibility.](#)

³⁰ [See BNDP Main Questionnaire Q 19-22.](#)

³¹ [Banbury Guardian 15th May 2015:](#)

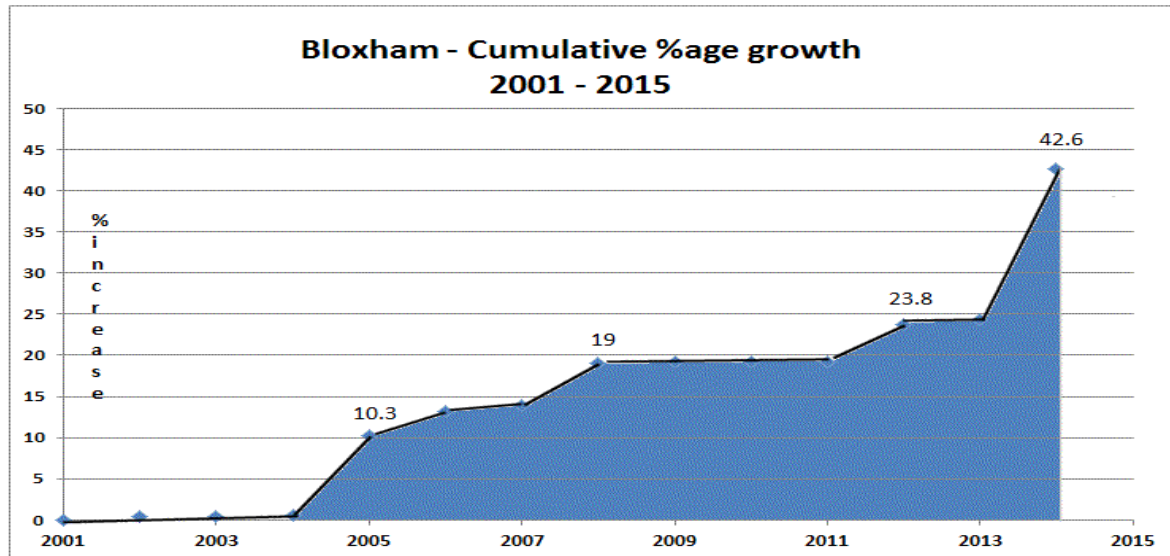
³² [Taylor Review on the Rural Economy \(2008\)](#)

³³ [Cherwell Local Plan Inspector’s Report with Main modifications](#)

C. Proposed number of houses for Bloxham 2015 - 31

Background context

The village is still playing “infrastructure catch-up” on rapid expansion in the very recent past.



Bloxham Housing Need

The Oxfordshire Rural Community Council carried out a housing Need survey in 2014.³⁴

Because of the extensive development that has taken place in Bloxham in recent years there were very few people with a village connection seeking homes of any kind in Bloxham. The handful who did were not on the housing register and sought homes to purchase, not rent. The housing numbers proposed in this plan would fulfil this need several times over.

Basically Bloxham has provided so many affordable homes in recent years that anyone on the housing register with a village connection who wanted one has got one! (See Appendix 7)

Consistency with the NPPF

The NPPF has an assumption in favour of sustainable development and during the period of this plan Bloxham will see a minimum of 220 new dwellings: 85 from pre-existing but unbuilt permissions. The number of dwellings recommended by the plan takes account of the sustainability issues raised in the preceding BNDP CRAITLUS-Plus assessment. Whilst the sustainability concerns cover a range of issues such as community facilities, pedestrian access to services and generally poor low-carbon connectivity. A key concern remains primary school capacity. Our housing numbers are calculated to achieve the likelihood of return to primary school admission for all children of residents within the Oxon CC pupil place plans. There will be an inevitable period of 3 - 5 years when we know we will have admission problems as a result of previously permitted developments after which there should be a reasonable match between pupil numbers and school capacity.

Para 72 of the NPPF notes “The Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places” and our choice of 85 plus minor development takes proper account of this.

Consistency with the past Local Plan.

Both the past and the adopted Local Plans focus the majority of development to the main urban areas. This was the adopted plan at the time this report was written but has now been superseded.

³⁴ [ORCC Bloxham NP Survey](#)

Consistency with the adopted Local Plan (2015)

The adopted Local Plan (2015) sets a March 2014 deadline for its housing trajectory.

- Permissions before that will not be considered to contribute to their new Local Plan trajectory
- Permissions after that will be considered to contribute to their new Local Plan trajectory.

Bloxham will see at least 220 new dwellings constructed during the plan period

- 135 of which permissions granted before March 2014
- 85 from permission granted after March 2014.
- There will be additional small scale development under Policy BL2 of this plan.

The latter two will contribute to the Local Plan trajectory.

Cherwell Policy Villages 1: How many dwellings?

- Assigns 750 dwellings across the Cherwell villages. It also projects 754 windfall dwellings across the entire rural area;
- Permissions granted after 31 March 2014 will contribute in meeting the above numbers
- It categorises villages (A- to C) with a view to directing unplanned, small-scale development towards those villages best able to accommodate growth.
- Category C villages are suitable only for infill or conversion.
- Category A (Service Centres) and Category B (Satellite Villages) are additionally considered suitable for minor development as well as infilling and conversions.
- With regard to infill Policy 1 Villages notes many spaces in village streets are important and cannot be filled without detriment to the village character.
- An allocation is also being made to enable the development of some new sites (for 10 or more dwellings) in the most sustainable locations

There are:

- 25 category A villages,
- 11 Category B villages
- 35 Category C villages

Policy Villages 2: Ways of distributing houses

How the 750 planned and 754 projected windfall dwellings are distributed across the villages is to be set out in Policy Villages 2 and Neighbourhood Plans.

There is a section on Housing Need in the Housing and Landscape report which provides detailed calculations of the figures below:

Option 1 divides the projected total by all the villages earmarked for development. Options 2-4 make a conservative assumption that only 100 of the 1504 go to Category B and C villages and shares out the rest according to three different criteria.

Method of allocating	To Bloxham	
1. Equally share between all Category A and B villages	3%	42 dwellings
2. Equally between Category A villages	4%	56 dwellings
3. In proportion to existing number of dwellings	7%	98 dwellings
4. In proportion to existing population	7.5%	104 dwellings

Conclusion

In the light of the evidence thus far we are recommending a total of 85 dwellings plus further minor development, infill and conversions (as per Policy BL2) during the Plan period. This is entirely consistent with both the adopted and emerging Local Plans.

8. BNDP THEMES , OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

A. Themes and Objectives

Themes and objectives are what eventually gave rise to our policies.

Theme	Objective
1. Delivering 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 existing properties.
2. Protecting and enhancing our rural heritage	A. All developments within the conservation area should protect and enhance this area and accord with the Conservation Area document.
	B. Development outside of the conservation area should protect, enhance and contribute to the rural character of the village as a whole.
	C. Developments should recognise that lower density and the role played by public and private open space is a significant component of rural character. 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.
3. Promoting economic vitality	A. Safeguard land currently associated with generating employment. Encourage buildings and services that cater for the start-up and expansion of micro and small businesses
	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.

B. BNDP Themes and objectives - consistency with the Higher Plans

Part of the policy-making process has entailed keeping an eye on consistency with the NPPF and Cherwell plans. The following is meant to be an illustrative rather than encyclopaedic list.

Broad Aim	NPPF	1996 Plan	Emerging Plan	BNDP Policy
1A Housing	47	RUR 2 2.60-64	BSC1 & Villages 1	BL1 - 2
1B Low carbon connectivity	17, 38-9	TR2, T7-10, 5.5, 5.12	SO13 B181 ESD16 (C208)	BL3 -5
1C Climate Change	99-103	ENV8, EN11, 10.16	ESD1, ESD6, B181	BL6 -7
1D Demographic Change	50, (159)	C32	SO7, A9, A14, A20-2	BL8
1E Regard for existing amenity	58-9	-	B83	BL9
2A Conservation area	126-7	9.47-54	ESD10, ESD13,	B10
2B Enhance village character	17, 56-64, 125-6	C22-3,C26-8 H6	ESD16 B272, C211, C218	B11
2C Role of open space and visual impact	75, 109,	R1 RUR 3 9.52 R4, 6.43	BSC10, ESD18, B275, B279-80 B84, B86 ESD13	BL12
3A Safeguard employment land	21	H20, 284	B36	BL13
3B Support small businesses	7, 19-21, 40	3.50	SLE1, B34, B40	BL14
3C Improved digital networks	42- 45			BL15
3D Emerging retail need	(23)			BL16
4A Protect Open spaces public rights of way	109, 267 17, 29	R1 RUR 3 9.52 TR2 T7-10 5.5 5.12	BSC10, ESD18,B275, B279-80, C211 SO13, B181, ESD16	BL17
4B Recreational Facilities	73-5 77	6.35-7, R4, 6.43	BSC11 -12	BL33-4
4C School capacity & village cohesion	38	OA1	BSC7, INF1	BL9d
4D Walking and cycling	17, 38-9	TR2, T7-10, 5.5, 5.12	SO13 B181 ESD16 (C208)	BL3

9. CHECKING SUSTAINABILITY.

In the absence of a Neighbourhood Plan development decisions in Bloxham would be controlled through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) / National Planning Policy guidance and the adopted or the emerging CDC Local Plan.

As set out in Section 4 we used the questions formulated for each of the listed issues to consider whether our Neighbourhood Plan policies makes the likely outcomes regarding sustainability better or worse than the “No Neighbourhood Plan” scenario.

A. Summary of the sustainability findings

In the interests of brevity we tabulate the issues vs the 4 Themes rather than every individual policy.

Key:

+	NP offers better sustainability than the emerging Local Plan
	NP offers at least equal sustainability to the alternative emerging Local Plan alone or is not especially applicable to this particular theme
-	NP offers demonstrably worse sustainability than the Local Plan alone.

No.	Sustainability Issue	Neighbourhood Plan Themes			
		Houses the village needs	Our rural heritage	Economic Vitality	Healthy Cohesive Community
1	Housing & Population	+			
2	Heritage		+		
3	Landscape/Visual Impact		+		
4	Travel and connectivity	+		+	+
5	Flood risk				+
6	Business and the Economy			+	
7	Community cohesion				+
8	Health & Well-being				+
9	Crime	+			+
1	Access to services	+		+	+
11	Air quality				+
12	Biodiversity and habitats	+	+		+
12	Resources				
13	Waste				
14	Water				
15	Energy				

10. OVERALL CONCLUSION

We find that the impact of the Neighbourhood Plan policies upon the above sustainability issues is either positive or else make little or no contribution because district level policies are already appropriate at parish level.

11. MONITORING

Measures for monitoring the significant effects of implementing the Neighbourhood Plan need to be developed with Cherwell District Council as they develop further the monitoring measures associated with the implementation of the Cherwell Local Plan.

12. APPENDICES

1. Sustainability Check-list

Do BNDP policies offer better, equal or worse sustainability than the Local plan on the items below?

Ho1 Meet the housing needs of those with a village connection;

Ho2 Contribute to Cherwell DC's Policy Villages 1 allocation of houses to rural Cherwell;

Ho3 Contribute to Cherwell's requirements for affordable homes;

Ho4 Contribute to meeting the lifetime housing needs of a changing demographic?

He1 Enhance or protect the historic character of the conservation area;

He2 Enhance or protect both designated and non-designated heritage assets?

LV1 Enhance or protect key views from and of the conservation area including the Parish church and the stunning visual setting of the main Bloxham School building at the northern approach;

LV2 Enhance or protect key views to and from the public rights of way especially Hobb Hill;

LV3 Enhance or protect space within the village streetscape as an important element of rural character;

LV4 Enhance or protect rural character by avoiding cumulative urbanisation resulting from use of inappropriate designs densities or materials?

TC1 Ensure that new developments contribute to improved low-carbon village connectivity for residents of all mobilities;

TC2 Ensure that new developments improve or at least not exacerbate existing parking problems;

TC3 | Ensure that new developments improve or avoid exacerbating traffic hot-spots?

FR1 For all developments provide site specific flood-risk assessments and sustainable drainage systems FR2 Avoid putting at risk the water supply or drainage of existing residents..

FR3 For all developments involve fail-safe designs for electrically pumped drainage systems.

BE1 Encourage start-ups & microbusinesses:

BE2 Encourage working from home;

BE3 Encourage better digital communication, especially mobile coverage?

CC1 Protect and enhance whole-village indoor and outdoor recreation areas;

CC2 Offer green corridors that further foster pedestrian connectivity?

CC3 Respect parental choice and minimise primary pupil out of village placements.

CC4 Improve the satisfaction of people with their neighbourhood?

HW1 protect or enhance resident access to village pre-schools , health facilities and sport?

Cr1 Reduce the likelihood of crime in Bloxham?

AS1 Ensure genuine connectivity and access to services for an ageing population?

AQ1 Reduce the likelihood of poor air quality in Bloxham?

Re1 Take account of and protect Bloxham's key resources?

BH1 Not endanger Natura2000 or other sensitive environmental sites.

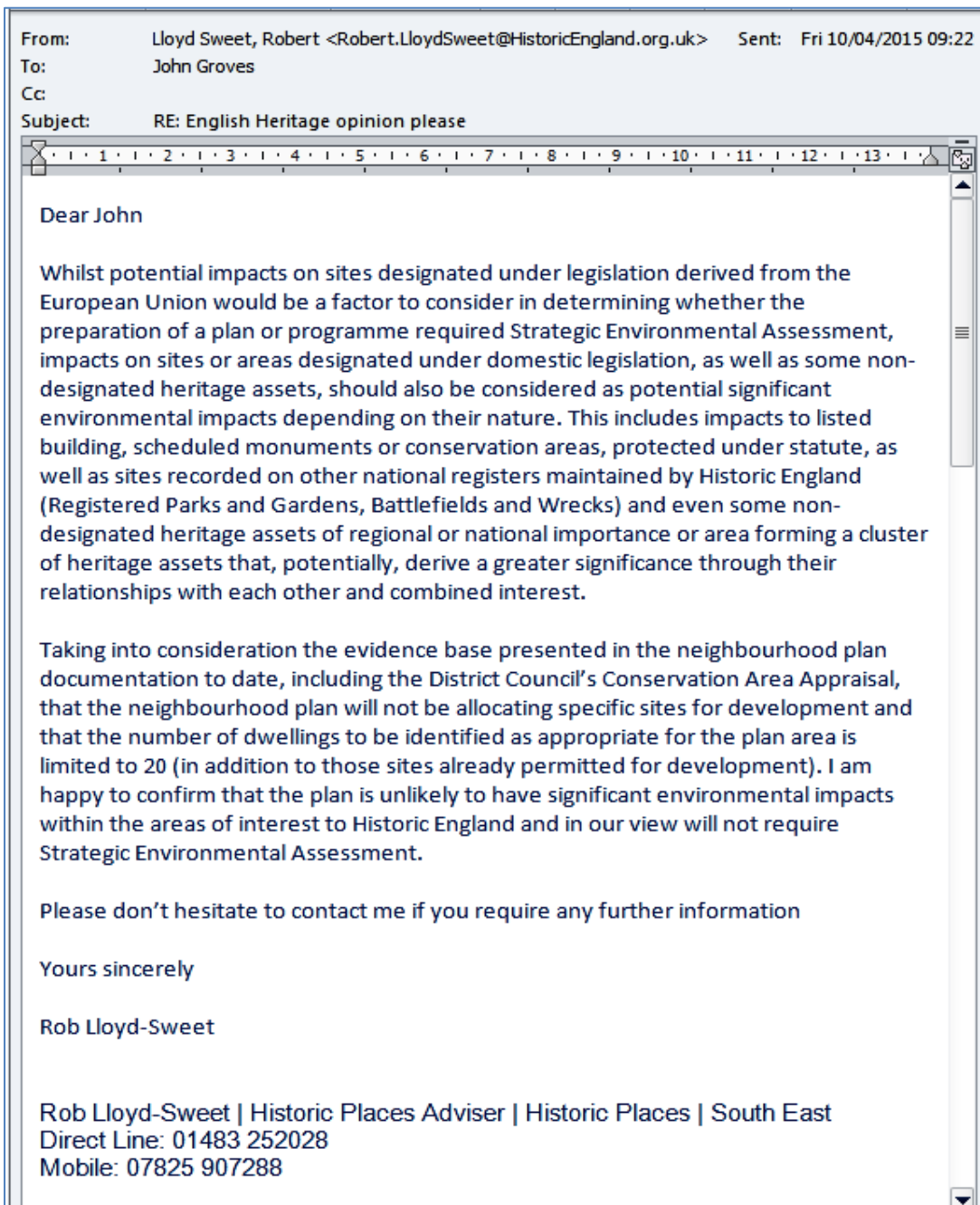
BH2 Enhance or at a minimum avoid or mitigate loss of local biodiversity including trees, hedgerows, nesting areas for birds and bats and ridge & furrow fields.

- WR1 Decrease waste and encourage increased recycling?
- Wa1 Ensure High levels of water efficiency exceeding that in the basic building regulations?
- En1 Encourage greater resilience of the electrical system.
- En2 Mitigate any flood impacts of electrical failures.

2. Screening upon Need for an SEA

Cherwell Planning Authority did not initially offer to provide a written screening opinion on an SEA so we contacted English Heritage, Natural England and the Environment Agency direct. These were the responses.

Response on SEA from English Heritage / Historic England



Response on SEA from Natural England

From: Plan Cons Area Team (Thames Valley) (NE) <Consultations.ThamesV> Sent: Thu 02/04/2015 16:26
To: finchamgroves@totalise.co.uk
Cc:
Subject: Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan

Dear Mr Groves,

Firstly my apologies for the delay in getting back to your enquiry below, but I have now had the opportunity to look at your request and check against our own datasets.

Having checked though our records, Natural England agree with your comments below that there are no designated sites of interest for Natural England, and you have referenced that Cherwell District Council have intimated that they will not be undertaking a screening opinion for the Parish, together with the Cherwell Habitats Regulation Assessment has stated no Likely Significant Effect on Natura 2000 sites.

In view of the above, Natural England can agree that a Strategic Environmental Assessment is no required for the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan.

I trust that this is sufficient for your purposes, but should you have any questions or queries or wish to discuss any aspects of this application please do not hesitate to contact.

Yours sincerely

David Hammond
Lead Advisor
Sustainable Development & Regulation
Thames Valley Team
Tel: 0300 060 1373

E Mail: david.hammond@naturalengland.org.uk
Natural England,
Area 1C Nobel House,
17 Smith Square, London SW1P 3JR

We are here to secure a healthy natural environment for people to enjoy, where wildlife is protected and England's traditional landscapes are safeguarded for future generations.

In an effort to reduce Natural England's carbon footprint, I will, wherever possible, avoid travelling to meetings and attend via audio, video or web conferencing.

Response on SEA from the Environment Agency



None thought that we needed an SEA. Although we consider this represents a valid screening opinion we do examine this in considerably more detail in the basic conditions statement.

Additionally we checked the BNDP against the SEA criteria applied to the emerging Cherwell Local Plan. (The process and outcomes are shown in more detail in the Basic Conditions Statement.)

In all cases BNDP policies seemed likely to produce an environmental outcome that was equal to or better than that produced by the Local plan alone.

Cherwell DC SEA Screening Opinion.

Prior to submission of the Plan for publication we subjected it to a Neighbourhood Planning Independent Examiner Referral Service (NPIERS) "Health Check."

This produced a recommendation we return to Cherwell DC to request that they provide an independent SEA screening.

We offered such additional information as requested by Cherwell as they applied the SEA Directive criteria to examine the scope and impact of the BNDP. (Again more detail is contained in the Basic Conditions Statement.)

Cherwell also re-contacted the Statutory consultees who re-iterated the opinions they had provided directly to us that no SEA was necessary.

The opinion arrived at by all concerned was that the plan was unlikely to have any significant environmental effect and that an SEA is therefore not required. A copy is available from the BNDP website.

3. Sustrans Executive Summary on Bloxham Connectivity

Bloxham is a large and growing village on the busy A361, Banbury to Chipping Norton road. Almost all the major services in the village are clustered around this road. Most journeys within the village are likely to be under a mile, making them potentially conducive to walking or cycling.

However, to realise this potential, the existing infrastructure needs to be improved – by widening footways and upgrading public footpaths, upgrading and extending cycle infrastructure along the A361 and the minor road network, installing crossings and removing barriers, such as high kerbs.

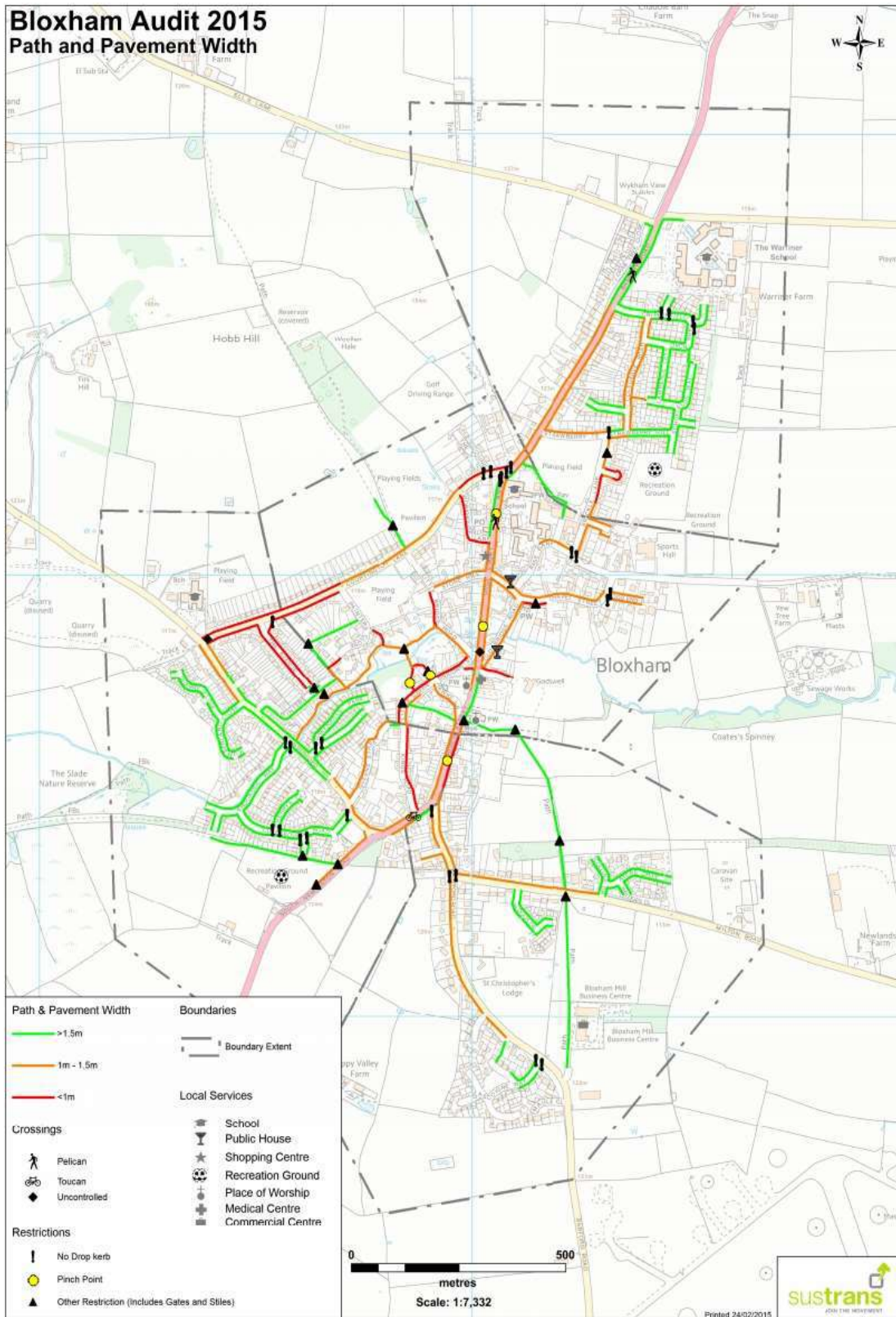
Particular challenges are presented by:

- the A361, where there are numerous pinch-points caused by narrow and discontinuous footways, and parking outside the shops, compounded by heavy traffic including HGVs;
- busy and awkward road junctions - such as those on the A361 at the Barford Road mini-roundabout, and where the cycle route crosses at Old Bridge Road - and others where pavement width is inadequate (e.g. near the primary school) or restricted (e.g. at Barford Road/Milton Road);
- the conservation area at the historic heart of the village, where highway space is restricted, and private land ownership may limit options for footway/footpath widening.

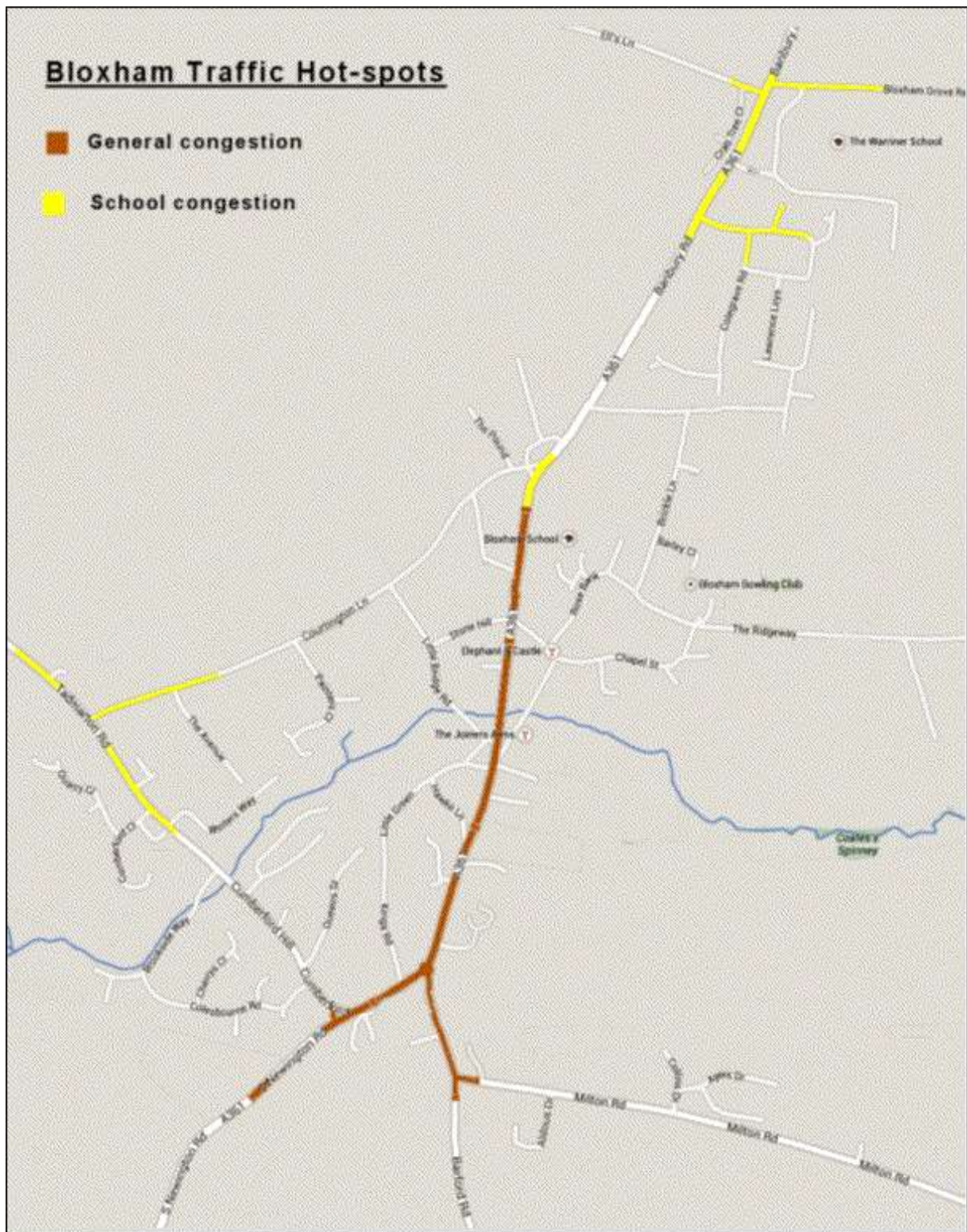
These and other challenges will need to be addressed to achieve the full potential for walking and cycling in the village. Possible solutions are suggested for some of these issues but others seem more intractable.

4. Sustrans Report on Bloxham Pavements

Green represent pavements of recommended width

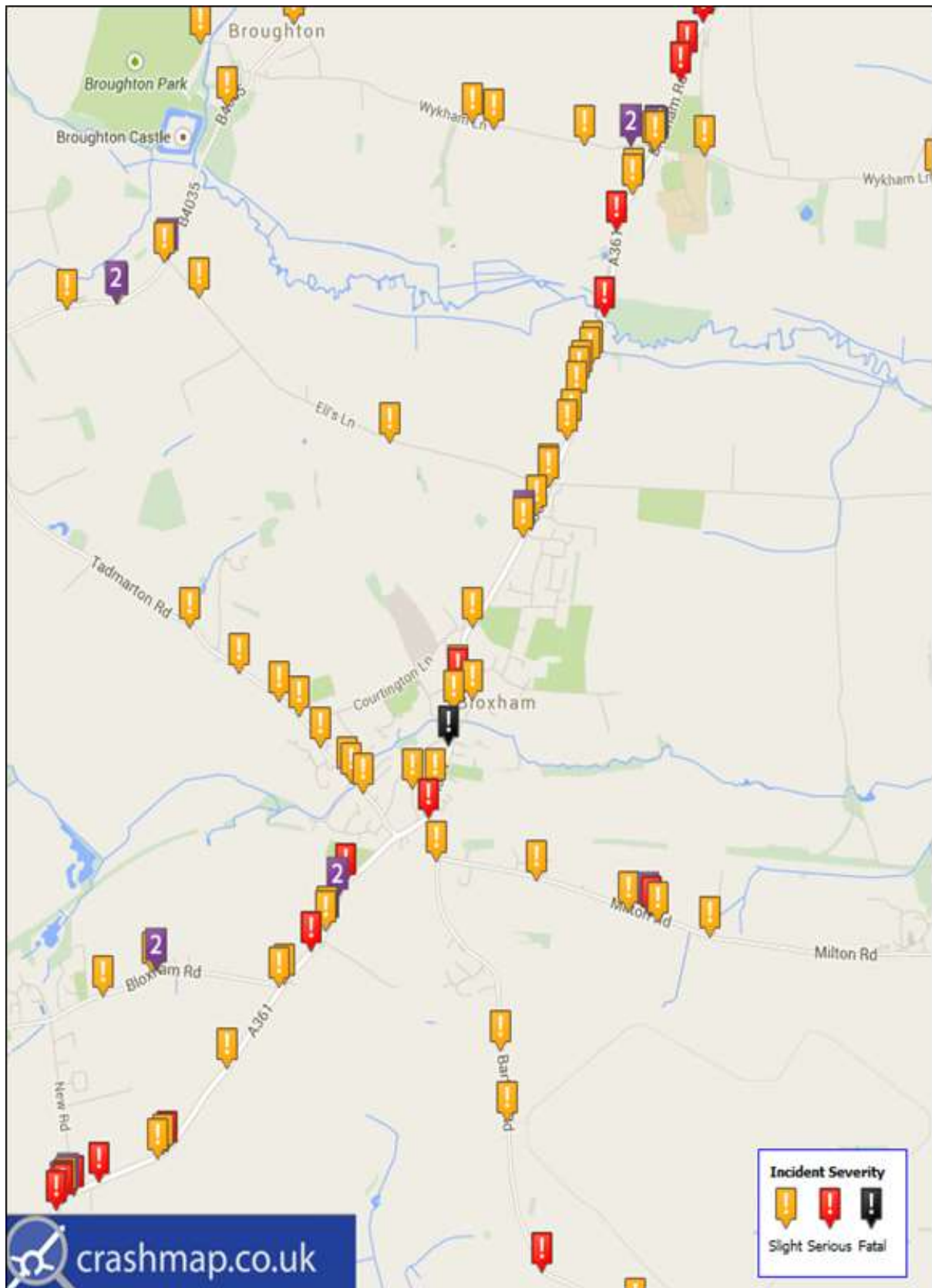


5. Traffic Hotspots

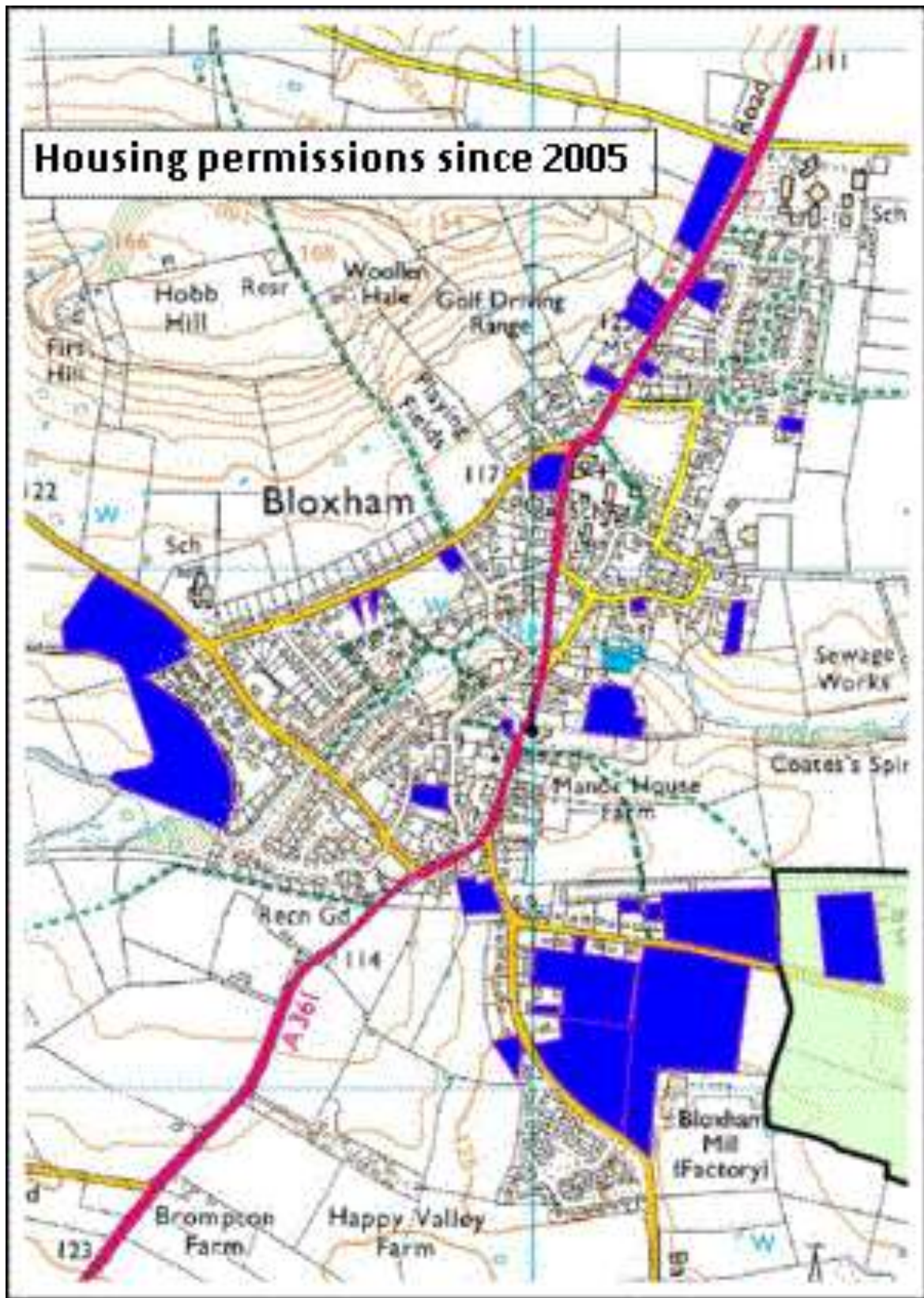


Note – traffic issues are increasingly extending well down the Milton Road at peak times.

6. Crash-map data for Bloxham



7. Recent Housing Permissions in Bloxham



8. Proposed cuts to Bloxham Bus Service³⁵



Stagecoach is among several bus companies who will be consulted on their willingness to continue to provide services without a subsidy.

SPECIAL REPORT

Dial-a-Ride could be scrapped and bus subsidies face sweeping cuts



Ian Huddespath.

Proposals for sweeping cuts which could see 105 existing bus services under threat have been announced by Oxfordshire County Council.

The council hopes to save £6.3m between 2014 to 2018. A large tranche of the money, £3.7m, is to come from efficiency savings made by placing all transport services under the control of a single body.

The remainder will be found by cutting the subsidies paid to commercial bus operators on routes which otherwise would not be economical to run, and a further £250,000 will be found by scrapping the Dial-a-Ride service, which helps transport people with mobility problems.

Taxpayers currently pay commercial bus companies £3.08m to subsidise bus routes. These include the 488 routes and Chipping Norton and the S3 and S4 Stagecoach services between both towns and Oxford.

Chairman of Bus Users Oxford, Hugh Jaeger, said his group was committed to conducting a "positive" campaign against the cuts, but said he fully understood the council's difficult financial position.

He said: "We are a national leader because the county council has had the right policies for over 40 years. We have been one of the highest rates of bus riders in the country by far - twice the national average."

"We must fight austerity but at a local level it is no good beating up the county council. We realise cuts are coming and we must fight to save as many services as we can."

The cuts come as the county council goes through the process of saving £290m by 2018. So far £500,000 has been saved this year, £2m in 2015 to £2.1m in 2016 to £1.7m in 2017 to £1.8. Cllr Ian Huddespath.

Key facts and figures

The council provides full and partial subsidies for 105 bus services in the county that otherwise would not be economical to run.

Services affected include those run by Stagecoach, Thames Travel and Heyfordian Travel, Oxfordshire County Council, Whites Coaches and Johnson's Excibus. These services are used by 15 per cent of bus passengers in the county. The rest use commercial services which are not threatened by the proposed cuts.

The council currently provides 481 separate return taxi journeys per day for 1,302 Oxfordshire school pupils - many with special educational needs. Should the bus subsidy cuts go ahead they will be implemented over the course of three years, with off-peak services given priority to protect older and disabled people.



"We have been one of the highest rates of bus riders in the country by far"

"We must fight to save as many services as we can."

- Hugh Jaeger
Bus Users Oxford

path, the leader of Oxfordshire County Council, said the council is set to "no option" but to reduce subsidies while pressing companies to continue to run services.

He said: "We are determined to target remaining resources at services used by older people and disabled passengers who are eligible for free travel. But before making any decisions, we will consult with service users. Clearly we would rather not be in the position of having to make these cuts. However, local government has faced year on year reductions in budgets in every year since 2010 and this is continuing."

We have protected these services up until now but we are no longer able to do this."

The proposals will go before cabinet at its next meeting on Tuesday, May 26.

A consultation on the broad principles behind the changes is set to begin in June and end in August, before the changes are due to come into force in April 2016.

Is your bus service affected?

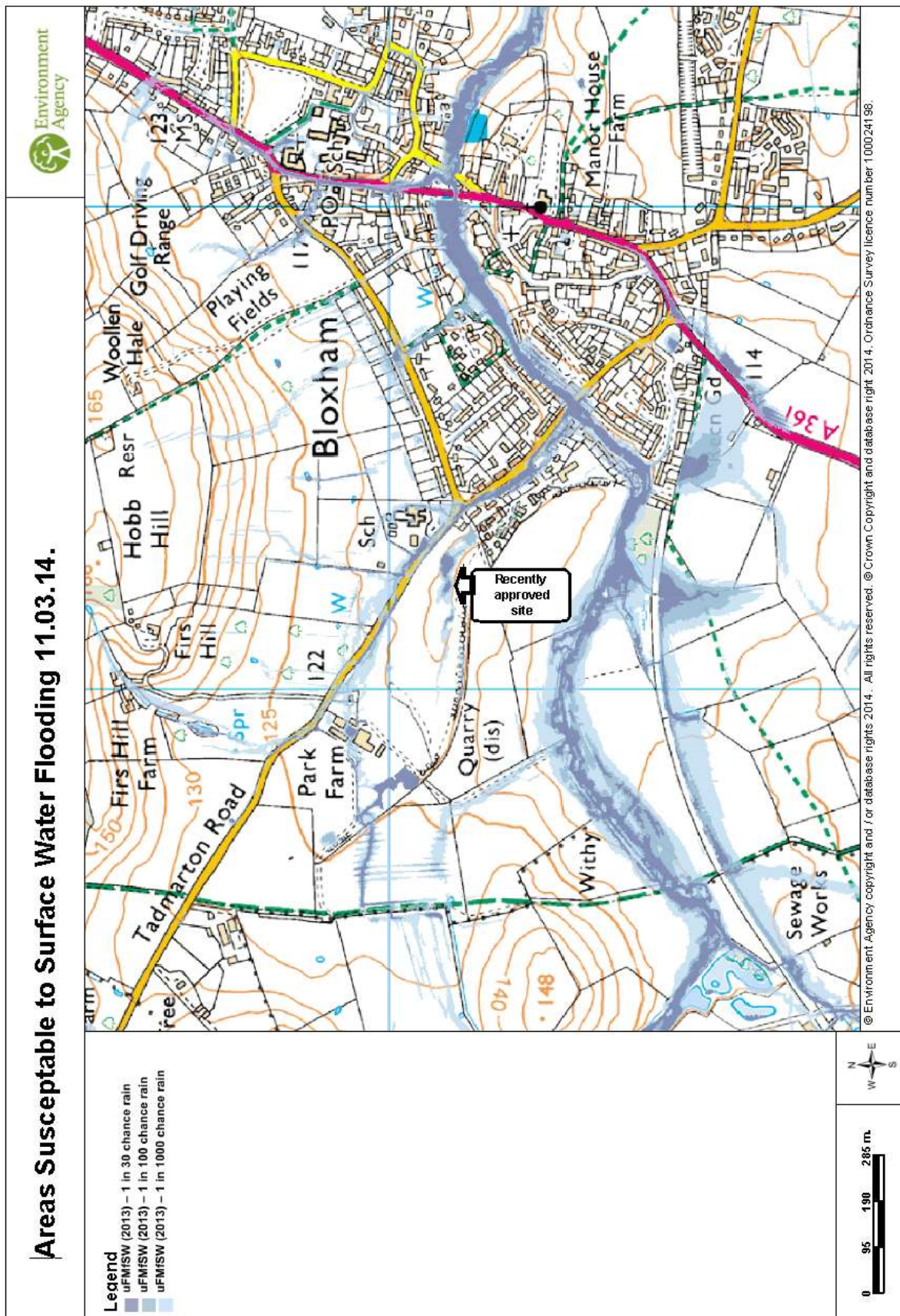
There are 105 services across Oxfordshire currently receiving full or partial subsidies from Oxfordshire County Council. Services in the Barbershire area have been listed below:

- Aylbury
- 22: Bicester - Langford - Caversfield - Bicester (Circular)
- 23: Abingdon - Witney
- 24: Woodstock - Slipton
- 25: Oxford - Kidlington - Woodstock
- 26: Oxford - Langford - Caversfield - Bicester (Circular)
- 27: Oxford - Cusford - Kidlington - Bladon - Woodstock
- 28: Oxford - Westcot - High Wycombe - Chipping Norton
- 29: Chipping Norton - Banbury
- 30: Oxford City Centre

- 31: Upper Oddington - Chipping Norton - Lechliff
- 32: Witney
- 33: Upper Oddington
- 34: Banbury - Stratford
- 35: Aylesbury & Edmonds
- 36: Banbury - Stratford
- 37: Banbury - Stratford
- 38: Lightbourne Heath - Banbury
- 39: Banbury - Stratford
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- 100: Banbury - Stratford

³⁵ County Council cabinet members recommended withdrawal of all bus service subsidies on 10th Nov 2015.

9. Bloxham Surface Water Flood Map



Bloxham Neighbourhood Development Plan

Screening Statement by Cherwell District Council on the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

The need for SEA

1. The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC) requires an environmental assessment to be made of certain plans or programmes. The SEA Directive has been transposed into UK law through the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.
2. As part of the independent examination of the Neighbourhood Plan, the independent examiner will test whether the making of the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan is compatible with European Union obligations, including the SEA Directive.
3. Government advice in Paragraphs 27 and 28 of the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) makes clear that *“Draft Neighbourhood Plan proposals should be assessed to determine whether the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects”* through a screening process set out in Regulation 9 of the Environment Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. These include a requirement to consult the environmental assessment consultation bodies.
4. Following the screening, *“If likely significant effects are identified, an environmental report must be prepared in accordance with paragraphs (2) and (3) of Regulation 12 of the Environment Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004”* (PPG, Paragraph 27). If it is concluded that *“... the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects (and accordingly it does not require an environmental assessment), a statement of the determination should be prepared* (PPG, Paragraph 28). A copy of the statement is then submitted for examination alongside the neighbourhood plan.

Purpose of the plan

5. The Draft Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan proposes policies to guide development within Bloxham Parish boundaries to 2031. The plan does not allocate development land. The policies seek to respond to those local issues identified in the plan’s baseline evidence and follow 4 themes:
 - Deliver the houses the village needs
 - Protect and enhance our rural heritage
 - Promote economic vitality
 - Ensure a safe, healthy, cohesive community
6. When the plan is adopted it will become part of the statutory development plan in Cherwell District and planning applications falling within the parish area will be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

SEA Screening criteria and procedure

7. Paragraphs ID: 11-026-20140306 and ID: 41-072-20140306 of the PPG confirm that that there is no legal requirement for a neighbourhood plan to have a sustainability appraisal. However, the parish council have prepared a Sustainability Report containing Bloxham Parish’s evidence on how the plan making process has considered sustainability issues.
8. The Sustainability Report details in Pages 7 and 8 how the parish council has taken into consideration SEA regulations, the EC Habitats Directive 1992 interpreted into British law by the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2010 and the Sustainability Appraisal for the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1. The Sustainability Report includes a record of consultation with the environmental assessment consultation bodies. The Sustainability Report indicates that the draft plan was submitted to the 3 environmental

assessment consultation bodies at pre-publication stage asking for their formal opinion as to whether an SEA was required. Appendix 1 of the Sustainability Report contains the response from these consultation bodies noting that an SEA was not required.

9. Bloxham Parish Council has requested a SEA screening opinion of its draft neighbourhood plan and has worked with Cherwell District Council to provide information which would enable District Council officers to determine whether the draft neighbourhood plan will give rise to significant environmental effects and require an SEA.
10. The criteria for determining the significance of effects are listed in Schedule 1 Regulations (9 (2) (a) and 10 (4)(a) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 . They relate to 2 main areas:
 - the scope and influence of the document and
 - the type of impact and area likely to be affected
11. The screening assessment has been undertaken using the criteria in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and it is contained in Appendix 1 of this screening opinion.

Conclusion

12. It is considered that the draft neighbourhood plan is unlikely to result in any significant environmental effects and hence a SEA is not required.
13. The draft neighbourhood plan has taken into consideration the Sustainability Appraisal and HRA screening undertaken to support the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1. The draft neighbourhood plan does not allocate land for development in addition to that already granted planning permission (since 31 March 2014) but it supports small scale growth within built-up limits allowed for by Cherwell Local Plan Policy Villages 1, albeit with additional restriction. Bloxham is located more than 20 km away from European designations for the purpose of the EC Habitats Directive 1992 and the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2010. It is concluded that an HRA is not required.
14. The three environment assessment consultation bodies (Historic England, Environment Agency and Natural England) have been consulted and agree with the conclusion of this screening opinion. Appendix 2 of this screening opinion contains the consultation bodies' responses.


Appendix 1. SEA screening

SEA Directive Criteria Schedule 1 of Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Summary of significant effects Scope and influence of the document	Is the Plan likely to have a significant environmental effect? Y/N
1. Characteristics of the neighbourhood plan having particular regard to:		
(a) The degree to which the Plan sets out a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size or operating conditions or by allocating resources.	<p>If the plan is brought into legal force it will become part of the statutory development plan in Cherwell District.</p> <p>The neighbourhood plan is prepared for land use purposes and covers the Bloxham Parish area. It accounts for the growth anticipated in the Cherwell Local Plan but does not specifically allocate land for development.</p> <p>Policy BL1 supports a proposal already with planning permission and Policy BL2 supports sites for minor development, infill and conversion as per policy Villages 1 in the adopted Cherwell Local Plan.</p> <p>The type of projects and or activities which the neighbourhood plan may set will be at parish level with limited resource implications.</p>	N
(b) The degree to which the Plan influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.	The neighbourhood plan takes into account planned growth identified in the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1, its policies and Sustainability Appraisal. The policies in the neighbourhood plan need to be in conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework and in general conformity with the Cherwell Local Plan. The degree of influence on future strategic policies will be limited.	N
(c) The relevance of the Plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.	The neighbourhood plan proposes policies to address local issues identified in the plan's baseline evidence. The policies cover four main themes: •Deliver the houses the village	N

	<p>needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Protect and enhance our rural heritage •Promote economic vitality •Ensure a safe, healthy, cohesive community <p>The policies are intended to protect and or enhance the natural and historic environment and address specific local issues. The neighbourhood plan does not allocate land for development and it is limited geographically to the parish boundaries. The neighbourhood plan policies complement policies in the adopted Cherwell Local Plan rather than address new environmental considerations. This is illustrated in the sustainability matrix contained in the neighbourhood plan’s Sustainability Report.</p>	
<p>(d) Environmental problems relevant to the Plan.</p>	<p>The Sustainability Report accompanying the neighbourhood plan identifies relevant local environmental matters in Chapter 5, Section D. This section identifies issues in relation to transport such as HGV use of the A361 running through the village and the mini-roundabout being over-capacity, flood risk and lack of school places.</p> <p>The parish council has liaised with the bodies responsible for the relevant infrastructure, prepared an Infrastructure Report and drafted neighbourhood plan policies seeking to address the identified issues such as BL3 on connectivity and policies BL6 and 7 on adaptation to climate change .</p> <p>The neighbourhood plan does not specifically allocate land for development and proposes policies to address local environmental issues. Given this and the localised nature of the plan, it is unlikely that significant environmental effects will arise.</p>	<p>N</p>

<p>(e) The relevance of the Plan for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example plans and programmes related to waste management or water protection).</p>	<p>These are not directly relevant to the neighbourhood plan although the plan has been prepared in consultation with relevant organisations which would have to take into account of such legislation in the preparation of their own plans or programmes.</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>2. Characteristics of the effects and area likely to be affected having particular regard to:</p>		
<p>(a)The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.</p>	<p>The neighbourhood plan accounts for the growth anticipated in the Cherwell Local Plan but does not specifically allocate land for development.</p> <p>Policy BL1 supports a proposal already with planning permission and Policy BL2 supports sites for minor development, infill and conversion as per policy Villages 1 in the adopted Cherwell Local Plan. Envisaged growth and policies in the Cherwell Local Plan 2011- 2031 have been the subject of Sustainability Appraisal incorporating SEA.</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>(b)The cumulative nature of the effects of the Plan.</p>	<p>The policies in the neighbourhood plan are expected to help the implementation at the local level of environmental policies in the adopted Cherwell Local Plan.</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>(c)The trans boundary nature of the effects of the Plan.</p>	<p>The administrative area of the neighbourhood plan is that of the parish boundary with no known significant effect on other parishes or on Districts outside Cherwell.</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>(d)The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accident).</p>	<p>The neighbourhood plan policies seek to address locally identified issues without further development growth than that in the adopted Cherwell Local Plan. There are no known risks to human health or the environment as a result of the plan.</p> <p>One of the main aims of the plan is to address transport and traffic free connectivity which is likely to improve human health.</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>(e)The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographic area and size of the population likely to be affected) by the Plan.</p>	<p>The plan covers the area of the parish of Bloxham with a population of 3,374 people according to the Census 2011.</p>	<p>N</p>

<p>(f)The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected by the Plan due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage • Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values • Intensive land use. 	<p>Chapter 5 of the neighbourhood plan's Sustainability Report identifies historic features such as St Mary's Church, and Bloxham's conservation area as well as environmental matters of local concern and the plan's policies seek to address their protection and enhancement through policies such as BL10 on conservation area, BL11 on the rural character of the village and BL12 on the importance of space and views and BL17 on protection of recreation spaces.</p> <p>The neighbourhood plan does not specifically allocate land for development (and therefore the additional consultations suggested by Natural England are not currently required for the specific purposes of this Screening Statement). It accounts for the growth already identified in the adopted Cherwell Local Plan and it is unlikely to result in intensive land use or exceed environmental quality standards or limit values.</p>	N
<p>(g)The effects of the Plan on areas or landscapes which have recognised national Community or international protected status.</p>	<p>Bloxham is located more than 20 km away from European designations for the purpose of the EC Habitats Directive 1992 and the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2010.</p> <p>There are no Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty affected by the neighbourhood plan.</p>	N

Name of officer producing the screening opinion	Maria Garcia Dopazo Planning Policy Officer Cherwell District Council
Date of assessment	9 September 2015
Person requesting Screening Opinion	John Groves Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan Coordinator
Conclusion of assessment	Is an SEA required? No
Name of officer approving the Screening Opinion	

	Adrian Colwell Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy Cherwell District Council
Date of approval	9 September 2015

Appendix 2. Responses from environment assessment consultation bodies

Consultee	Date of consultation	Date of response
Jack Morean Planning Advisor Environment Agency	17.08.15	26.08.15 (Attached)
Victoria Kirkham Consultations Team Natural England	17.08.15	28.08.15 (Attached)
Robert Lloyd-Sweet Historic Places Adviser (South East England) Historic England	17.08.15	07.09.15 (Attached)

Shukri Masseri

From: Planning-Wallingford <planning-wallingford@environment-agency.gov.uk>
Sent: 26 August 2015 14:27
To: Shukri Masseri
Cc: finchamgroves@totalise.co.uk
Subject: RE: BLOXHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT SCREENING

Dear Shruki,

Thank you for your email below. We note that the development being proposed through the plan period is minimal (20 dwellings plus existing approved developments). As such we would not have any significant concerns with what is proposed and agree that SEA is not necessary in this instance.

Thanks,

Jack Moeran
Planning Advisor

jack.moeran@environment-agency.gov.uk
01491 828367

Please note: The Development Management Procedure Order changed on 15 April. Responsibility for assessing surface water drainage proposals for [major applications](#) has passed to the relevant Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) from this date. We may still comment on surface water drainage concerning contamination or pollution prevention.

Our **flood risk standing advice** has been updated:
for local authorities <https://www.gov.uk/flood-risk-assessment-local-planning-authorities>
for developers <https://www.gov.uk/flood-risk-assessment-local-planning-authorities>

Oxfordshire Lead Local Flood Authority - sudsadoptions@oxfordshire.gov.uk

From: Shukri Masseri [mailto:Shukri.Masseri@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk]
Sent: 17 August 2015 09:50
To: Robert.LloydSweet@HistoricEngland.org.uk; david.hammond@naturalengland.org.uk; Moeran, Jack
Cc: finchamgroves@totalise.co.uk
Subject: BLOXHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT SCREENING

Dear Sir/Madam

Bloxham Parish Council are preparing for the submission of their draft neighbourhood Plan and have produced an amended version following pre-submission consultation. The Parish Council have requested Cherwell District Council as the Local Planning Authority to screen the amended version to establish whether the plan might give rise to significant environmental effects. This process has been carried out in the attached report. As the relevant statutory bodies you are being formally consulted on the findings of the screening in the attached draft report. Your comments would be appreciated prior to the authority making a formal determination.

The latest version of the draft neighbourhood plan and supporting documents can be downloaded from the following website:

<http://bloxhamneighbourhoodplan.co.uk/post-consultation-documents/>

If you have any further queries then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind Regards

Shukri Masseri

Planning Officer

Strategic Planning and the Economy

Cherwell District Council

Email: shukri.masseri@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Tel: 01295 221851

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Date: 28th August 2015
Our ref: 163214
Your ref: Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan



Shukri Masseri
Cherwell District Council
Planning, Housing and Economy
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Banbury
OX15 4AA

Customer Services
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Crewe Business
Park
Electra Way
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Cheshire
CW1 6GJ

BY EMAIL ONLY

Shukri.Masseri@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk

T 0300 060 3900

Dear Sir/Madam,

Screening consultation: BLOXHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT SCREENING

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated and received by Natural England on 17th August 2015.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Screening Request: Strategic Environmental Assessment

It is our advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that, in so far as our strategic environmental interests are concerned (including but not limited to statutory designated sites, landscapes and protected species, geology and soils) are concerned, that there are unlikely to be significant environmental effects from the proposed plan.

Neighbourhood Plan

Guidance on the assessment of Neighbourhood Plans in light of the SEA Directive is contained within the National Planning Practice Guidance¹. The guidance highlights three triggers that may require the production of an SEA, for instance where:

- a neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development
- the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan
- the neighbourhood plan may have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan.

We have checked our records and based on the information provided, we can confirm that in our view the proposals contained within the plan will not have significant effects on sensitive sites that Natural England has a statutory duty to protect.

We are not aware of significant populations of protected species which are likely to be affected by the policies / proposals within the plan. It remains the case, however, that the responsible authority should provide information supporting this screening decision, sufficient to assess whether protected species are likely to be affected.

Notwithstanding this advice, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all potential environmental assets. As a result the responsible authority should raise environmental

issues that we have not identified on local or national biodiversity action plan species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites or local landscape character, with its own ecological and/or landscape advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local landscape and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by this plan, before determining whether an SA/SEA is necessary. Please note that Natural England reserves the right to provide further comments on the environmental assessment of the plan beyond this SEA/SA screening stage, should the responsible authority seek our views on the scoping or environmental report stages. This includes any third party appeal against any screening decision you may make.

For any queries relating to the specific advice in this letter only please contact Charlotte Frizzell on 07824 597885. For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

We really value your feedback to help us improve the service we offer. We have attached a feedback form to this letter and welcome any comments you might have about our service.

Yours faithfully,

Victoria Kirkham
Consultations Team

Shukri Masseri

From: Lloyd Sweet, Robert <Robert.LloydSweet@HistoricEngland.org.uk>
Sent: 07 September 2015 10:18
To: Shukri Masseri
Subject: RE: BLOXHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT SCREENING

Dear Shukri

Thank you for consulting Historic England on the District Council's screening opinion for SEA of the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan. For the reasons provided in our correspondence with the Parish Council, reproduced in their Sustainability Report, and without repeating them, I am happy to confirm that we agree with the Council's opinion that Strategic Environmental Assessment of the plan should not be required.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any queries relating to Historic England's position or require any further information.

Yours sincerely

Robert Lloyd-Sweet

Historic Places Adviser (South East England) Historic England Guildford Tel. 01483 252028

From: Shukri Masseri [Shukri.Masseri@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk]
Sent: 17 August 2015 09:50
To: Lloyd Sweet, Robert; david.hammond@naturalengland.org.uk; jack.moeran@environment-agency.gov.uk
Cc: finchamgroves@totalise.co.uk
Subject: BLOXHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT SCREENING

Dear Sir/Madam

Bloxham Parish Council are preparing for the submission of their draft neighbourhood Plan and have produced an amended version following pre-submission consultation. The Parish Council have requested Cherwell District Council as the Local Planning Authority to screen the amended version to establish whether the plan might give rise to significant environmental effects. This process has been carried out in the attached report. As the relevant statutory bodies you are being formally consulted on the findings of the screening in the attached draft report. Your comments would be appreciated prior to the authority making a formal determination.

The latest version of the draft neighbourhood plan and supporting documents can be downloaded from the following website:

<http://bloxhamneighbourhoodplan.co.uk/post-consultation-documents/>

If you have any further queries then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind Regards

Shukri Masseri
Planning Officer
Strategic Planning and the Economy
Cherwell District Council
Email: shukri.masseri@cherwell-dc.gov.uk
Tel: 01295 221851

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Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan 2015 – 2031



**This should be read in conjunction with the
Separate Appendix 1 – The BNDP Sustainability Report**

**Submission Version
19th Nov 2015**



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.

Table of Contents

A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOR BLOXHAM	4
1. FOREWORD	4
1.1 <i>How Bloxham’s Neighbourhood Plan fits into the Planning Process</i>	4
1.2 <i>Meeting Basic Conditions.....</i>	5
1.3 <i>The Sustainability Report</i>	5
2. OUR BLOXHAM	5
2.1 <i>The Parish.....</i>	6
2.2 <i>Locality and Connections</i>	6
2.3 <i>The Demographic Context.....</i>	7
2.4 <i>Historical Context.....</i>	8
2.5 <i>The Education Context</i>	11
2.6 <i>The Village Economy</i>	12
3. OUR VOICE.....	13
3.1 <i>The consultation process.....</i>	13
3.2 <i>Issues Raised by Residents</i>	15
4. A VISION FOR BLOXHAM.....	16
5. THEMES AND OBJECTIVES	16
5.1 <i>Themes.....</i>	16
5.2 <i>Objectives.....</i>	17
6. POLICIES	18
Theme 1 <i>Deliver the houses the Village needs.....</i>	18
<i>POLICIES ON SUSTAINABLE HOUSING AND SIZE OF DEVELOPMENTS.....</i>	22
<i>POLICY ON CONNECTIVITY.....</i>	24
<i>POLICIES ON PARKING.....</i>	24
<i>POLICIES ON ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE</i>	26
<i>POLICY ON HOUSING THAT ADAPTS TO DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE.....</i>	28
<i>POLICY ON REGARD FOR THE AMENITY OF EXISTING RESIDENTS.....</i>	29
Theme 2 <i>Protect and enhance our rural heritage.....</i>	30
<i>POLICY ON THE CONSERVATION AREA</i>	31
<i>POLICY ON CONTRIBUTING TO THE RURAL CHARACTER OF THE VILLAGE</i>	33
<i>POLICY ON THE IMPORTANCE OF SPACE AND KEY STREET SCENES AND VIEWS.....</i>	40
Theme 3 <i>Promote Economic Vitality.....</i>	42
<i>POLICY TO PROTECT EMPLOYMENT LAND</i>	42
<i>POLICY TO ENCOURAGE START-UP AND SMALL BUSINESS EXPANSION.....</i>	43
<i>POLICY TO ENCOURAGE IMPROVED DIGITAL COMMUNICATION</i>	44
<i>POLICY TO ADDRESS EMERGING NEED FOR ADDITIONAL RETAIL.....</i>	45
Theme 4 <i>Ensure a safe, healthy, cohesive community.....</i>	46
<i>POLICY TO PROTECT IMPORTANT RECREATION SPACES</i>	50
<i>POLICIES ON PROVIDING A BETTER RANGE OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES.....</i>	51
7. BLOXHAM PROJECTS.....	52
8. MONITORING AND DELIVERY	52
9. THE EVIDENCE BASE	53
APPENDICES.....	55
APPENDIX 1 THE BNDP SUSTAINABILITY REPORT.....	55
APPENDIX 2 THE CONSERVATION AREA.....	55
APPENDIX 3 THE PLAN-MAKING PROCESS	56
APPENDIX 4 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT.....	57

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 build upon recent unplanned development in a manner that respects our rural heritage and which is measured, timely and sustainable.

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, it will be subject to independent examination and a final edition produced that incorporates the modifications required by the Examiner.
6. It will then be 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.

1.2 Meeting Basic Conditions

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:

- generally conforming with strategic local policy
- having regard to national planning policy and guidance
- being compatible with EU obligations
- contributing to achieving sustainable development

1.3 The Sustainability Report

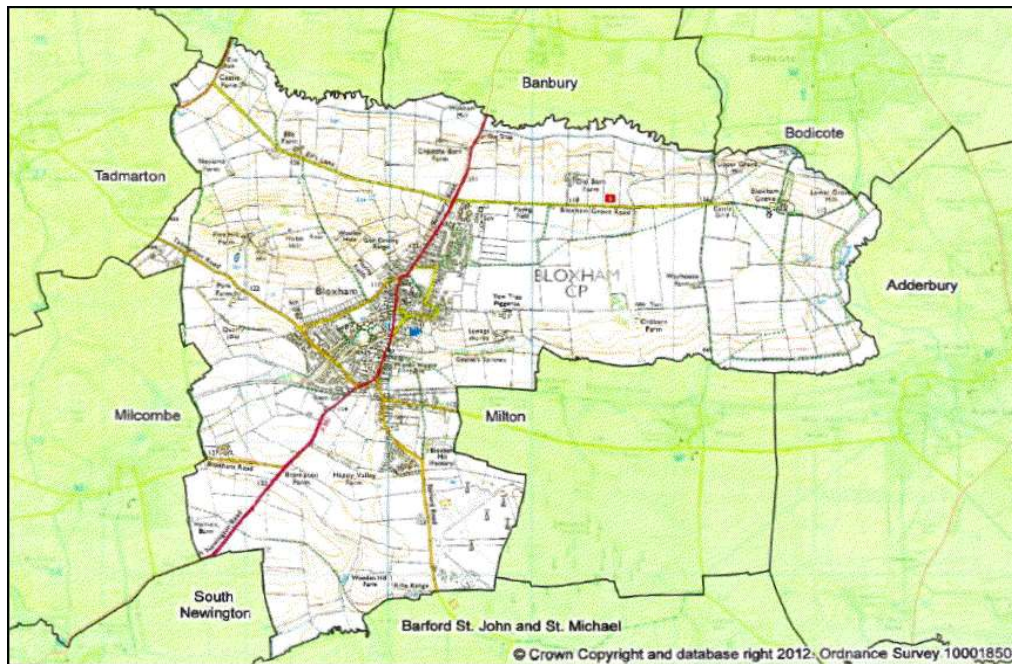
This Plan should be read alongside the Bloxham Neighbourhood Development plan (BNDP) Sustainability Report as this document greatly clarifies the context of the policies herein. The report is available from the BNDP website at <http://bloxhamneighbourhoodplan.co.uk/submission-of-publication-version-of-the-plan/>

2. Our Bloxham

On 3rd 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, Part 2, S. 5(1).

2.1 The Parish



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'¹ categorises as 'low density rural.' The general area was classified in Cherwell District Council's past adopted Local Plan (1996)² as an area of 'high landscape value.' This is not a saved policy and the recently Adopted Plan (2015) no longer uses this term but Policy ESD 13 of the Adopted Plan (2015) retains concern 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.³

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.

¹ [Manual for Streets-Evidence and Research](#)

² [The Adopted Cherwell Local Plan \(1996\)](#)

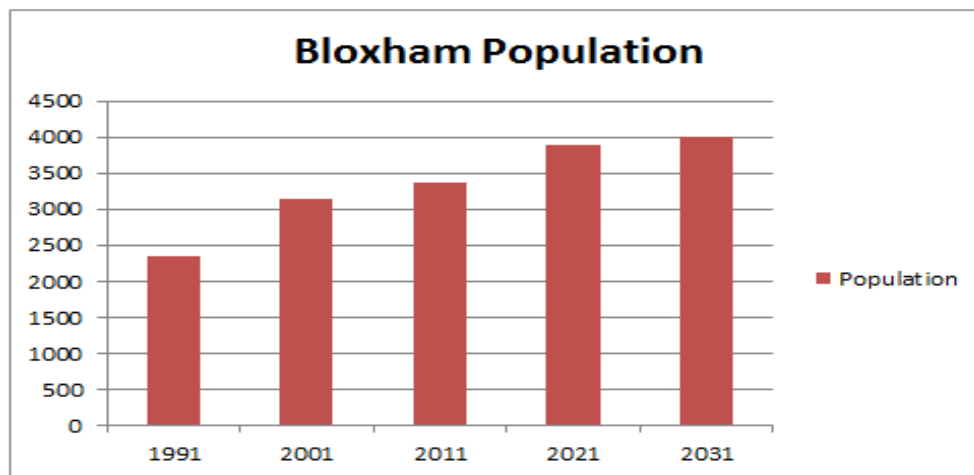
³ [Sustrans Report – Walking and cycling in Bloxham \(2015\)](#)

2.3 The Demographic Context

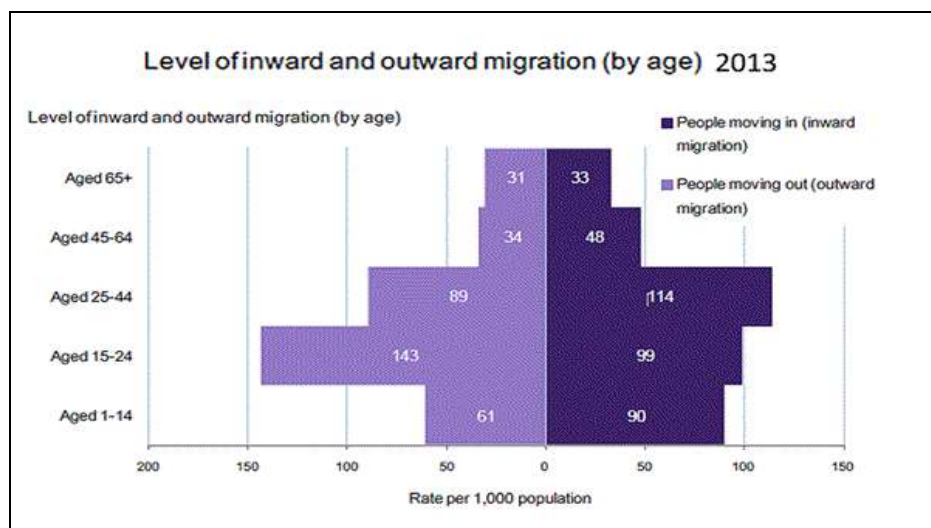
Population: Bloxham is a village where the population⁴ remained broadly unchanged between 1801 and 1961 since when it has grown at a significant rate.

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

⁴ [A vision of Britain through time - Bloxham](#)

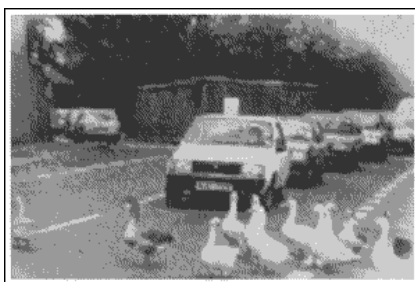
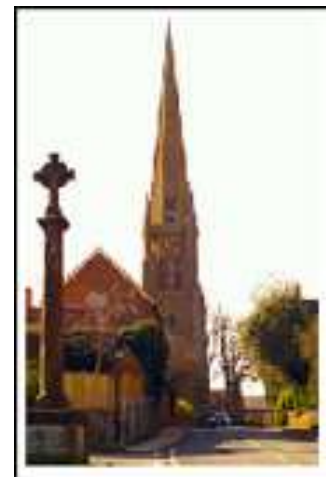
Relative to Oxfordshire and UK averages the population is slightly skewed towards the older age groups though less so than in many rural villages.

Over 96% of Bloxham residents are British⁵ 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

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 Jenkins⁶ 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.

⁵ ONS Neighbourhood Statistic - National Identity - Bloxham

⁶ [Greatest English Churches](#)

The winding medieval streets and alleyways are still apparent in the conservation area of 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 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-19th 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.

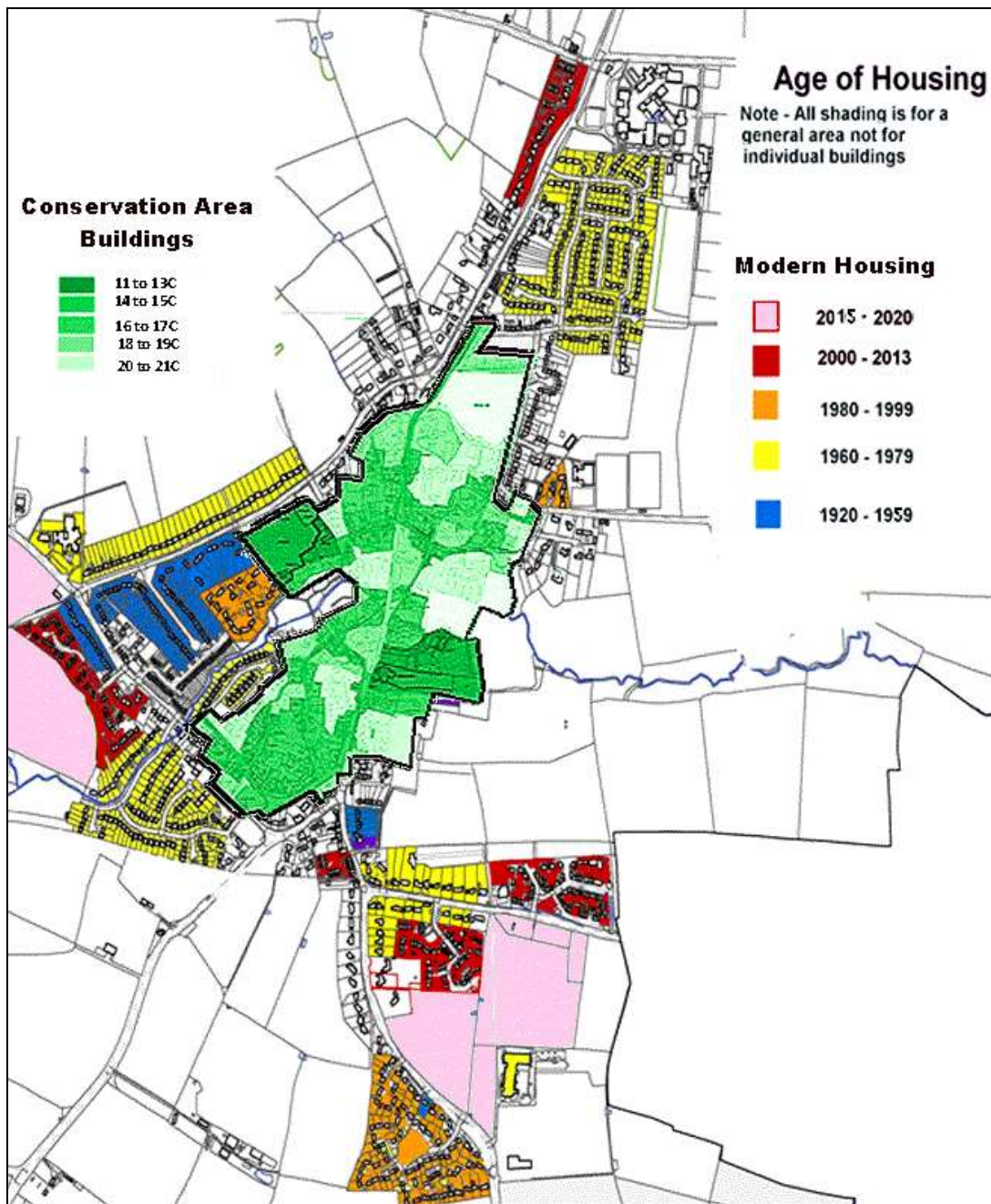
Despite on-going expansion, it remains a largely cohesive community with a 'rural sense of place' the preservation of which features highly in this plan.





Bloxham had little growth until the late 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.



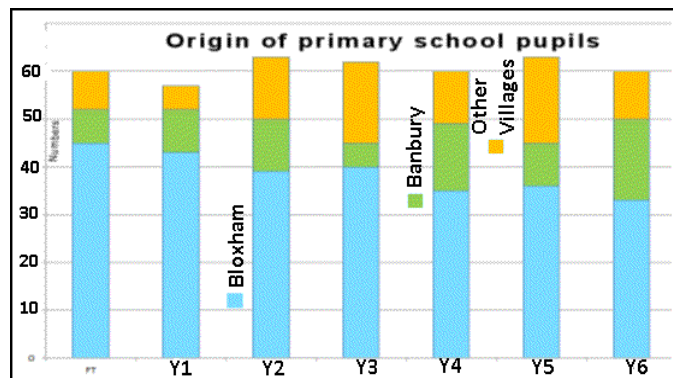
Since 2000, Bloxham has seen extensive development mainly at its southern end with house builders gaining permissions for more than 450 homes. These developments exhibit a variety of styles and a recurrent theme of this Plan is the avoidance of cumulative urbanisation that fails properly to respect our 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 capacity issues over the coming 4 to 5 years whilst new catchment areas take effect and out-of-catchment children are progressively replaced by the children of residents.



As non-Bloxham children (■ & ■) leave, the school should find itself with just enough capacity to match the number of Bloxham children including those from the new developments set out in this plan.

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. At the time of writing, Oxfordshire see a likely need for expansion but have no definitive plans available.

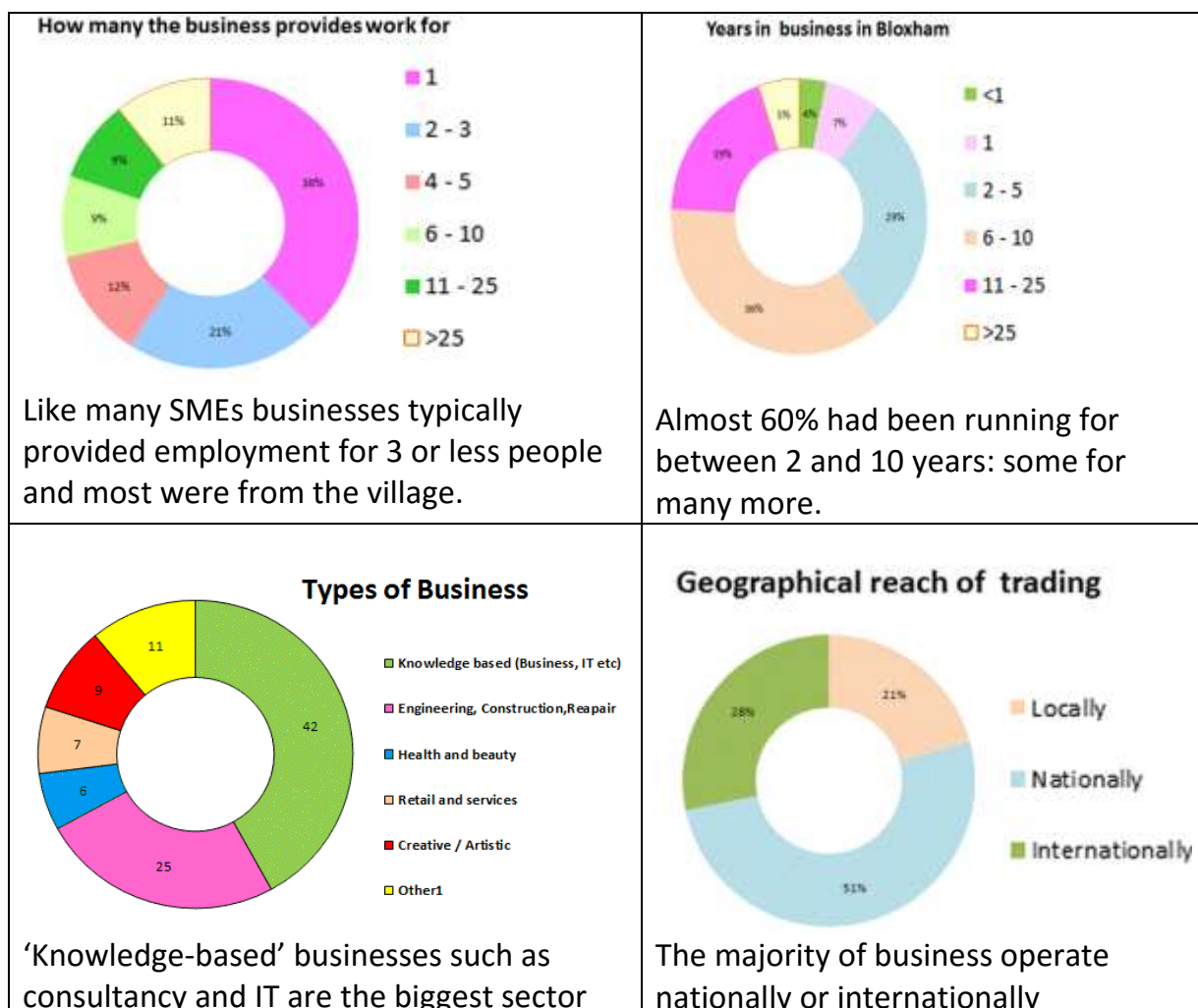
2.5.3 Bloxham School

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.⁷
- 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

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 websites

⁷ [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%) ⁸
2. NP Business Questionnaire	Jan 2014	76 (31%) ⁹
3. NP Young person’s Questionnaire	Jan 2014	57 unknown
4. Parish Plan Questionnaire	July 2010	909 (76%)



⁸ Main Questionnaire based on delivery to 1340 houses in 2014. Parish Plan based on 1196 houses in 2009.

⁹ Based on estimate of 250 Bloxham businesses

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.

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

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

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

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 within the conservation area should protect and enhance this area and fully accord with the Conservation Area document.
	B. Development outside of the conservation area should protect, enhance and contribute to the rural character of the village as a whole.
	C. Developments should recognise that lower density and the role played by public and private open space are significant components of rural character. 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.
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.

There are five elements to policies in this area:

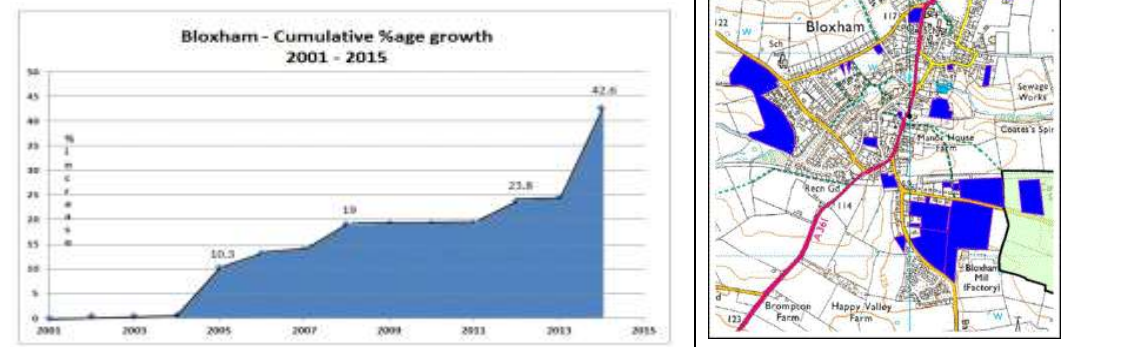
- A. Housing Need and sustainability
- B. Developments that enhance village connectivity and have minimal impact upon village traffic congestion
- C. Homes that adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change
- D. Homes that adapt to demographic change
- E. Homes that show regard for the amenity 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 centres¹⁰.
- 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.

¹⁰ Adopted Local Plan (2015) Foreword:

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



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:

Decisions before March 2014 do not count towards the Adopted Local Plan (2015) housing projections of 750 allocated and 754 projected dwellings.

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 infrastructure¹¹.



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

¹¹ See BNDP Sustainability Report

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.

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 country¹² with 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.)

In total Bloxham will accommodate at least 220 new dwellings during the period of this plan although 135 of these are from permissions too early to contribute towards the 750 allocated and 754 projected dwellings projected in the adopted Local Plan (2015.)

¹² [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 dwellings¹³ (Policy BL1) plus additional sustainable development by infill, conversion and minor development (Policy BL2) will be seen as in conformity with the NPPF and with the adopted Local Plan (2015). 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:

- ✓ NPPF
 - Para 7 ...by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure.
 - Para 72 The Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs

- ✓ Adopted Local Plan(2015)
 - Policy Villages 1 (C261 ->) sets out the types of development that may be accommodated in rural villages:
 - i. Minor development: less than 10 dwellings;
 - ii. Infill: development of a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage;
 - iii. Conversions: the conversion of either residential or non-residential buildings.

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.
 - Policy Villages 2 (C272 ->) seeks to allocate sites for 10 or more dwellings to create a further 750 dwellings in the more sustainable (category A and B) rural areas including Kidlington.
 - Policy INF 1 (D11) states infrastructure should be provided as an integral part of development.
 - Para A9 states - We will ensure people have convenient access to health, education & open space.
 - Para C241 states - An assessment of education provision will need to inform development proposals.

¹³ CDC Planning application number (14/01017/OUT)

✓ 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 in-village 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

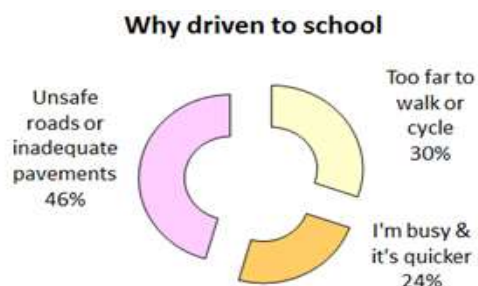
BL1 Detailed proposals (and / or reserved matters) will be supported for the development approved in outline of up to 85 houses to the south of Milton Road where such proposals comply with the detailed policies of this Plan.

BL2 a. 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:

- a. Such additional developments are small in scale typically, but not exclusively, five dwellings or fewer.
- b. All such development proposals during the plan period will be expected to show proper regard for the policies that follow with policy BL9d (in-village primary school places) being considered especially important by the local community.

B. Village connectivity and parking

Residents have repeatedly highlighted¹⁴ 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.



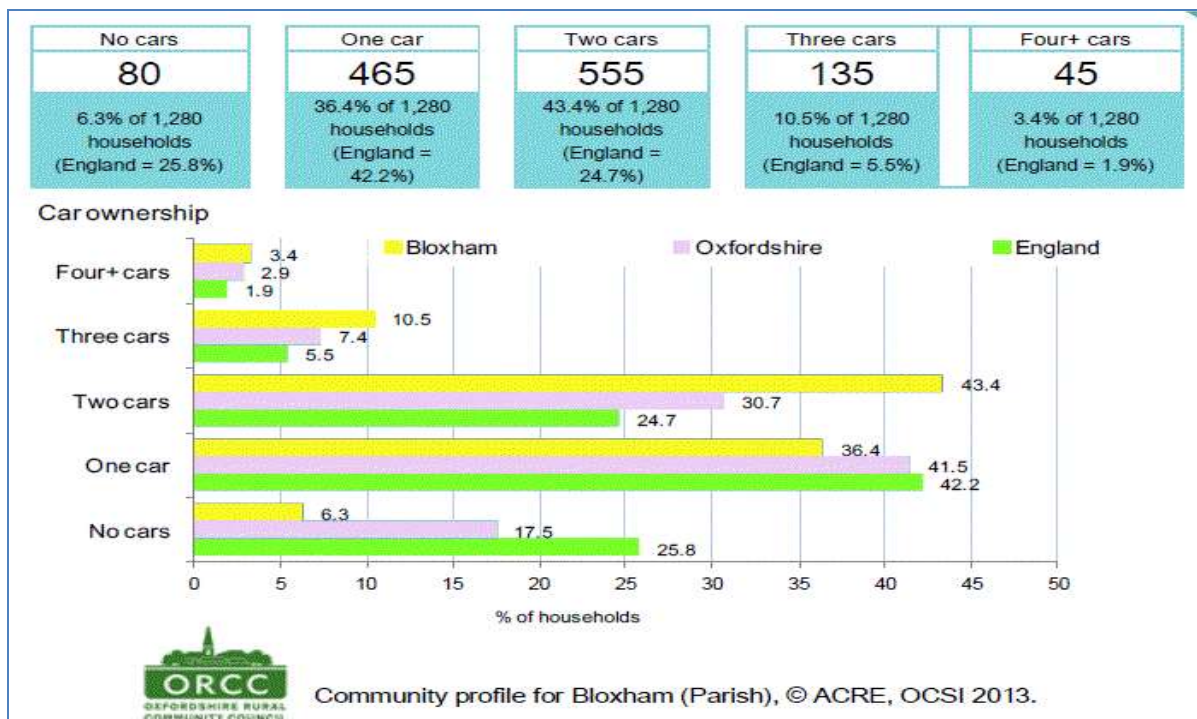
¹⁴ [See BNDP Main Questionnaire results](#)

They also express concern about an inadequacy of public transport to Banbury: something that will not be helped by the recent (Nov 10th) decision by Oxfordshire County Council cabinet members to scrap all subsidised bus routes.¹⁵

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.¹⁶

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.¹⁷ This plan seeks that new developments offer on-plot parking that is commensurate with the evidenced levels of car ownership¹⁸ rather than the more general Oxon. C.C. parking standards which are, according to the OCC consultation response, only advisory¹⁹.



¹⁵ [Oxon CC cuts to transport funding – Banbury Guardian 15th May 2015](#)

¹⁶ [See BNDP Main questionnaire or BNDP infrastructure and business report for detailed evidence.](#)

¹⁷ [Planning update – March 2015: parking](#)

¹⁸ [ORCC Rural community profile for Bloxham](#)

¹⁹ 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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	<p>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.</p>

POLICIES ON PARKING	
BL4	<p>All new housing development shall comply with the following requirements with regard to parking:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Each new home with one or two bedrooms will have a minimum of one car space on its plot along with further nearby shared visitor parking of at least 0.5 spaces per dwelling. b. Each new home with three bedrooms will have a minimum of two car spaces on its plot. c. Each new home with more than three bedrooms will have a minimum of two car spaces on its plot along with nearby shared parking at a rate of at least 0.5 spaces for each additional bedroom beyond the third. d. Where garages are provided they should be in direct physical association with the houses whose inhabitants may be expected to use them and spacious enough to accommodate modern cars.

e. Where on-plot parking spaces are specified in a. to c. the use of parking courts will not be considered an acceptable alternative.

BL5 Planning applications seeking modifications or extensions to an existing dwelling that would reduce parking space to below the levels set out in BL4 will not be supported.

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-off²⁰. 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 supply²¹ 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.²²

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.

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. |

²⁰ [BNDP Infrastructure and Business Report - Flooding](#)

²¹ See [infrastructure and business report](#) also see both [residents and business questionnaires](#).

²² [Next steps to zero carbon homes](#)

- ✓ 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 All new housing development, irrespective of size, shall:

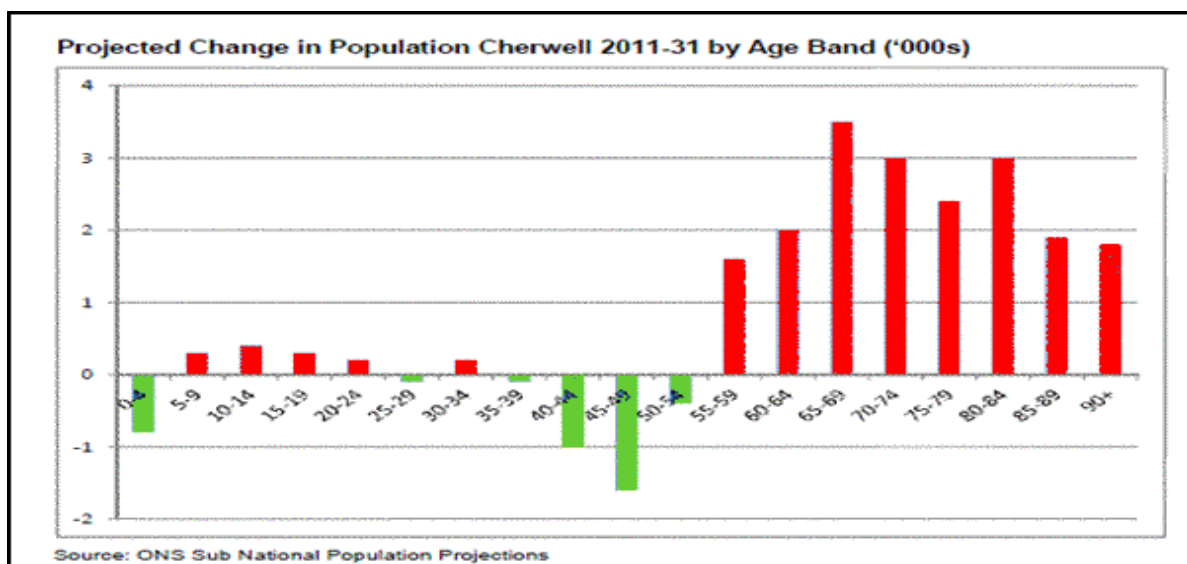
- a. Be avoided in areas with a history of either fluvial or run-off flooding where less vulnerable alternatives are available;
- b. Be subject to site-specific flood risk assessment, adopt the principles of sustainable drainage and comply with Policy BL9
- c. Where pumped drainage is employed, incorporate design features that demonstrate property flooding will not occur in the event of temporary failure of the mains electricity supply.

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.²³ 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.²⁴

²³ [See BNDP Housing & Landscape Report: The Ageing Population](#)

²⁴ [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.²⁵ 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;
- IV. There are sixteen areas set out in the Lifetime Homes standards²⁶. We seek to draw upon just three of these: parking, access and personal hygiene facilities.

We consider these policies consistent with the following:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NPPF | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Para 50 Plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic Trends. - Para 159 Meet household and population projections, taking account of migration and demographic change |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Adopted Local Plan(2015) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policy BSC4 (B126) Recognise an ageing population and higher levels of disability and health problems amongst older people
See also pre-publication consultation feedback from Oxon CC |

²⁵ [Page 35 Strategic Housing Market Assessment review and update 2012](#)

²⁶ [Lifetime Homes Standards](#)

✓ SHMA 2014	- 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
✓ Community Support	- 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.
✓ Building Regs	- The proposed Optional “Access and use of Buildings” criteria for Accessible and Adaptable dwellings offer much of what we seek in BL8

POLICY ON HOUSING THAT ADAPTS TO DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE	
BL8	<p>Wherever practicable all new housing developments should include at least 20% open-market homes that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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 storeys including any roof accommodation; and d. Meet the Lifetime Homes standards (or its successors) being accessible and adaptable dwellings in respect of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. The distance from the car parking space to the dwelling being kept to a minimum and being on the plot; ii. Being built to a wheelchair adaptable level, enabling full fit-out to be carried out easily, where and when necessary; iii. Being designed with entrance level WC and shower drainage such that some-one could ‘live’ on the ground floor; and iv. Ensuring WC and bathroom walls are capable of firm fixing for grab rails.

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	<p>All development shall where appropriate:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Avoid impinging upon the amenity of nearby residents in terms of noise or light pollution, privacy or access to daylight; b. Demonstrate that there is adequate wastewater and water supply capacity both on and off the site to serve the development and that it would not lead to problems for existing or new users; c. Minimise impacts of additional traffic especially, but not exclusively, for infill or live-work developments; and d. Demonstrate that there is capacity to educate primary aged children within the village and that proposed development will not lead to lack of school places for families of 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

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)²⁷ 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 Data²⁸ offers more detail of listed assets.

We consider these policies consistent with the following:

- ✓ NPPF
 - Foreword: Our historic environment – buildings, landscapes, towns and villages –can better be cherished if their spirit of place thrives, rather than withers
 - Para 7 Contributing to, protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.
 - Para 17 Take account of the different roles and

²⁷ [Policy statement on the conservation area](#)

²⁸ [BNDP Archaeological and Heritage Data](#)

	character of different areas
✓ Past Local Plan (1996)	- C27 Respect historic settlements - Particular attention will be paid within the existing and proposed conservation areas where the character of the settlement is particularly sensitive to change.
✓ 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	<p>Development shall be permitted within the Conservation Area as identified in Cherwell D.C. Bloxham Conservation Area Appraisal (2007) where if it can demonstrate that it:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the area; Shows compliance with guidance given in the Conservation Area Appraisal; and Preserves important open spaces, important gaps in the built form and significant views into and out of the area. <p>Where these criteria are not met planning permission will not be granted.</p>

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 Summary²⁹ 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.

²⁹ [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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Para 17 Planning must be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives. - Para 57 Inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces. - Para 59 Guiding new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally.
✓ Past Local Plan (1996)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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.
Adopted Local Plan(2015)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A9 We will cherish protect and enhance our distinctive natural and built environment and our rich historic heritage.
✓ Community Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 98.3% think developments should preserve the rural feel of Bloxham less than 10% think modern 3-storey 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 not 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 or create new public open space to help maintain 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;
 - 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 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. both recognises the generally lower density in rural areas³⁰ and also notes: 'The public realm in rural settlements was often also generous, with village

³⁰ [Cherwell Submission Local Plan \(2013\) - Housing Density](#)

greens and wide streets providing communal space.’ They also note 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)³¹ 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 tranquillity

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 tranquillity of, Public Rights of Way
5. Certain areas earmarked for recreational / amenity use as part of recent planning approvals

The Cherwell Bloxham Conservation Area Appraisal (2007) identifies important listed and non-listed assets but also identifies key views that should be protected.

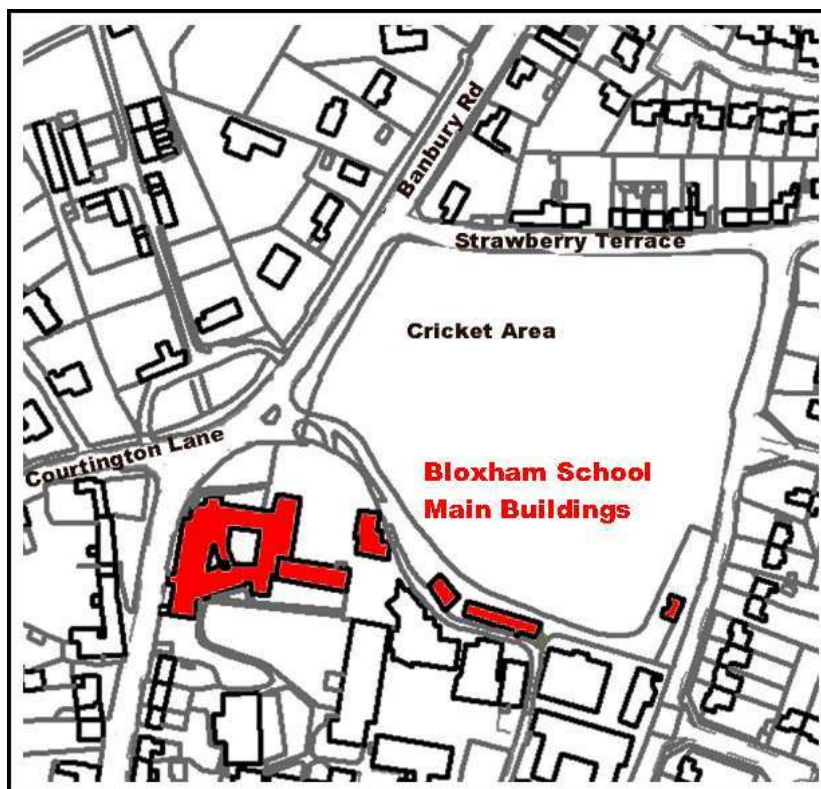
Until recently, the 60m (198ft) church steeple could be seen from most areas of the village. Further development should employ designs that minimise further loss of such views.

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 tranquillity 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.

³¹ [Cherwell Open Space Assessment \(2006\)](#)

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.

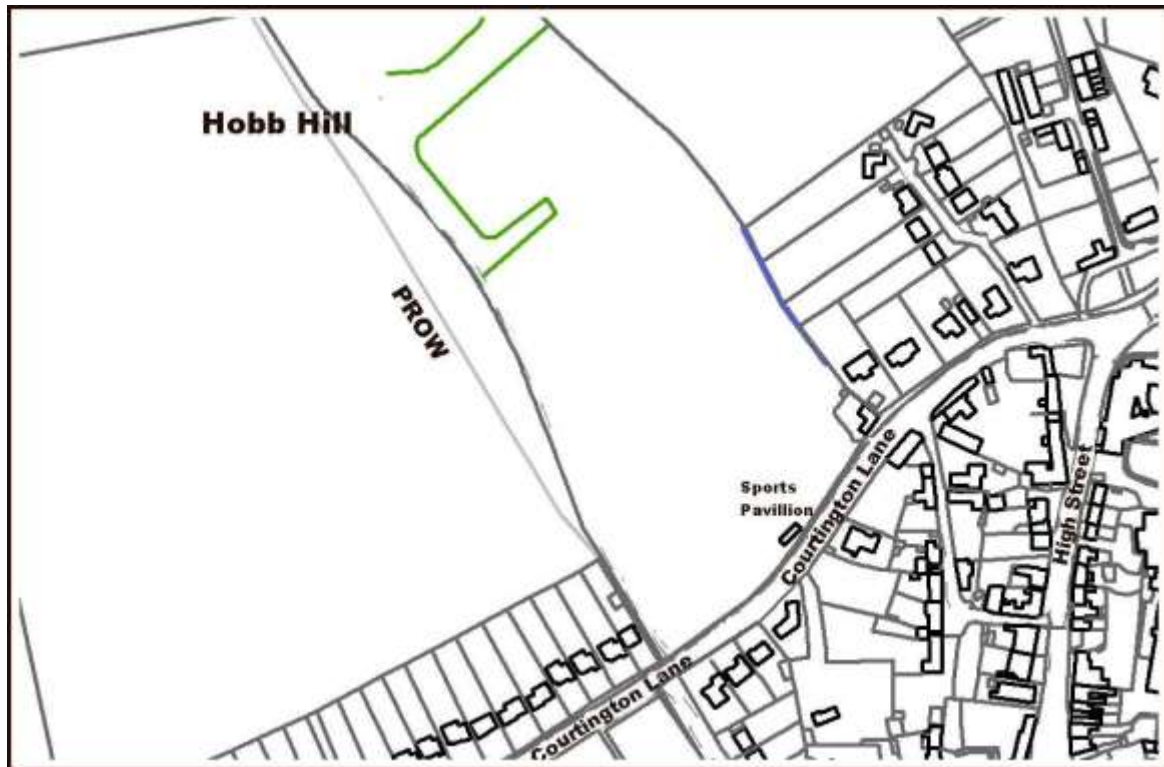


With the possible exception of the parish church, its visual impact is unsurpassed.

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 bid³²

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.

³² [Red Lion Gardens – 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

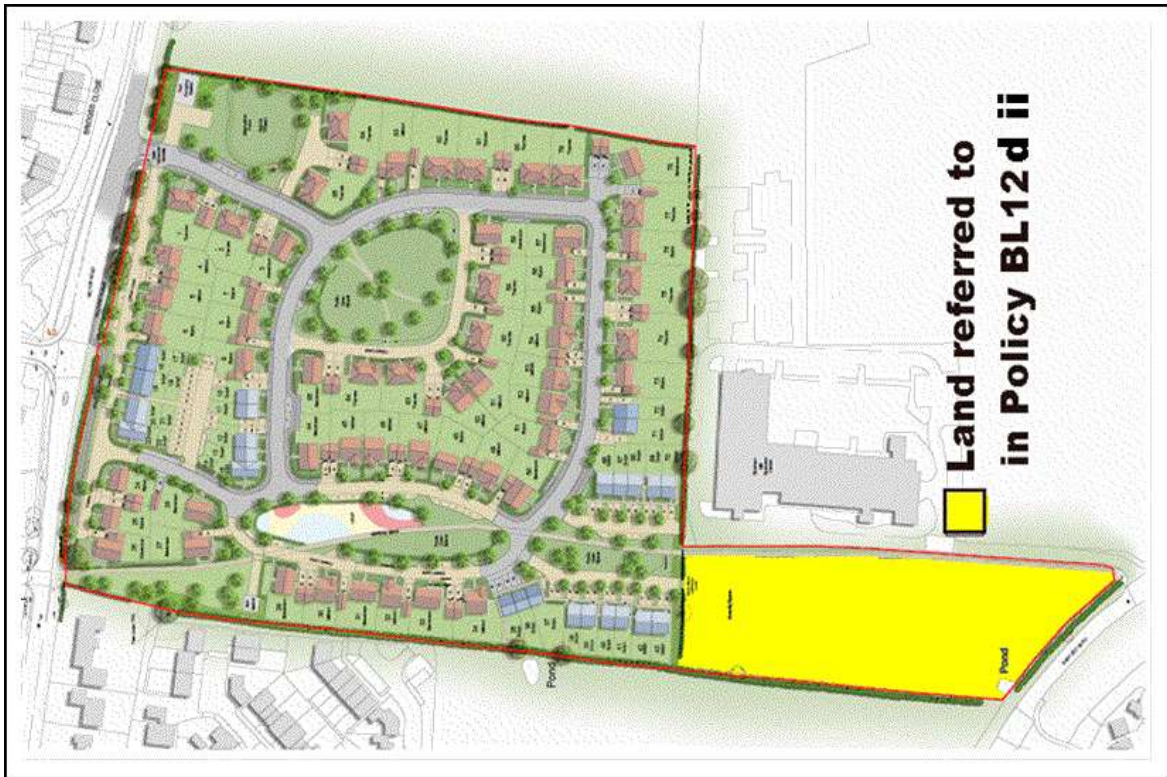
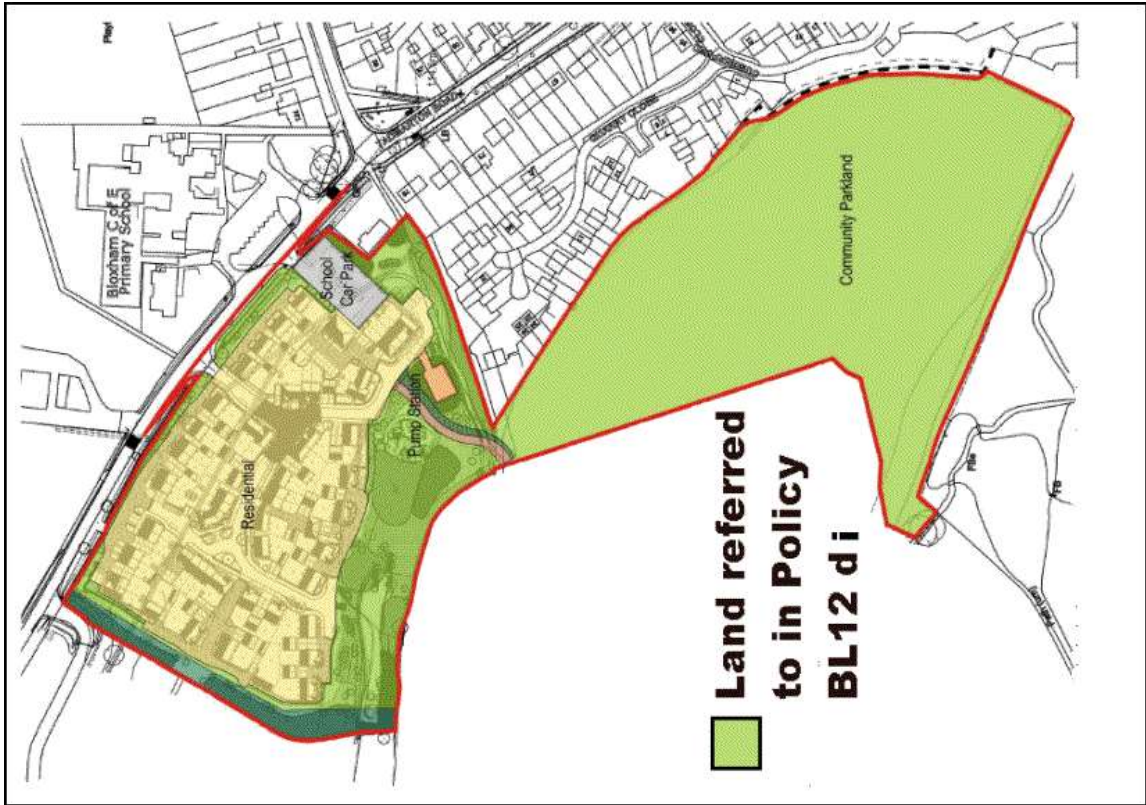
We consider these policies consistent with the following:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NPPF ✓ Past Local Plan (1996) ✓ Adopted Local Plan(2015) ✓ Oxfordshire C.C. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Para 58 Respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials. - Para 75 Planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access. - Para 109 Should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment protecting and enhancing valued landscapes. - Para 156 Conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape. - 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. - Para 6.38 Preserve as far as possible the visual character of the countryside and the indigenous wildlife of the site. - SO15 Protect and enhance historic and natural environment and Cherwell's core assets, including protecting and enhancing cultural heritage assets - A27 Protect and enhance wildlife habitats as priority. - Communities are able to be actively involved in promoting responsible walking and riding in their area. (Oxon PROW Management Plan 2015-25)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Community Support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 98.3% want to preserve the rural feel. - 96% support soft-edge boundaries, trees, hedgerows. - 93% Minimise light pollution, especially towards the village boundaries. - 98% want to preserve PROW around Bloxham. - Over 90% of residents want the Red Lion gardens protected.

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

- BL12
- a. Development that endangers visual impact of the key views set out in the Cherwell D.C. Bloxham Conservation Area Appraisal (2007) shall not be permitted.
 - b. Development anywhere in the village shall demonstrate it does not inflict significant harm upon the rural or heritage character. This will include consideration of the effect of development upon:
 - i. Views of high positive visual impact, particularly of the Parish Church or the area fronting the Bloxham School main buildings, towers or arches and views to and from Hobb Hill;
 - ii. The rural character engendered by all types of amenity green spaces;
 - iii. The views from, and the tranquillity of public rights of way within the parish. See Appendix 5.
 - iv. The historic character area of the Red Lion garden.
 - c. Development of domestic gardens will not be permitted unless such proposals fully meet all the criteria set out in Policies BL10 and BL11.
 - d. Development upon land designated for amenity use as part of recently approved planning decisions will not be supported. Such land will include
 - i. the country park associated with the forthcoming Tadmarton Road development;
 - ii. the proposed amenity space adjacent to the Barford Road and the entrance road to Bloxham Mill Business Park.

Note – Where we refer to amenity green spaces in the policies below this will include spaces listed in Cherwell D.C. Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Needs Assessment Audit and Strategy (2006) and all open spaces specifically allocated as part of the planning process associated with permissions granted since 2006.



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 |
| ✓ Past 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 22 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;
✓ Past 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	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. does not lead to the loss of A1 shops or of community facilities; ii. does not harm local residential amenity; iii. does not create parking problems; iv. does not encourage other than light vehicles onto residential streets; and v. does not exacerbate flood risk. <p>a. 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 they do not harm local amenity - as set out in Policy BL9</p>

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.
✓ Past 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	<p>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.</p> <p>b. Proposals from mobile phone network operators to improve mobile coverage will be supported where:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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. <p>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.</p>

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
✓ Past 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	Applications for additional or expanded retail facilities in the High Street and Church Street will be supported only if accompanied by a statement of how any additional impact upon traffic flow and pedestrian safety will be mitigated.

Theme 4 Ensure a safe, healthy, cohesive community

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.

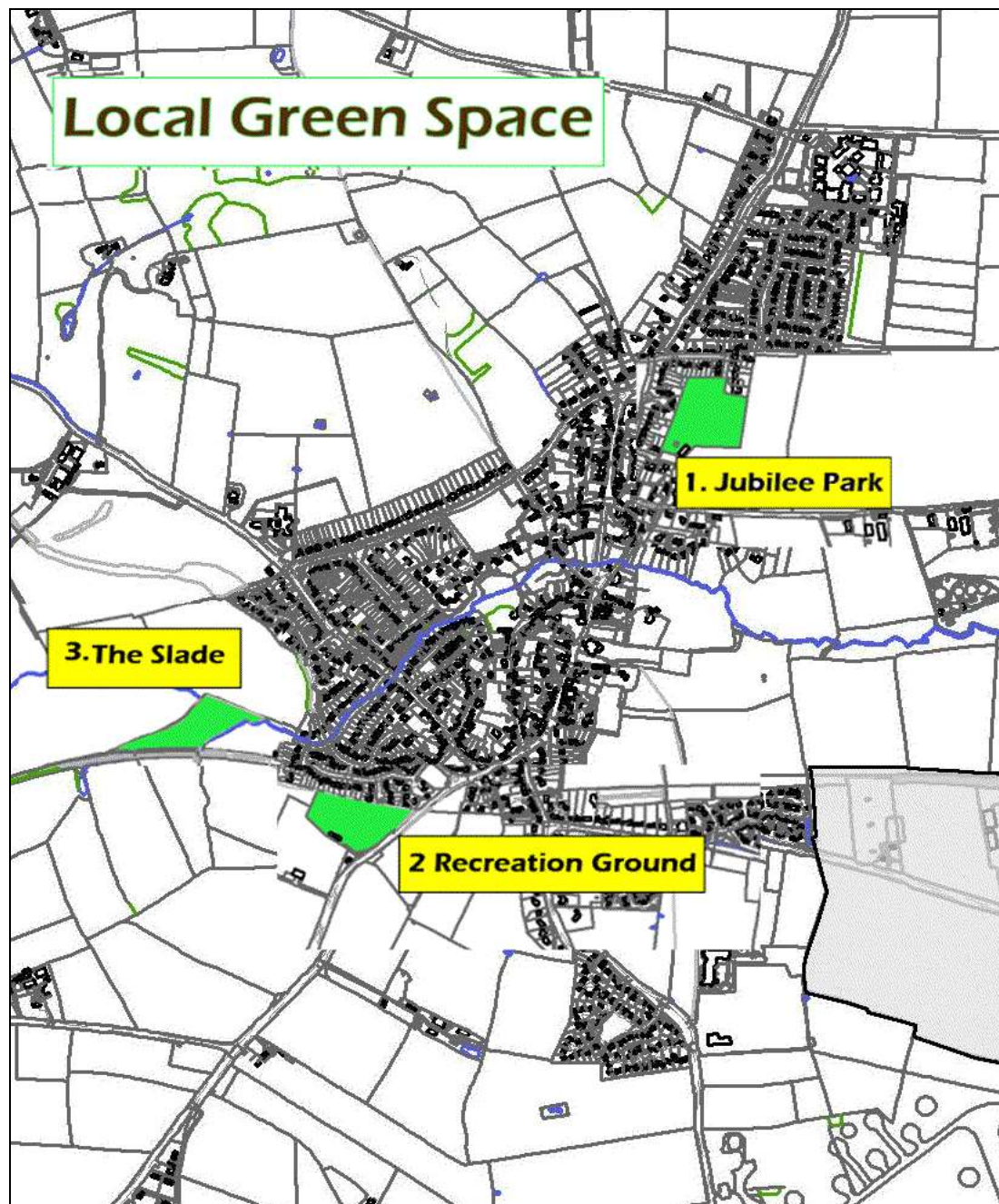
The BNDP Recreation working group investigated areas for additional or alternative provision of recreation areas but, given the potential value of land for housing development, none was forthcoming.

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 naturalists³³, schools and families and is demonstrably special for its tranquillity and wildlife: 96% of residents are in favour of protecting this area from any development and we propose Local Green Space status.

³³ See *The birds of the Slade Nature Reserve Bloxham* by Anthony Brownett (1992)

Public Rights of Way (PROW)

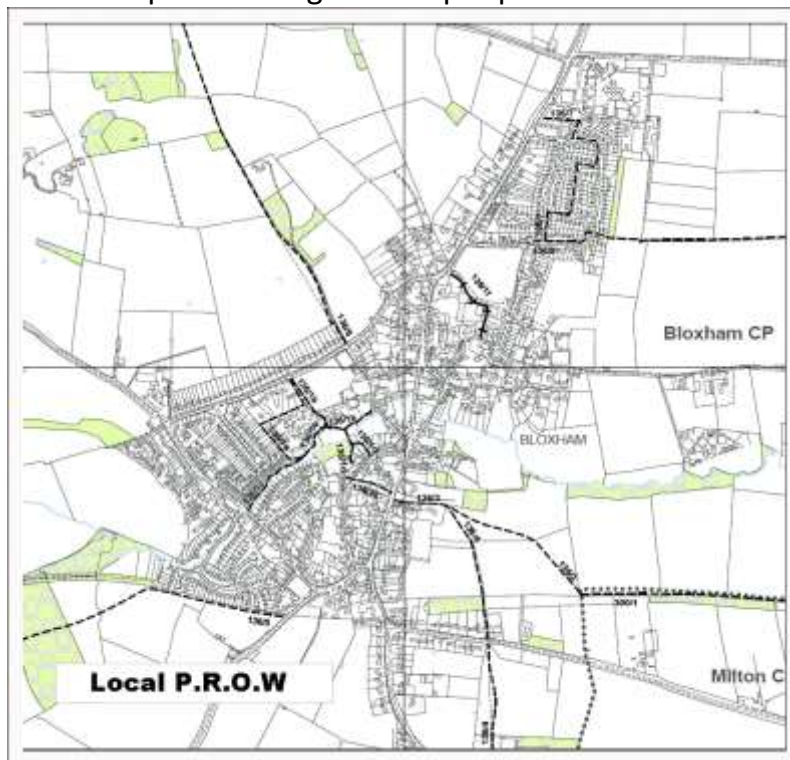
The importance of PROW from a connectivity perspective has already been highlighted but they are also important from a health and recreation perspective. Paths that still meander through green village fields offer residents of all ages quick access to healthy traffic-free exercise.

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 tranquillity 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 2015-25³⁴

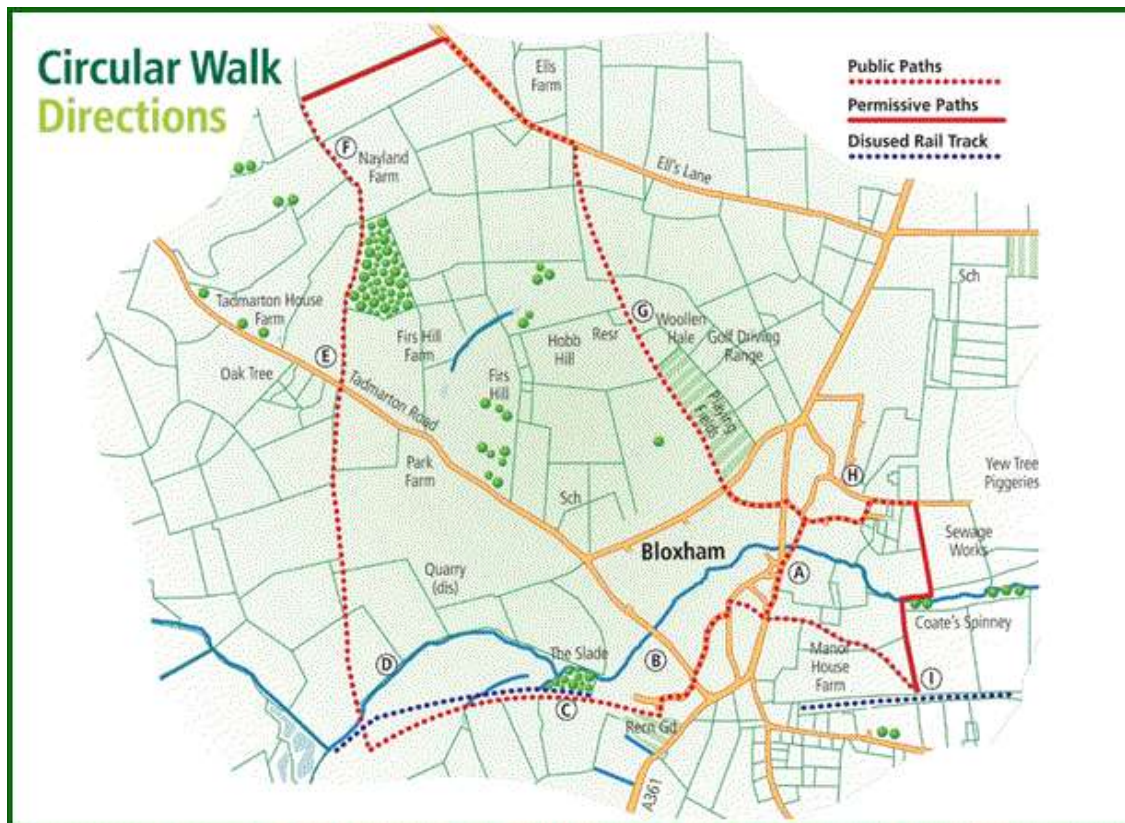
The definitive map of Oxfordshire PROW can be found on the Oxon C.C. site³⁵ but there is a partial map of the area around Bloxham below..

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.



³⁴ [Oxfordshire Rights of Way Management Plan 2015-25](#)

³⁵ [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 along with two Bloxham School areas. Bloxham School objected to such designation as unreasonably constraining. As there is limited public access to these two areas, it is clearly the visual impact that is important to residents. In the light of the school's objections, we have removed LGS designation but stress the fact that the view of the

school and the green area fronting it remain demonstrably special to the village and its general visual impact continues to receive protection in policy BL12.

POLICY TO PROTECT IMPORTANT RECREATION SPACES

- BL17
- a. The previously shown Local Green Space map (page 47) sets out designated Local Green Spaces. Proposals for development not ancillary to the use of the sites for recreational and sport purposes will be resisted.
 - i. The Jubilee Park
 - ii. The Recreation Ground
 - iii. 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.

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 accompanied by a formal shared use agreement and if care is taken not to affect the amenity of residents. 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...)
- ✓ Past Local Plan (1996) - 6.59 Land and buildings available for use by the whole community are an essential part of the social life of the village and it is important that such facilities are maintained and that, when required, new facilities

	provided.
✓ 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.

POLICIES 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.

BL19	Development of an all-weather pitch at Warriner School along Bloxham Grove Road shall be supported subject to a Joint Use Agreement between the school and the community and provided that the development is consistent with Policy BL9.
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C. Securing primary school capacity for all village children

This has already been raised in Theme 1 Policy BL9d where this question had a significant influence upon the proposed number of new dwellings for this plan. We will not repeat the arguments here other than to emphasize that the need established in Policy BL9d for any new housing development to 'demonstrate that there is capacity to educate primary aged children within the village and that the development will not lead to lack of school places for families of 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 an Appendix to 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.

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.³⁶

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.³⁷

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.³⁸

³⁶ [Bloxham Working Group Reports and consultation report](#)

³⁷ [NPPF](#)

³⁸ [CDC Evidence Base](#)

Oxfordshire County Council documents

Policies pertaining to education, highways and flooding draw heavily upon documents from Oxfordshire County Council.³⁹

The Census 2011

Much of the demographic data emanates from the 2011 census which is readily available online.⁴⁰

Oxfordshire Rural Community Council documents

Some statistical information about the village derives from the ORCC Rural community profile for Bloxham.⁴¹

ORCC also carried out the production, analysis and reporting of the main questionnaire and housing needs survey.

³⁹ [OCC Website](#)

⁴⁰ [Census 2011](#)

⁴¹ [ORCC Community Place profile - Bloxham](#)

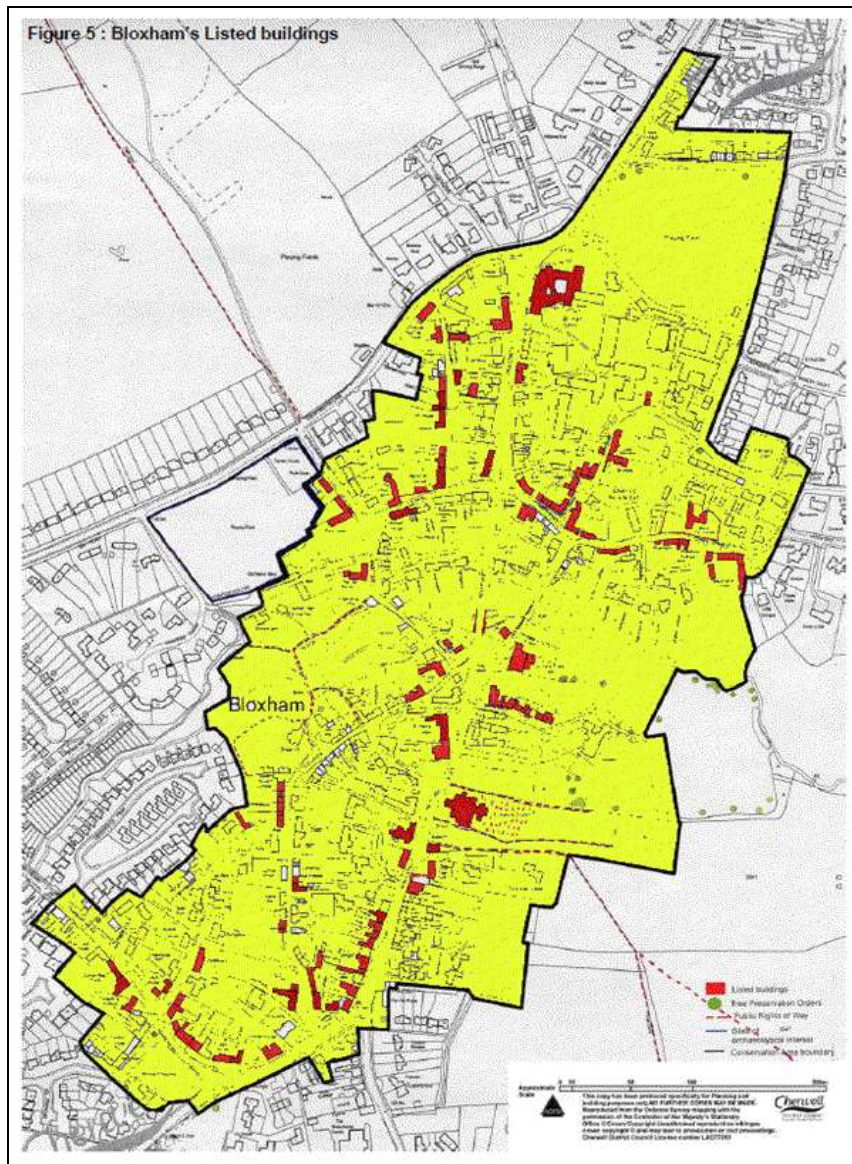
Appendices

Appendix 1 The BNDP Sustainability Report

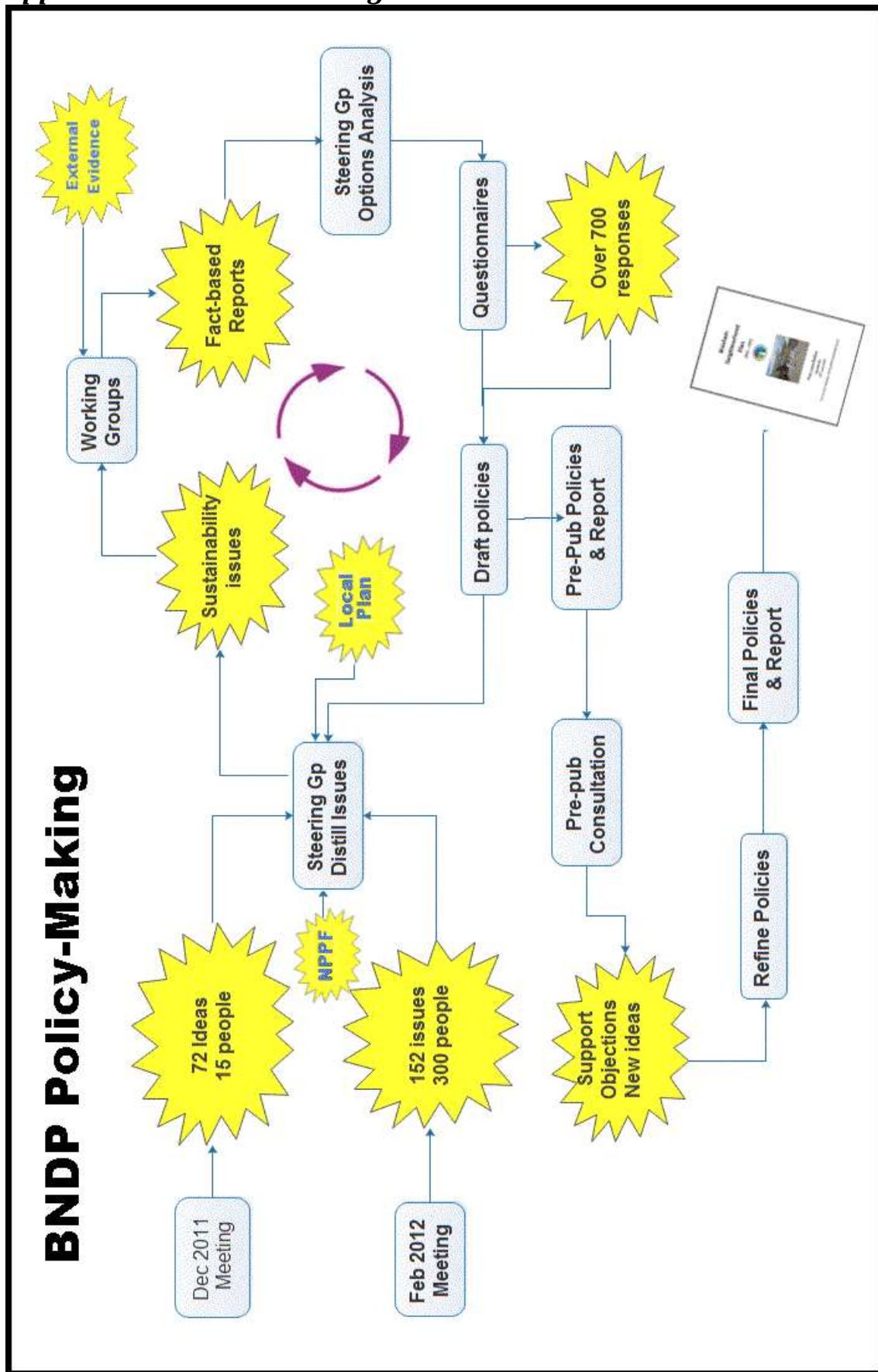
This is available as a separate document. It contains summarised evidence that impinges upon every policy in this Plan.

Appendix 2 The Conservation Area

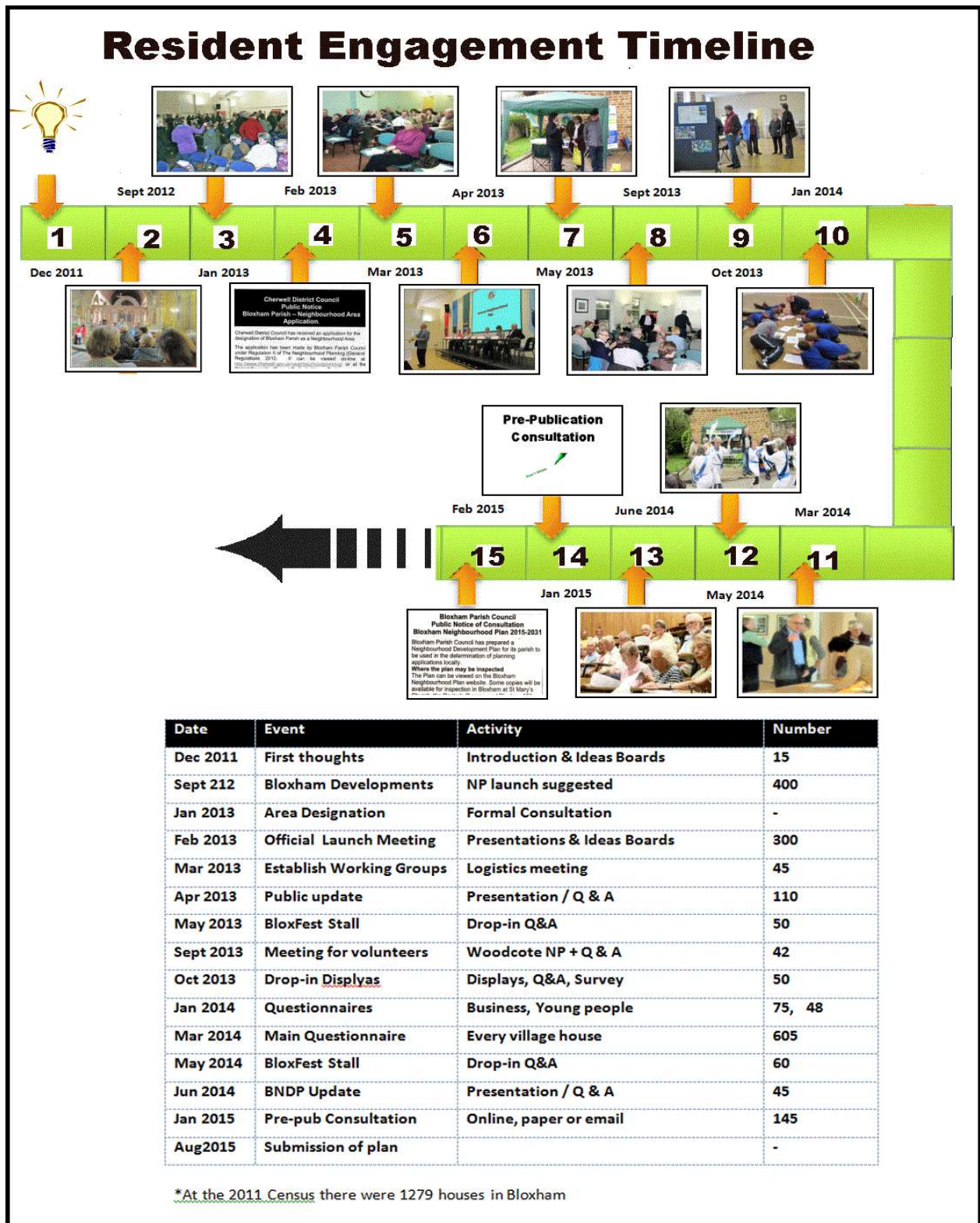
For detailed maps please see the Cherwell D.C. Conservation Area document which also notes several important but non-listed assets within this area. It is available from the BNDP or Cherwell D.C. websites.



Appendix 3 The Plan-making Process



Appendix 4 Public Engagement



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Cherwell District Council

Executive

5 September 2016

Air Quality Update

Report of Public Protection Manager

This report is public

Purpose of report

To update the Executive on progress with the draft Air Quality Action Plan for Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington prior to public and stakeholder consultation.

1.0 Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the current position on the review and assessment of air quality in Cherwell; and
- 1.2 To approve the draft Air Quality Action Plan for public and stakeholder consultation.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 established the legislative framework for local air quality management. Under the Act, the Council has a statutory duty to review and assess air quality in the District against national air quality objectives and co-ordinate actions to improve air quality where exceedances are identified.
- 2.2 Local authorities have a duty to declare any area where an air quality objective is unlikely to be, or is not being met as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Once an AQMA has been declared the Council is required to develop an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) outlining the measures required to improve air quality in that area.

3.0 Report Details

- 3.1 The review and assessment process identified nitrogen dioxide from road transport sources as the pollutant of concern in Cherwell. The review and assessment reports can be found on the air quality management page of the Council's website at www.cherwell.gov.uk/airqualitymanagement.
- 3.2 The assessment reports confirmed the air quality objective for nitrogen dioxide was being exceeded at four locations in the District and AQMAs were subsequently declared for these areas. The AQMAs are at:

1. Hennef Way in Banbury
2. Horsefair/North Bar in Banbury
3. Bicester Road in Kidlington
4. Kings End/Queens Avenue in Bicester

- 3.3 The action plan has to be realistic and reflect the current priorities and resources available to the Council and the highway authority. At this stage all possible actions have been put forward for consideration and so some of the proposals are preliminary or relatively broad and will require further work before they can be quantified in terms of costs and benefits.
- 3.4 Tables 5.1 to 5.5 in the draft AQAP, attached as Appendix 1, show the actions for consideration. Table 5.1 shows the general measures that could apply to all four AQMA's and Tables 5.2 to 5.5 the measures specific to one of the AQMAs.
- 3.5 Measures to improve air quality both within the AQMAs and in areas located outside the boundaries of the AQMAs that may affect the AQMA will also need to be considered. Particularly relevant and a challenge here is the need to consider the effects of new development with increased traffic movements on air quality and how this plan can contribute to new developments. Commuters in Cherwell travel relatively long distances to work and therefore reducing travel by car, managing traffic congestion and maximising the opportunity to shift from car dependency to sustainable modes of transport are the key challenges which are recognised in the draft plan.
- 3.6 A Steering Group will be established to consider the proposals further and the first meeting will be arranged for October 2016. The Steering Group will also consider responses to the wider consultation which will take place from mid-September until the end of December 2016.
- 3.6 The final Air Quality Action Plan for the District with the proposed actions relevant to each AQMA is planned to be submitted for Executive consideration at its meeting on the 6 March 2017.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The production of an AQAP is mandatory once an order to declare an AQMA has been issued. The Council has issued an order for each of the four AQMAs declared.

5.0 Consultation

- 5.1 As road transport sources are the cause of the problem in each AQMA, the AQAP will be developed in consultation with Oxfordshire County Council as the local Highways Authority. The Highways Authority is a statutory consultee.
- 5.2 Other statutory consultees include Defra (on behalf of the Secretary of State), Highways England, Environment Agency, Public Health England, Oxfordshire Public Health, and Neighbouring Authorities.
- 5.3 Bodies representing local business interests, Parish Councils and other relevant local interest groups will also be consulted on the draft AQAP. Information will be placed on the website and a press release issued to inform the wider community. Residents within the AQMAs will be sent a letter with details of the consultation and where to find relevant information.

- 5.4 Internally consultation will include Strategic Planning and the Economy, Community Services, Economic Growth and the Bicester Delivery Team. The Bicester delivery Team is particularly relevant given the many green transport initiatives proposed in the town.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: The Council could choose not to adopt an AQAP. However once an AQMA has been declared the Council is required to produce an AQAP and so for this reason this is not an alternative option.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. The continuing review and assessment of air quality and the development of the AQAP will be met within existing budgets. The reference to air quality funding via new development planning agreements recognises that there will be competing requirements through this process and therefore this funding source is not guaranteed.

Comments checked by Kelly Wheeler, Principal Accountant (Operations and Delivery), 01327 322230, kelly.wheeler@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Legal Implications

- 7.2 There is a statutory requirement to review and assess air quality and if an AQMA has been declared it is a requirement to produce an AQAP outlining the actions to improve air quality in that area.

Comments checked by Nigel Bell, Team Leader Planning & Litigation, 01295 221687 nigel.bell@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Risk

- 7.3 There is an increase in risk to health to prolonged exposure to elevated levels of nitrogen dioxide. This risk is being managed through the service risk register and will be escalated if necessary to the corporate register.

Comments checked by Ed Bailey, Corporate Performance Manager, 01295 221605 edward.bailey@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision

Financial Threshold Met: No

Community Impact Threshold Met: Yes

Wards Affected

Banbury Grimsbury and Hightown
Banbury Cross and Neithrop
Kidlington East
Bicester West
Bicester East
Bicester South and Ambrosden

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

Fulfilling the statutory regulatory functions of the Council, supporting the protection of human health and wellbeing from poor air quality and protecting the natural environment link to the Council's Business Plan objective to 'work to promote and support health and wellbeing across the District'

Lead Councillor

Councillor Tony Ilott, Lead Member for Public Protection

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Draft Air Quality Action Plan
Background Papers	
2016 Annual Status Report (available on the air quality management page on the council website)	
Report Author	Trevor Dixon, Environmental Protection Manager
Contact Information	01327 322279 Trevor.dixon@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk



DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Cherwell District Council Air Quality Action Plan

In fulfilment of Part IV of the
Environment Act 1995
Local Air Quality Management

August (2016)

Local Authority Officer	Sean Gregory
Department	Environmental Protection
Address	Bodicote House Whitepost Road Bodicote Banbury OX15 4AA
Telephone	01295 227001
E-mail	sean.gregory@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk
Report Reference number	sg 08 AQAP2016 AQ
Date	August 2016

DRAFT

Executive Summary

This Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) has been produced as part of our statutory duties required by the Local Air Quality Management framework. It outlines the action we will take to improve air quality in Cherwell between 2016 and 2020.

Air pollution is associated with a number of adverse health impacts. It is recognised as a contributing factor in the onset of heart disease and cancer. Additionally, air pollution particularly affects the most vulnerable in society: children and older people, and those with heart and lung conditions. There is also often a strong correlation with equalities issues, because areas with poor air quality are also often the less affluent areas^{1,2}.

The annual health cost to society of the impacts of particulate matter alone in the UK is estimated to be around £16 billion³. Cherwell District Council is committed to reducing the exposure of people in Cherwell to poor air quality in order to improve health.

We have developed actions that can be considered under five broad topics:

- Policy guidance and development control
- Promoting low emission transport
- Promoting travel alternatives to private vehicle use
- Transport planning and infrastructure
- Public information

Our priorities are:

- Priority 1 – Strengthening local policy to improve air quality and its role in protecting health;
- Priority 2 – Reducing NO_x emissions from cars in all AQMAs;
- Priority 3 – Ensuring new developments encourage and facilitate low emission and alternative transport;
- Priority 4 – Ensuring transport infrastructure delivery takes account of air quality improvement potential within AQMAs;
- Priority 5 – Raising awareness of poor air quality and encouraging improvement actions by vehicle users and fleet managers.

¹ Environmental equity, air quality, socioeconomic status and respiratory health, 2010

² Air quality and social deprivation in the UK: an environmental inequalities analysis, 2006

³ Defra. Abatement cost guidance for valuing changes in air quality, May 2013

In this AQAP we outline how we plan to effectively tackle air quality issues. It is recognised that Public Health and Highways Authority matters are beyond Cherwells direct control and partnership working to deliver the measures outlined is essential.

We recognise that there are a large number of air quality policy areas that are further outside of our influence (such as vehicle emissions standards agreed in Europe), but for which we may have useful evidence, and so we will continue to work with regional and central government on related policies and issues.

Responsibilities and Commitment

This AQAP was prepared by the Public Protection Service of Cherwell District Council with the support and agreement of the following officers and departments:

List officers/departments involved in the preparation of the AQAP

This AQAP has been sent for approval to go to out to public consultation by the Councils Executive at their meeting on 3rd September 2016.

This AQAP will be subject to an annual review and appraisal of progress each year will be reported in the Annual Status Reports (ASRs) produced by Cherwell District, as part of our statutory Local Air Quality Management duties, and to the Councils Executive.

If you have any comments on this AQAP please write to us using the following details and quoting AQAP in the title / header:

Email: airquality@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Address:

Environmental Protection
Bodicote House
Whitepost Road
Bodicote
Banbury
OX15 4AA

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	i
Responsibilities and Commitment	ii
1 Introduction	1
2 Summary of Current Air Quality in Cherwell District	2
3 Cherwell District's Air Quality Priorities	3
3.1 Public Health Context	3
3.2 Planning and Policy Context.....	5
3.2.1 Cherwell Local Plan Part 1	5
3.2.2 Cherwell Local Plan Part 2.....	6
3.2.3 Corporate Policy.....	7
3.3 Source Apportionment.....	7
3.3.1 AQMA No.1 Hennef Way, Banbury - Source Apportionment	8
3.3.2 AQMA No.2 Banbury - Source Apportionment	9
3.3.3 AQMA No.3 Bicester Road, Kidlington - Source Apportionment	10
3.3.4 AQMA No.4 Bicester - Source Apportionment.....	10
3.4 Required Reduction in Emissions.....	11
3.4.1 AQMA No.1 Hennef Way, Banbury – Required Reduction.....	11
3.4.2 AQMA No.2 Banbury – Required Reduction.....	11
3.4.3 AQMA No.3 Bicester Road, Kidlington – Required Reduction	11
3.4.4 AQMA No.4 Bicester – Required Reduction	12
3.5 Key Priorities	12
4 Development and Implementation of Cherwell District AQAP	13
4.1 Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement.....	13
4.2 Steering Group.....	14
5 AQAP Measures	15
Appendix A: Reasons for Not Pursuing Action Plan Measures	27
Glossary of Terms	29
References	30

List of Tables

Table 4.1 – Consultees from Schedule 11 of EA 1995	13
Table 5.1 – Air Quality Action Plan General	16

1 Introduction

This report outlines the actions that Cherwell District Council will deliver in order to reduce concentrations of air pollutants and exposure to air pollution; thereby positively impacting on the health and quality of life of residents and visitors to the Cherwell area.

It has been developed in recognition of the legal requirement on the local authority to work towards Air Quality Strategy (AQS) objectives under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 and relevant regulations made under that part and to meet the requirements of the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) statutory process.

This Plan will be reviewed every five years at the latest and progress on measures set out within this Plan will be reported on annually within Cherwell District's air quality ASR.

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2 Summary of Current Air Quality in Cherwell District

Cherwell District Council has identified four areas where air quality does not meet national air quality objectives for nitrogen dioxide. The locations of these four Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) can be found on our website at

www.cherwell.gov.uk/airqualitymanagement. There are two in Banbury, one in Bicester and one in Kidlington. These concentrations are largely related to road traffic emissions.

AQMA No.1 in Hennef Way exceeds the annual and hourly mean objectives for nitrogen dioxide.

AQMA No.2 between Oxford Road to Southam Road, Banbury, including a section of High Street exceeds the annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide.

AQMA No.3 on a section of Bicester Road, Kidlington to the north of the Water Eaton Lane controlled junction exceeds the annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide.

AQMA No.4 between the mini roundabout in Kings End through Queens Avenue to the Field Street mini roundabout, including St Johns, exceeds the annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide.

The latest monitoring indicates nitrogen dioxide concentrations are trending downwards in most places. This includes within the AQMAs, although concentrations in the AQMAs remain above the national air quality objective levels for nitrogen dioxide. Further information can be found in the latest Annual Status Report which can be downloaded at the website above. Monitoring locations and the latest monitoring data can also be found using the interactive map on <https://oxfordshire.air-quality.info/>.

3 Cherwell District's Air Quality Priorities

3.1 Public Health Context

Four AQMAs have been identified with people exposed to sufficiently poor air quality to require legal intervention under Environment Act 1995, which this action plan contributes to. Table 3.1 shows the number of residential properties within the AQMAs.

Table 3.1 – Residential properties within AQMAs

AQMA	Description	Nitrogen Dioxide Concentration ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) ^a	Approximate No. residential properties within AQMA
AQMA No.1	Hennef Way, Banbury	59.8	3
AQMA No.2	Banbury	40.9	86
AQMA No.3	Kidlington	41.1	5
AQMA No.4	Bicester	46.0	111

Notes:

^a 2015 Concentration at relevant exposure reported in ASR 2016

These AQMAs are localised areas representing the worst affected places. The main source of pollutants in these AQMAs is traffic emissions. Traffic emissions aren't localised i.e. journeys originating and terminating within the AQMA so measures to address emissions district-wide are collated as general measures.

It is anticipated that most general measures to reduce emissions will also contribute to reducing PM_{2.5} emissions from vehicles.

Where local measures to reduce pollutant concentrations are identified, these measures have been related to that specific AQMA.

Oxfordshire County Councils Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) provides information about Oxfordshire's population and the factors affecting health, wellbeing, and social care needs and can be found at <http://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/joint-strategic-needs-assessment>

Air quality is included in Section 4.2.8 of the 2016 JSNA under the “Wider Determinants; Environment” section and recognises:

- Poor air quality is known to have negative impacts on health.
- In the more densely populated areas of the county, and those which experience high traffic flows, increased levels of air pollution are of concern. In these areas, road traffic is the most significant source of pollutant emissions.
- There are currently 13 AQMAs in Oxfordshire, where the annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide is being exceeded (four in Cherwell, one covering the whole of Oxford, three in South Oxfordshire, three in Vale of White Horse and two in West Oxfordshire).
- Trends in air quality across some of Oxfordshire’s long-standing AQMAs show signs of improvement, with reductions in concentrations of nitrogen dioxide over recent years. However, new AQMAs are still being identified.
- Air Quality and Mortality Estimates In 2010 the UK Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants estimated that removing all man-made, particulate matter air pollution could save the UK population approximately 36.5 million life years over the next 100 years, and would be associated with an increase in UK life expectancy from birth, of six months on average.
- The calculated attributable proportion of deaths associated with air pollution, among those aged 25 and over in Oxfordshire, was 5.6% in 2010. However, given the uncertainties this could, in fact, be somewhere between 0.9% and 11%. For 2013 it was estimated that 5.3% of all-cause mortality among people aged 30 and over in Oxfordshire was attributable to particulate air pollution from man-made sources. This value has fluctuated between 5.1% and 5.6% over the years between 2010 and 2013 but it is not possible to tell whether or not changes are statistically significant.
- The national and regional averages in 2013 were 5.3% (England) and 5.2% (South East). Meanwhile, the proportion of mortality attributable to man-made air pollution in the districts ranged from 5% (in West Oxfordshire) to 5.6% (in Oxford) with the other three districts at 5.3%.

-The quantification of mortality burden associated with long term nitrogen dioxide concentration exposure is not currently available.

3.2 Planning and Policy Context

3.2.1 Cherwell Local Plan Part 1

The Cherwell Local Plan Part 1 was adopted in July 2015. It sets out proposals to support the local economy and the community between 2011 and 2016. This can be downloaded from the Cherwell District Council website or by following this [link](#).

Sustainable development is a key part of this Plan focussing proposed growth in and around Banbury and Bicester and limiting growth in rural areas. The Plan sets out planning policies grouped around three themes; Developing a Sustainable Local Economy, Building Sustainable Communities and Ensuring Sustainable Development. Section C outlines how these themes will be delivered in Bicester, Banbury, Kidlington and villages and rural areas.

The need to consider the effects of development on air quality, and how they can contribute towards improvements, is identified as a key challenge to ensuring sustainable development. Commuters in Cherwell travel relatively long distances to work and reducing travel by car and managing traffic congestion are identified as key challenges. Maximising the opportunity to shift from dependency on cars to sustainable modes of transport is also identified.

Relevant objectives and policies which may contribute to improvements in air quality within the AQMAs are referred to below. Further detail can be found in the adopted Local Plan.

The strategic objectives (SO) for ensuring sustainable development include minimising carbon emissions, promoting decentralised and renewable or low carbon energy where appropriate (SO11), reducing the dependency on the private car with increasing the attraction of public transport, cycling and travel by foot (SO13).

Policy SLE4 includes new developments to provide financial and/or in-kind contributions to mitigate the transport impacts of development. All development where reasonable to do so, should facilitate the use of sustainable modes of transport to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling. Encouragement will be given to solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion. Development which is not suitable for the

roads that serve the development and which have a severe traffic impact will not be supported.

Policies ESD 1 – ESD 5 address carbon emission reductions. These include a requirement that all new residential development will be expected to incorporate sustainable design and construction technology to achieve zero carbon development. All new non-residential development will be expected to meet at least BREEAM 'Very Good' (ESD 3). The encouragement of decentralising energy systems in developments e.g. district heating or combined heat and power (ESD 4). Support for renewable and low carbon provision wherever adverse impacts can be addressed satisfactorily is part of ESD 5.

Policy ESD10 includes the requirement for air quality assessments where development proposals would be likely to have a significantly adverse impact on biodiversity by generating an increase in air pollution.

Policy BSC 8 acknowledges the local environment has a fundamental impact on the health and well-being of local people. By providing facilities such as local open space this allows for activities such as walking and cycling, promoting healthy lifestyles.

Policy ESD 17 refers to providing opportunities for walking and cycling by maximising the opportunity to maintain and extend green infrastructure links and connecting the towns to the urban fringe and the wider countryside beyond.

Section C of The Cherwell Local Plan Part 1 contains the policies for Cherwells Places and includes detailed site-specific policies for large strategic developments. This includes a new zero-carbon mixed use development including 6000 homes at North West Bicester (Bicester 1: North West Bicester Eco-town).

The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) is appended to the Local Plan Part 1 and details projects to facilitate the proposed development growth. Some of these will contribute to improvements in air quality within the AQMAs. The IDP is reviewed on an annual basis.

3.2.2 Cherwell Local Plan Part 2

Cherwell District Council is currently preparing Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 2) which will contain non-strategic site allocations and development management policies.

An Issues Consultation Paper was published in January 2016. Related documents can be on the Cherwell District Council website or following this [link](#).

3.2.3 Corporate Policy

Further information to be included in this section following the consultation process on:

- *Cherwell District Council travel plan*
- *The Bicester Sustainable Transport Strategy*
- *Carbon Policy*
- *Procurement policy for CDC vehicles*
- *Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4)*
- *Local car parking policy and air quality.*
- *Local taxi licensing policy and air quality*
- *Strategic Economic Plan and air quality*
- *Cherwell Sustainable Community Strategy*

3.3 Source Apportionment

The AQAP measures presented in this report are intended to be targeted towards the predominant sources of emissions within Cherwell District's area.

Source apportionment exercises have been undertaken. These are presented in the in the following reports which can be found on www.cherwell.gov.uk/airqualitymanagement:

- Further Assessment - Hennef Way (2013)
- Banbury Source Apportionment (2015)
- Kidlington Source Apportionment (2015)
- Detailed Assessment – Bicester (2015)

The source apportionment aspects of these reports have been revised using the most recent emission factors (including petrol / diesel vehicle apportionment), background concentrations and monitoring results. The traffic survey data used is the same.

A summary of sources is shown in Table 3.2 below. The data used to inform these calculations is shown in Appendix B:

Table 3.2 Summarised NO₂ concentrations in AQMAs apportioned by source

AQMA	NO ₂ Concentration	% NO ₂ by Source				
		Background	Cars	LGVs	HGVs	Buses
1 (Hennef Way)	59.8 µg/m ³	32%	39%	17%	10%	2%
2 (Banbury)	40.9 µg/m ³	32%	39%	13%	10%	6%
3 (Kidlington)	41.1 µg/m ³	35%	41%	9%	6%	9%
4 (Bicester)	46.0 µg/m ³	27%	50%	8%	2%	13%

3.3.1 AQMA No.1 Hennef Way, Banbury - Source Apportionment

The source apportionment works reported in the 2013 Further Assessment for Hennef Way, Banbury were based on an exceedance of the annual mean objective not being predicted by the modelling undertaken. Uncertainties were identified in the monitoring i.e. significantly above the objective at the property boundary but significantly below at the property façade facing away from the roadside, which translated into the modelling. Subsequent Monitoring at relevant exposure is reported in the Updating and Screening Assessment 2015 and Annual Status Report 2016. Monitoring at both facades, at different heights on the roadside façade and at the property boundary fence have been reported and show exceedances at the roadside façade. The worst of these exceedances has been used for the source apportionment in this AQMA.

The worst case NO₂ of 59.8 µg/m³ is apportioned to:

- 6.3 µg/m³ NO₂ (10.5%) Regional Background
- 12.9 µg/m³ NO₂ (21.6%) Local Background
- 23 µg/m³ NO₂ (38.5%) Cars of which,

- 19.8 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ NO_2 (33.1%) Diesel Cars
- 10.2 NO_2 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ NO_2 (17.1%) Light Goods Vehicles
- 6.1 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ NO_2 (10.2%) Heavy Goods Vehicles
- 1 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ NO_2 (1.7%) Buses

Cars are the main contributor (38%) to this NO_2 concentration. Diesel car emissions are attributed to the majority of these car related emissions with 33% of the total, 19.8 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$. This diesel car fraction is larger than the total background NO_2 concentrations of 19.2 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$.

Light goods vehicles, of which the majority are diesel, make up the next highest proportion (17.1%) of this concentration, with HGVs accounting for 10% and buses a much smaller fraction (1.7%).

3.3.2 AQMA No.2 Banbury - Source Apportionment

The worst case NO_2 of 40.9 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ is apportioned to:

- 8.9 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ NO_2 (21.8%) Regional Background
- 8.7 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ NO_2 (21.3%) Local Background
- 19.2 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ NO_2 (46.9%) Cars of which,
 - 16.4 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ NO_2 (40.1%) Diesel Cars
- 6.3 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ NO_2 (15.4%) Light Goods Vehicles
- 5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ NO_2 (12.2%) Heavy Goods Vehicles
- 2.8 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ NO_2 (6.8%) Buses

Cars are the main contributor (46.9%) to this NO_2 concentration. Diesel car emissions are attributed to the majority of these car related emissions with 40.1% of the total, 16.4 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$. The total background concentration of NO_2 (17.6 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) is attributed to 43.1% of the total.

Light goods vehicles, of which the majority are diesel, make up the next highest proportion (15.4%) of this concentration, with HGVs accounting for 12.2% and buses a smaller fraction (6.8%).

3.3.3 AQMA No.3 Bicester Road, Kidlington - Source Apportionment

The worst case NO₂ of 41.1 µg/m³ is apportioned to:

- 6.4 µg/m³ NO₂ (15.6%) Regional Background
- 7.8 µg/m³ NO₂ (19.0%) Local Background
- 16.8 µg/m³ NO₂ (40.9%) Cars of which,
 - 14.3 µg/m³ NO₂ (34.8%) Diesel Cars
- 3.5 µg/m³ NO₂ (8.5%) Light Goods Vehicles
- 2.6 µg/m³ NO₂ (6.3%) Heavy Goods Vehicles
- 3.9 µg/m³ NO₂ (9.5%) Buses

Cars are the main contributor (40.9%) to this NO₂ concentration. Diesel car emissions are attributed to the majority of these car related emissions with 34.8% of the total, 14.3 µg/m³. The total background concentration of NO₂, 14.2 µg/m³, is attributed to 34.8% of the total.

Buses make up the next highest proportion (9.5%) with 3.9 µg/m³. Light goods vehicles make up the next highest proportion (8.5%) of this concentration, with HGVs accounting for a lower fraction of 6.3%.

3.3.4 AQMA No.4 Bicester - Source Apportionment

The worst case NO₂ of 46.0 µg/m³ is apportioned to:

- 6.6 µg/m³ NO₂ (14.3%) Regional Background
- 5.9 µg/m³ NO₂ (12.8%) Local Background
- 22.8 µg/m³ NO₂ (49.6%) Cars of which,
 - 19.5 µg/m³ NO₂ (42.4%) Diesel Cars
- 3.6 µg/m³ NO₂ (7.8%) Light Goods Vehicles
- 0.8 µg/m³ NO₂ (1.7%) Heavy Goods Vehicles
- 6.2 µg/m³ NO₂ (13.5%) Buses

Cars are the main contributor (46.9%) to this NO₂ concentration. Diesel car emissions are attributed to the majority of these car related emissions with 42.4% of

the total, $19.5 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$. The total background concentration of NO_2 ($12.5 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) is attributed to 27.1% of the total.

Buses, $6.2 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, make up the next highest proportion (13.5%) of this concentration with light goods vehicles accounting for 7.8 % and HGVs a much smaller fraction (1.7%).

3.4 Required Reduction in Emissions

The required reduction in emissions has been calculated in line with Defra's statutory Technical Guidance document (LAQM.TG16) to determine the road NO_x reduction required to meet the annual mean air quality objective of $40 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3 \text{NO}_2$. It is anticipated that this reduction will also achieve the hourly mean objective.

Total oxides of nitrogen (NO_x) are used for the required reduction in vehicle emissions. This is routinely used for vehicle emissions standards instead of NO_2 . Vehicles emit nitrogen dioxide (NO_2) and nitrogen oxide (NO) which make up the total NO_x . The NO reacts with ozone in sunlight to create NO_2 . The relationship between NO_x emitted and ambient NO_2 is not linear so emission reductions are presented in NO_x .

3.4.1 AQMA No.1 Hennef Way, Banbury – Required Reduction

To reduce the total NO_2 concentration by $19.8 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ at the worst case monitoring location in this AQMA, a road NO_x reduction of $61.6 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ (52%) is required.

3.4.2 AQMA No.2 Banbury – Required Reduction

To reduce the total NO_2 concentration by $0.9 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ at the worst case monitoring location in this AQMA, a road NO_x reduction of $11.1 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ (16%) is required.

3.4.3 AQMA No.3 Bicester Road, Kidlington – Required Reduction

To reduce the total NO_2 concentration by $1.1 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ at the worst case monitoring location in this AQMA, a road NO_x reduction of $11.2 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ (17%) is required.

3.4.4 AQMA No.4 Bicester – Required Reduction

To reduce the total NO₂ concentration by 6 µg/m³ at the worst case monitoring location in this AQMA, a road NO_x reduction of 25.6 µg/m³ (30%) is required.

3.5 Key Priorities

The key priorities for action are:

- Priority 1 – Strengthening local policy to improve air quality and its role in protecting health;
- Priority 2 – Reducing NO_x emissions from cars in all AQMAs;
- Priority 3 – Ensuring new developments encourage and facilitate low emission and alternative transport;
- Priority 4 – Ensuring transport infrastructure delivery takes account of air quality improvement potential within AQMAs;
- Priority 5 – Raising awareness of poor air quality and encouraging improvement actions by vehicle users and fleet managers.

4 Development and Implementation of Cherwell District AQAP

4.1 Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

In developing this draft AQAP, we have worked with other local authorities and agencies to improve local air quality. Schedule 11 of the Environment Act 1995 requires local authorities to consult the bodies listed in Table 4.1.

In addition we will undertake the following stakeholder engagement:

- Website consultation
- Article in local press
- Article in local newsletter

(The response to our consultation / stakeholder engagement will be appended to the final AQAP)

Table 4.1 – Consultees from Schedule 11 of EA 1995

Consultee
Secretary of State
Environment Agency
Highways authority
Neighbouring local authorities
Other public authorities as appropriate, such as Public Health officials
Bodies representing local business interests and other organisations as appropriate

List these here:

4.2 Steering Group

Defra's Statutory Policy Guidance (LAQM.PG16) recommends the steering group is of sufficient seniority to ensure that the outputs from the group are taken forward and as significant action is required from Oxfordshire County Council to resolve the air quality issues, it would be beneficial to have a senior county council representative as co-chair.

A steering group will be set up to consider the actions in Tables 5.1 to 5.5. Officer level engagement has been undertaken to develop some of these measures.

Several steering group meetings were run in 2013 to develop action measures for AQMA No.1 – Hennef Way. These actions were not taken further due to the uncertainties raised over an exceedance occurring at a relevant receptor (identified in the 2013 Further Assessment report) and Defra requiring further monitoring to address this uncertainty. These measures are included in tables 5.1 – 5.5.

(To give the public further confidence that the work being taken forward to tackle air quality is supported at the highest level, it's recommended that engagement in and sign-off of Action Plans and annual reports is undertaken by both the Chief Executive and also the heads of the main departments involved)

5 AQAP Measures

Table 5.1 to 5.5 show the Cherwell District AQAP measures. It contains:

- a list of the actions that form part of the plan
- the responsible individual and departments/organisations who will deliver this action
- expected benefit in terms of pollutant emission and/or concentration reduction
- the timescale for implementation

Updates on the implementation of these measures will be reported on in future Annual Status Reports which will be available to download at www.cherwell.gov.uk/airqualitymanagement.

Measures that will not be pursued and the reasons why are shown in Table A.1 in Appendix A.

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Table 5.1 – Air Quality Action Plan General

Measure No.	Measure	EU Category	EU Classification	Lead Authority	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Target Pollution Reduction in the AQMA	Progress to Date	Comments
G.1	Explore Local Plan including Low Emission Vehicle uptake measures incorporated into all new developments	Policy Guidance and Development Control	Air Quality Planning and Policy Guidance	CDC	2016/17	2017	medium		
G.2	All major developments to include Emission statements and mitigation strategies within an appropriate air quality assessment submitted at the application stage.	Policy Guidance and Development Control	Air Quality Planning and Policy Guidance	CDC	2016/17	2017	medium		

Measure No.	Measure	EU Category	EU Classification	Lead Authority	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Target Pollution Reduction in the AQMA	Progress to Date	Comments
G.3	Damage cost calculations to be included in air quality assessments to show the financial impact of developments.	Policy Guidance and Development Control	Air Quality Planning and Policy Guidance	CDC	2016	2016	low	n/a	
G.4	Major developments in or within 100 metres of an AQMA will be air quality neutral	Policy Guidance and Development Control	Air Quality Planning and Policy Guidance	CDC	tbc	tbc	low	n/a	All major developments within 100 metres of an AQMA will be air quality neutral to avoid impacting the local background NOx contribution.

Measure No.	Measure	EU Category	EU Classification	Lead Authority	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Target Pollution Reduction in the AQMA	Progress to Date	Comments
G.5	Travel plans submitted with development proposals will make reference their contribution to the mitigation strategy and progress will be reported to CDC for 5 years post development completion.	Policy Guidance and Development Control	Air Quality Planning and Policy Guidance	OCC / CDC	tbc	tbc	low		Travel plans should address air quality specifically and be reported in such a fashion they can be included in the Annual status report.
G.6	Air Quality actions to be included in the Local Transport Plan	Policy Guidance and Development Control	Air Quality Planning and Policy Guidance	OCC	2015	2016	medium	LTP4 (2016 update) includes an annex on actions to address air quality	Ongoing measure development and updates to LTP4 to represent changes in air quality. Maintain close links between OCC and CDC.

Measure No.	Measure	EU Category	EU Classification	Lead Authority	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Target Pollution Reduction in the AQMA	Progress to Date	Comments
G.7	Air Quality included in the Public health framework Joint Strategic Needs Assessment	Policy Guidance and Development Control	Air Quality Planning and Policy Guidance	OCC	2015	2015	low	JSNA includes statement on air quality	JSNA includes air quality. To maintain, update and progress actions as part of the annual review process.
G.9	Include low emission vehicles in taxi licensing policy to encourage their take up and use within the district.	Policy Guidance and Development Control	Other Policy	CDC	2016	2017	low		Taxi licensing policy is currently being revised.
G.10	Low emission plant, vehicle, delivery and fleet requirements to be included in sustainable procurement section of CDC procurement policy.	Policy Guidance and Development Control	Sustainable procurement guidance	CDC	2016	2017	low		

Measure No.	Measure	EU Category	EU Classification	Lead Authority	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Target Pollution Reduction in the AQMA	Progress to Date	Comments
G.11	Low emission plant, vehicle, delivery and fleet requirements to be included in sustainable procurement section of OCC procurement policy.	Policy Guidance and Development Control	Sustainable procurement guidance	OCC	2016	2017	medium		

Table 5.2 – AQMA No.1 Hennef Way Air Quality Action Plan

Measure No.	Measure	EU Category	EU Classification	Lead Authority	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Target Pollution Reduction in the AQMA	Progress to Date	Comments
1.1	Banbury Park and Ride Bus service around M40 junction	Alternatives to private vehicle use	Bus based Park & Ride	OCC	tbc	tbc	medium	tbc	OCC to add. Feasibility done?
1.2	Targeted business-led employee lift share schemes	Alternatives to private vehicle use	Car & lift sharing schemes	OCC	tbc	tbc	low	tbc	Target Banbury - Brackley employee journeys and local industrial estates i.e. Wildmere and Overthorpe
1.3	Corporate policy encouraging home working where possible and equipment provision.	Promoting Travel Alternatives	Encourage / Facilitate home-working	CDC	2014	2014	low	complete	CDC transport policy encourages home working and regularly reviews work travel.
1.4	Promote use of canal towpath routes	Promoting Travel Alternatives	Promote use of rail and inland waterways	CRT	tbc				
1.5	Promote use of rail to get into Banbury	Promoting Travel Alternatives	Promote use of rail and inland waterways	OCC					
1.6	Identify school journeys on this route e.g. Banbury - Middleton Cheney to monitor and promote school travel plans	Promoting Travel Alternatives	School Travel Plans	OCC					

Measure No.	Measure	EU Category	EU Classification	Lead Authority	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Target Pollution Reduction in the AQMA	Progress to Date	Comments
1.7	Green Wall Barrier between carriageway and receptor	Transport Planning and Infrastructure	Other	OCC					
1.8	Targeted business-led workplace travel plan promotion	Promoting Travel Alternatives	Workplace Travel Planning						Target Banbury - Brackley employee journeys and local industrial estates i.e. Wildmere and Overthorpe

Table 5.3 – AQMA No.2 Banbury Air Quality Action Plan

Measure No.	Measure	EU Category	EU Classification	Lead Authority	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Target Pollution Reduction in the AQMA	Progress to Date	Comments
2.1	Banbury Park and Ride Bus service	Alternatives to private vehicle use	Bus based Park & Ride	OCC	tbc	tbc	medium	tbc	OCC to add. Feasibility done?
2.2	Priority parking for lift share permit holders in CDC owned car parks	Alternatives to private vehicle use	Car & lift sharing schemes	CDC	tbc	tbc	low	tbc	Lift share permit system and assign priority parking for permit holders.
2.3	Banbury wide car club	Alternatives to private vehicle use	Car Clubs	OCC	2017	tbc	low	tbc	Assess feasibility for Banbury area.
2.4	Corporate policy encouraging home working where possible and equipment provision.	Promoting Travel Alternatives	Encourage / Facilitate home-working	CDC	2014	2014	low	complete	CDC transport policy encourages home working and regularly reviews work travel.
2.5	Promote use of canal towpath routes	Promoting Travel Alternatives	Promote use of rail and inland waterways	CRT	tbc				
2.6	Promote use of rail to get into Banbury	Promoting Travel Alternatives	Promote use of rail and inland waterways	OCC					Promote use of rail to get into Banbury

Table 5.4 – AQMA No.3 Kidlington Air Quality Action Plan

Measure No.	Measure	EU Category	EU Classification	Lead Authority	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Target Pollution Reduction in the AQMA	Progress to Date	Comments
3.1	Lift share campaign at Water Eaton Park and ride	Alternatives to private vehicle use	Car & lift sharing schemes	OCC	tbc	tbc	low	tbc	Water Eaton traffic drives through this AQMA. Promote lift share to encourage sharing to the park and ride.
3.2	Promote use of canal towpath routes	Promoting Travel Alternatives	Promote use of rail and inland waterways	GRT	tbc				
3.3	Promote use of rail to get into Bicester	Promoting Travel Alternatives	Promote use of rail and inland waterways	OCC					Promote use of rail to get into Bicester
3.4	Feasibility for traffic light management to reduce north side queuing to be investigated.	Traffic Management	UTC, Congestion management, traffic reduction	OCC					

Table 5.5 – AQMA No.4 Bicester Air Quality Action Plan

Measure No.	Measure	EU Category	EU Classification	Lead Authority	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Target Pollution Reduction in the AQMA	Progress to Date	Comments
4.1	Bicester Park and Ride Bus service	Alternatives to private vehicle use	Bus based Park & Ride	OCC	2015	2016	medium	Delivered	Potential to include alternative vehicle charging at this site to encourage low emission vehicle transport
4.2	Priority parking for lift share permit holders in CDC owned car parks	Alternatives to private vehicle use	Car & lift sharing schemes	CDC	tbc	tbc	low	tbc	Lift share permit system and assign priority parking for permit holders.
4.3	Bicester wide car club	Alternatives to private vehicle use	Car Clubs	OCC	2016	tbc	low	tbc	A2 dominion administers a car club for the Elmsbrook development. Assess feasibility for wider Bicester area.
4.4	Promote Oxford Parkway station for journeys into Bicester	Alternatives to private vehicle use	Rail based Park & Ride	OCC	tbc	tbc	low	tbc	Oxford Parkway alternative to travel to Bicester.
4.5	Low emission delivery plans	Freight and Delivery Management	Delivery and Service plans	OCC	tbc	tbc	low	tbc	Assess feasibility to introduce low emission delivery vehicle requirements.
4.6	Bicester active travel i.e. walking and cycling campaign	Promoting Travel Alternatives	Intensive active travel campaign & infrastructure	CDC	2016	2017	high	tbc	Healthy town to encourage active travel i.e. walking and cycling

Measure No.	Measure	EU Category	EU Classification	Lead Authority	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Target Pollution Reduction in the AQMA	Progress to Date	Comments
4.7	Identify school journeys on this route to monitor and promote school travel plans	Promoting Travel Alternatives	School Travel Plans	OCC					
4.8	Wayfinding campaign	Promoting Travel Alternatives	Other	CDC	2016	2017		tbc	Wayfinding campaign to signpost walking and cycling routes around Bicester.
4.9	Central corridor works in LTP	Traffic Management	Strategic highway improvements, Re-prioritising road space away from cars, inc Access management, Selective vehicle priority, bus priority, high vehicle occupancy lane	OCC					

Appendix A: Reasons for Not Pursuing Action Plan Measures

Table A.1 – Action Plan Measures Not Pursued and the Reasons for that Decision

Action category	Action description	Reason action is not being pursued (including Stakeholder views)
Bus based Park and ride	Removal of Water Eaton Park and Ride to reduce travel to this park and ride facility.	The park and ride facility reduces journeys into neighbouring authorities AQMA.
Rail based Park & Ride	Promotion of rail based park and ride	Banbury and Bicester stations are located in areas which may encourage journeys through AQMAs.
Environmental Permits	Environmental permit based actions	Transport is the main contributor to pollutants in the AQMAs.
Freight Consolidation Centre	Freight Consolidation Centre	main emission source is cars
Freight Partnerships for city centre deliveries	Freight Partnerships for city centre deliveries	main emission source is cars
Quiet & out of hours delivery	Quiet & out of hours delivery	main emission source is cars
Route Management Plans/ Strategic routing strategy for HGV's	Route Management Plans/ Strategic routing strategy for HGV's	main emission source is cars
Public information via television	TV campaign	Limited impact
Anti-idling enforcement	Anti-idling enforcement campaign	Idling hasn't been identified as a significant issue in any AQMA.

Reduction of speed limits, 20mph zones	Reduction of speed limits	Speeding or faster moving traffic has not been identified as an issue. Hennef Way dual carriageway has a speed reduction to 50 mph in place currently.
Road User Charging (RUC)/ Congestion charging	Congestion charging in towns	No zone for congestion charging identified.
Testing Vehicle Emissions	Roadside testing of vehicle emissions campaigns	-
Workplace Parking Levy, Parking Enforcement on highway	Workplace Parking Levy, Parking Enforcement on highway	Roadside parking not identified as a significant issue.
Vehicle Retrofitting programmes	Vehicle Retrofitting programmes	-
Transport Planning and Infrastructure	Purchasing the 3 houses within AQMA No.1	Not improving air quality or the neighbourhood with empty properties.

Glossary of Terms

Abbreviation	Description
AQAP	Air Quality Action Plan - A detailed description of measures, outcomes, achievement dates and implementation methods, showing how the local authority intends to achieve air quality limit values'
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area – An area where air pollutant concentrations exceed / are likely to exceed the relevant air quality objectives. AQMAs are declared for specific pollutants and objectives
AQS	Air Quality Strategy
ASR	Air quality Annual Status Report
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
EU	European Union
LAQM	Local Air Quality Management
NO	Nitrogen Oxide
NO ₂	Nitrogen Dioxide
NO _x	Nitrogen Oxides
PM ₁₀	Airborne particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 10µm (micrometres or microns) or less
PM _{2.5}	Airborne particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 2.5µm or less
...	...

References

Cherwell's Environmental Strategy for a Changing Climate (2008)

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Cherwell District Council

Executive

5 September 2016

Award Of Liquid Fuel Contract

Report of Chief Finance Officer

This report is public

Purpose of report

To consider the award of contracts to supply diesel to Cherwell District Council.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To approve the acceptance of the recommended tender for the supply of diesel for October 2016-September 2018.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 Cherwell District Council has an annual requirement for approximately 363,000 litres of diesel that is delivered to its storage tanks at Highfield and Thorpe Lane Depots. At current market prices this requirement has an annual value in the region of £317,000. The size of the contract award exceeds delegated authority arrangements and hence requires an Executive decision.

3.0 Report Details

- 3.1 To secure the lowest cost of supply Cherwell District Council purchases diesel in bulk for deliveries to its storage tanks. This results in a lower cost per unit than would be obtained from garage forecourts.
- 3.2 The cost of diesel is made up of three elements: 1. cost of the product (this is tracked by The Platts Index) Platts is a global provider of energy, petrochemicals, metals and agriculture information, and a source of benchmark price assessments for those commodity markets since 1909 2. Duty 3. Delivery and profit.
- 3.3 As the Council cannot influence either element 1 (set by international markets) or 2 (set by Central Government) tenders are evaluated on element 3.

- 3.4 To minimise the cost of running a procurement exercise and to drive down the delivery & profit element of the fuel cost CDC cooperated with the Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation who ran a further competition using the national 'Liquid Fuels' framework contract.
- 3.5 ESPO grouped requirements by County and tendered these requirements with all the eligible suppliers on the Framework. For Oxfordshire this meant that Cherwell District Council's requirement was grouped with that of Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue service, Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council and West Oxfordshire District Council to give a total diesel requirement in excess of 1.4 million litres a year.
- 3.6 ESPO analysed the tenders received and Certas Energy UK Ltd were found to have submitted the most advantageous tender for the supply of both white and red diesel. The margins offered by Certas Energy UK Ltd are unfortunately higher than the current contract and will result in an increase of approximately £2,300 a year.
- 3.7 ESPO proposes to run a further competition for the supply of diesel for October 2016 – September 2018.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 Following a 'best practice' procurement exercise Certas Energy UK Ltd have submitted the lowest cost tender for the supply of Diesel to Cherwell District Council for the next two years and the Executive is recommended to authorise the award.

5.0 Consultation

Cllr Ken Atack, Lead Member for Financial Management.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 No reasonable alternatives.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 The increase in margins offered by Certas Energy UK Ltd should result in an increase of approximately £2,300 a year.

Comments checked by:

Paul Sutton, Chief Finance Officer, 0300 0030106,
Paul.Sutton@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Legal Implications

7.2 The procurement has been undertaken in compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

Comments checked by:

Kevin Lane, Head of Law and Governance, 0300 0030107,
kevin.lane@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision

Financial Threshold Met: Yes

Community Impact Threshold Met: No

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

Sound budgets and customer focused council

Lead Councillor

Ken Attack, Lead Member for Financial Management.

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
None	
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Paul Sutton, Chief Finance Officer
Contact Information	0300 0030106 Paul.sutton@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

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Cherwell District Council

Executive

5 September 2016

Consultation & Engagement Strategy (2016–19)

Report of Director - Strategy and Commissioning

This report is public

Purpose of report

To set out the Strategy for Consultation and Engagement for Cherwell District Council, and the action plan for the consultations and engagements for 2016/17.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended to:

- 1.1 Agree the three year Strategy for Consultation and Engagement.
- 1.2 Agree the consultation and engagement action plan for 2016/17 noting the areas of joint working with partner agencies and developing closer links with our communities.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 This report presents the consultation and engagement strategy. The strategy will outline the principles for consultation and engagement for the council enabling us to continue to improve service delivery by collecting focussed and meaningful feedback from residents, communities and customers.
- 2.2 This joint strategy will be used as the basis for the annual action plans to guide the specific consultation and engagement events that Cherwell District Council will be undertaking during the period 2016 to 2019.
- 2.3 The Council has had a consultation strategy in place since 2009 which has now come to an end and needs updating.

3.0 Report Details

- 3.1 The consultation and engagement strategy for 2016–2019 is attached as appendix 1, it sets out the types and methods of engagement and consultation that will be used which will be proportionate and appropriate to the nature and subject matter and has a much greater emphasis on partnership working.
- 3.2 The action plan for 2016/2017 is attached as appendix 2 and contains local opportunities to consult and engage with the local community and the district as a whole. It sets out the topic to be covered and the audience the event/consultation is targeted at.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The council has undertaken regular consultations and engagement events since 2009 and the new strategy will build on this foundation. The strategy is supported by meaningful and relevant action plans to provide the detail for how this work will be carried out.
- 4.2 The 2016-17 action plan demonstrates how the council will continue to deliver consultations and public engagement and thereby support the stated equalities objectives over the coming year. Progress will be reported via the performance management framework on a quarterly basis. The equalities objectives are:
- Fair Access and Customer Satisfaction
 - Tackling Inequality and Deprivation
 - Building Strong and Cohesive Communities
 - Positive Engagement and Understanding
 - Demonstrating Our Commitment to Equality

5.0 Consultation

No specific consultation on this report is required.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: To note the report

Option 2: To request additional information on items within this report

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 There are no financial implications

Comments checked by:

Paul Sutton – Chief Finance Officer, 03000 030106

Paul.Sutton@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Legal Implications

- 7.2 The Council can be under a mandatory legal duty to consult on certain proposed decisions (such as budget setting) and an implied duty to ensure fair decision taking processes in other areas. When consultation takes place due regard must be had to the responses and, where a different approach is taken to the prevailing view arising from the consultation this needs to be expressly justified. In short proper and effective consultation adds to the robustness and legality of the Council's decision making. It also enables the Council to comply with the public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010.

Comments checked by:

Nigel Bell, Team Leader – Planning and Litigation, 01295 221687

nigel.bell@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Risk Implications

- 7.3 There are no Corporate Risks recorded on the Register; however for all Community Engagement Events a risk assessment is conducted and insurance is checked for validity with copies provided to the external venue if required.

Comments checked by:

Edward Bailey: Corporate Performance Manager - 01295 221605

edward.bailey@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision

Financial Threshold Met: No

Community Impact Threshold Met: No

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

Corporate Plan and Equality Framework for local Government

Lead Councillor

Councillor Wood, Leader of the Council and Executive Member for policy, partnerships and performance management.

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Consultation & Engagement Strategy 2016-2019
Appendix 2	Consultation & Engagement Action Plan 2016/17
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Tracie Darke, Consultation and Engagement Officer Ed Bailey, Corporate Performance Manager
Contact Information	01295 221605 Edward.Bailey@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Cherwell District Council

Consultation and Engagement Strategy

2016 - 2019

Contents

1. Aim of Strategy	2
2. Context	2
3. Applying the strategy	3
3.1 How we will engage and consult	3
3.2 Methods of consultation and engagement	4
3.4 Communications	6
4. Consultation & Engagement – Annual Action Plans & using the data	6
4.1 Action Plans	6
4.2 Using the data collected	6
5. Contact details	7

1. Aim of Strategy

The Consultation and Engagement Strategy will form the basis for a medium term action plan to guide the specific consultation and engagement activity undertaken by the council during the period 2016 - 2019.

Services will be expected to use this strategy when undertaking service-specific consultation and engagement exercises and apply the principles when they work with residents, communities, businesses and customers.

The Performance and Insight Team will deliver this strategy and apply the principles to all generic engagement and consultation exercises (e.g. the council-wide customer satisfaction survey) as well as providing support and advice for any service specific consultation and engagement activity that is proposed and carried out.

2. Context

The council is keen to enhance performance by ensuring we understand what people want and that people understand what we do. This will be supported through effective communication and engagement with communities. CDC already has strong links with the local community and voluntary sector as well as other public service providers and recognises the importance of ensuring consultation and engagement includes these organisations.

The “Localism” agenda (The Localism Act 2011) set out in national government policy placed new and greater emphasis on the importance of effective community engagement and the role of local people in decision making and neighbourhood planning. The council is also committed to working with partners where it benefits local communities because ‘joined up’ engagement can help both the public and the council to address local problems that cut across agencies.

The strategy outlines our developing approach and commitment to consultation with residents, communities and customers. It does not replace any statutory or formal consultation processes that we currently undertake, for example in relation to

planning, licensing or any appeals processes.

In preparation for the council's Local Plan, there is a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), which provides the consultation strategy for the Local Plan. The SCI sets out the framework for planning-related consultations which will ensure there is genuine involvement in plan and decision making. It also enables the council to demonstrate how they have met statutory requirements. The SCI is a requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). The SCI needs to comply with statutory requirements and Government policy for plan making and consultation on planning matters.

The council also incorporates the Equality Act into its consultation and engagement work. The Equality Act came into force on 6 April 2010 with many of its provisions coming into effect in October 2010. The intention of the Act is to harmonize the fragmented discrimination legislation but it also introduced new restrictions.

Existing good practice (e.g. 'Connecting Communities' events for the public, 'Knowing our Communities' information sharing events for officers and members, etc.) will form the basis of our consultation and engagement work going forward, enabling us to replicate successes and learn from any issues that have previously arisen.

3. Applying the strategy

The key objective of this strategy is to capture and use relevant and meaningful insight from a wide range of stakeholders on how they use and/or perceive our services, what changes they would like to see and where there is scope to provide improved or additional services.

Under-pinning the objective are clear aims to:

1. Demonstrate a clear commitment to consultation and community engagement
2. Have a coordinated but flexible approach to consultation that meets the needs of all our services and ensures a consistent approach across the council
3. Work in partnership with others where appropriate to ensure effective consultation
4. Undertake consultation in line with clear standards and good practice
5. Ensure our consultation and engagement is open, accessible and inclusive

3.1 How we will engage and consult

The council is determined to move away from consultation that speaks about "hard to reach groups" and to ensure our consultative approach is inclusive to all and effective in gathering feedback that can help drive service improvement.

Engagement with local people is vital. Engagement is part of the process of actively involving people in the delivery and development of services. When engaging with residents, community, business and customers, all services should follow these distinct principles for effective engagement.

Informing	This involves raising awareness about the subject by providing relevant, balanced, clear and easily understood information. We will also ensure that people are kept up to date.
Consulting	This means asking what people think and inviting comment on proposals and approaches.
Participating	This entails a more interactive approach of encouraging people to put forward views, ideas and proposals for discussion.
Giving Feedback	This is the stage of the process where people can see how their involvement has informed decision making.

3.2 Methods of consultation and engagement

The types and methods of engagement used will be proportionate and appropriate to the nature and subject matter with a much greater emphasis on partnership working. Potential techniques that could be used include:

Connecting Community events

The public will be invited to attend open events that will provide the opportunity for relevant services to showcase what they can deliver alongside the services provided by connected agencies (Police, NHS, Education, etc.), the Town/Parish and County Councils and voluntary groups.

After each event an evaluation will be made of how it impacted upon the community and what we can learn to improve our service and overall satisfaction of residents of both councils.

The existing **Faith Forum** and **Disability Forum** of CDC will form part of a Connecting Community event but with a direct focus on those areas to ensure that the focus is driven from those with a direct need or understanding of the service area.

Links with other Council and District forums

There are existing forums to which the Consultation and Engagement Officer attends to ensure the opportunities to engage are taken forward. It will be good practice to ensure that the existing forums review their terms of reference and validity of function. Where opportunities existing to ‘piggyback’ on connected forums then the possibility will be explored in order to share resources and link them with Connecting Communities events.

Presentations and Attendance at Meetings

Where appropriate (and by arrangement) the council may deliver presentations, hold question and answer sessions or attend meetings of external groups and organisations, in order to consult or engage upon particular issues.

Public Exhibitions and Meetings

Where appropriate, the council may hold exhibitions, with staffed or unstaffed drop-in

sessions, to help inform the community, or hold public meetings to allow people to debate particular issues.

Annual Satisfaction Survey

The council conducts an annual Customer Satisfaction Survey. The Customer Satisfaction Survey will cover overall satisfaction, satisfaction with individual services, value for money, communications and the ability to measure performance year on year. The Survey is sent both electronically and in paper form to capture feedback from as many residents as possible.

Targeted Surveys

The council can use online surveys via Survey Monkey to contact residents either in targeted groups or as a percentage of all on the Land Registry database. The Performance and Insight team can assist services in setting up online surveys as well as providing guidance on question setting.

Targeted surveys can also be set up for postal or telephone contact or indeed gathering information face to face. The method of delivery for a targeted survey will depend on the requirements of the residents, community or customers being asked and also with whom the service needs to consult and engage.

For example, a targeted survey asking users of a leisure centre for their opinions and improvement decisions could be carried out by specifically targeting people at the leisure centre by giving them a survey/return envelope or link to an online survey as they leave the centre, ensuring we are only getting the views of people who will be able to feedback on the facilities on offer.

Internal Staff Surveys

The council will continue to look inwards to consider the views of staff with staff surveys conducted across both sites in a two year rolling programme. The last survey was conducted in early 2016.

Town/Parish Councils and other existing community forums

Where appropriate, the council may utilise Town/Parish Council meetings, as well as other existing community forums or local liaison groups, to raise awareness of new services or to hold consultations regarding access to services.

Workshops/Focus Groups

Where appropriate, the council will hold workshops or meetings with key stakeholders to discuss particular issues and key technical matters in depth.

Knowing our communities

The 'knowing our communities' events will be used as a mechanism to share information with the staff. A programme of new topics will be provided in line with the Equalities Action Plan. It is aimed to link these 'knowing our communities' staff

briefings to the appraisal and personal development plans as a way to encourage greater staff uptake of the events.

3.4 Communications

Council publications

The council publishes a quarterly newsletter which is delivered to all households across the district. This newsletter will publicise the community engagement events.

Email/Letters

The council will email/send letters to those who are on our consultation database who have requested to be consulted or engage within forums.

Internet and Social Media

The council will seek to publicise the public community engagements on its website and will raise awareness of consultations and engagement through social media such as Twitter and Facebook.

Local Media

The council will prepare press releases to circulate to local newspapers and/or radio stations to raise awareness of the consultations and engagement to encourage community involvement.

4. Consultation & Engagement – Annual Action Plans & using the data

4.1 Action Plans

Each year the Action Plan to implement the Consultation Strategy will be refreshed to take into account any new developments and respond to lessons learned from the previous year. The Action Plan aligns activity to the 5 aims and also will support the Corporate Business Plan for the council.

4.2 Using the data collected

All information collected through engagement and consultation activities will be treated appropriately to conform with data protection legislation. The information will be used to help:

- a) Evidence satisfaction with the council's services.
- b) Show progress over time, particularly when gauging improvement in service delivery.
- c) Capture ideas from residents, communities and customers that will help the council with service design and resource allocation.
- d) Identify concerns that need investigation and resolution.

5. Contact details

For information about planned consultation and engagement events please contact the Performance and Insight Team

Telephone 01295 221605

Website www.cherwell.gov.uk

Address Cherwell District Council, Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxfordshire OX15 4AA

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DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

**Consultation & Engagement Strategy
2016 – 2019**

**Action Plan
2016 - 2017**

CDC Business Plan 2016 – 2017

Priority: Cherwell: safe, green, clean

b3. Work with partners to help ensure the District remains a low crime area, reducing fear of crime, tackling Anti-Social Behaviour and focussing on safeguarding our residents and businesses.

Priority: Cherwell: a thriving community

c2. Work with partners to support financial inclusion and help local people into paid employment.

c5. Work to promote and support health and wellbeing across the district.

c6. Provide support to the voluntary and community sector.

Priority: Cherwell: sound budgets and customer focused council

d2. Continue to communicate effectively with local residents and businesses

Action Set 1: Effective Engagement

1. Demonstrate a clear commitment to consultation and community engagement
2. Have a coordinated but flexible approach to consultation that meets the needs of all our services and ensures a consistent approach across the council
3. Work in partnership with others where appropriate to ensure effective consultation
4. Undertake consultation in line with clear standards and good practice
5. Ensure our consultation and engagement is open, accessible and inclusive

Action	Output/Outcome	Service Area Link
Develop Consultation and Engagement Strategy and three year action plan to be signed off by Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the strategy, opportunities, legislation and bring forward revised or a new version of strategy 	
Promote strategy and action plan within Cherwell District Council and partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of consultation and engagement strategy and requirements by publishing the results and findings of the consultations 	
Develop consultation & engagement arrangements and opportunities to support Members and service areas Officers in their roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the activities of both Members and Officers throughout the Council. • Provide a calendar of events to encourage shared activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All service areas.
Ensure staff and managers have sufficient tools to undertake effective consultation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure services are evaluated by appropriate survey and targeted participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Housing Options Team ➤ Economic Development ➤ Community Service (Summer Hubs programme) ➤ Waste Recycling
Deliver 2 Connecting Community Events in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecting Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-Social Behaviour

CDC	Events involve the services of the council as well of those offered by our partner agencies and voluntary groups. Targeted to meet the needs of the community it is at: Kidlington April 2016 and Bicester November 2016.	<p>Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Services (leisure) • Housing • Economic Growth • Public Protection • Benefits Advice • Outside agencies/volunteers
Deliver annual corporate consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual surveys - budget/investment/savings priorities (budget consultation). • Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Finance ➤ Performance & Insight
Maintain local partnership networks to help ensure that consultation and engagement activities are well planned publicised and do not lead to consultation fatigue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate and promote the Northamptonshire Residents Panel and other county wide consultations when appropriate by OCC or other partner agencies. • Ensure information about planned consultations and engagement events is available to CDC partners, Parish Council's and local voluntary groups • Attend network meetings with local forums including voluntary groups and NHS services and Thames Valley Police (IAG) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Community Services

Action Set 2: to capture and use relevant and meaningful insight from a wide range of stakeholders on how they use and/or perceive our services, what changes they would like to see and where there is scope to provide improved or additional services.

Action	Output/Outcome	Service Area Link
Use the results of the Annual Satisfaction Survey to inform council and activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results provided as part of Business Plan planning to shape objectives and delivery • Disseminate results to CDC managers and partners; identify actions to take as a result of the survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Performance & Insight & all service areas
Ensure services use consultation and engagement evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure customer feedback and evidence from consultation and engagement work informs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Performance & Insight & all service areas

as part of service planning.	service plans and bids for service development or growth.	
Ensure there are effective arrangements in place for feeding back the results of consultation to those who have taken part	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure consultation findings will be feedback to those who took part in the consultation activity and those affected. • Publish actions taken as a result of consultation on the council's web pages. Work with the services and teams to develop an on-going feedback mechanism for their customers to enable collecting customer comments, compliments and complaints. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Communications ➤ All services
Undertake the corporate consultation programme to inform service and financial planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake customer satisfaction as part of an annual programme. Highlight how results are informing the budget and council priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public facing services
Work with Economic Development to ensure local businesses and Job Clubs attendees are included with consultation and engagement processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure feedback opportunities for local businesses and Job Club attendees. • Work with team to ensure presence at community events to promote both the Job Club and Job Match services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Economic Development
Provide support and assistance to Strategic Planning and Economy; including Banbury and Bicester Masterplans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link in with Planning Policy – Statement of Community Involvement to ensure opportunities to promote Planning policies during consultation and engagement events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Planning
Ensure effective consultation and engagement with residents on housing policies, plans and strategies, including housing strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Housing services presence at the community engagement events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Housing ➤ Sanctuary Housing

Cherwell District Council

Executive

5 September 2016

Quarter One 2016/17 Performance Update

Report of Director – Strategy & Commissioning

This report is public

Purpose of report

To provide an update on the Cherwell District Business Plan progress to the end of Quarter One 2016/17.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended to:

- 1.1 Note the exceptions highlighted and proposed actions.
- 1.2 Note that any feedback on performance issues from Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 1 September 2016 will be provided directly to the Leader of the Council.
- 1.3 Note the new reporting style which has been designed to improve the presentation of performance reporting.
- 1.4 Agree that, where appropriate, judgement measures used in the current business plan reporting are augmented or replaced by more specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely (SMART) measures.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 This is the first quarterly performance report for the 2016/17 Business Plan. Commentary has been developed to focus on areas not performing at the required level and provide an explanation of what has happened, why it has happened and what are we doing to improve performance.
- 2.2 The revised reporting template uses infographics (displaying data in a graphical form to aid understanding) and focuses on exception reporting (concentrating on the issues).
- 2.3 The report is also available online via the Performance Matters website where further options are available to interrogate the data in the report and the

performance and insight team is available to respond to specific reporting enquiries.

3.0 Report Details

3.1 Overall summary

3.1.1 Of the 81 measures in the plan that have targets or judgements applied to them, 61 (75%) are performing on or above target. 17 measures (21%) are showing an Amber alert and there are currently three measures (4%) which have not been updated. There are no red alerts as at Quarter One. Appendix 1 shows a 'sunburst' overview of performance plus counts for each of the corporate priorities.

3.2 A district of opportunity

3.2.1 The overall RAGG* rating for this priority is showing as Amber for this first quarter. CBP1.5.1 Deliver High Quality Regulatory Services has been reported as green for this quarter.

It has been a great year for Better Business. Approximately 200 staff attended four Organisational Awareness Days across Cherwell and South Northamptonshire which provided an opportunity for staff to experience what it felt like to be a start-up business in our district and to shape how our services assist. 88% of delegates agreed that the workshops met a number of objectives including ensuring that services recognise and understand that they need to work together as a whole Council to support our businesses.

Our programme with SEMLEP continues with a regulators workshop and a work programme which will include working with businesses to find out what the barriers are. We held workshops in Banbury with local businesses earlier in the year and developed a funded single regulatory point of contact based on feedback from businesses. We have extended this project as it is showing early signs of success which will add value to the final evaluation.

3.3 Safe, Clean and Green

3.3.1 CBP2.1.4 Maintain Customer satisfaction with recycling and waste service has been reported as green with an 83% customer satisfaction rate.

In order to maintain/enhance customer satisfaction on waste collection we will take the following measures:-

- Ensure all our collection staff are trained and competent.
- Ensure all our collection staff are smart, wearing corporate PPE and carry out their duties professionally.
- Regularly remind staff of the need for high quality customer service through team briefings.
- Ensure our supervisors monitor the performance of our collection staff in areas such as returning bins to the point of collection.
- Investigate any complaints and put in place any actions needed.

3.4 **A Thriving Community**

- 3.4.1 CBP3.1.1 Deliver at least 190 units of affordable housing is reporting as green* for this quarter. The 43 units were delivered at: Springfield Farm (Ambrosden), Kingsmere (Bicester), Longford Park, North West Bicester (Eco Town). These figures reflect the continued good partnership working that is taking place between the district council and registered providers operating in Cherwell to continue to deliver the affordable homes that are needed. It also reflects the Council's strong policy position with regards to affordable housing.

However, there will be increasing challenges in the coming months to ensure the Council continues to secure the affordable housing it needs to meet the affordable housing demand which the district has, not least because of the financial implications of the Brexit decision and the changing national housing and planning policy.

3.5 **Sound Budgets and Customer Focused**

- 3.5.1 The overall RAGG* rating for this priority is showing as Amber for this first quarter.

CBP4.1.4 Maximise income coming into the authority to include NHB/NNDR/C-Tax/external funding is reporting as green for this quarter.

Work is ongoing to maximise all income coming in to the authority. We have seen a further 299 properties become subject to council tax in the first quarter of 2016-2017 which means additional income from council tax as well as New Homes Bonus. We are continuing to implement and deliver strategies for NNDR, but we have seen a fall in rateable value in this quarter which impacts negatively on income. This is a variable we have little control over although we seek to mitigate this by having efficient processes in place to identify and monitor growth. During this quarter we went live with a product called GrantFinder and anticipate that this will help us to start to capture funding from external sources.

3.6 **Exceptions**

- 3.6.1 An exception is anything that has triggered a red or amber alert.
- 3.6.2 For objectives where judgements are being used, this is anything rated as 'slightly behind schedule' (amber) or 'significantly behind schedule' (red).
- 3.6.3 For measures of performance which are numerically based, the default tolerances are 'not meeting target but within 10%' (amber) and 'worse than 10% away from target' (red). Some measures may in future have their own tailored tolerances to ensure that red and amber alerts are appropriate to the measure.
- 3.7 There are 17 exceptions this quarter; thirteen judgements rated as 'slightly behind schedule' and four numeric measures.
- 3.7.1 Appendix 2 highlights the exceptions with associated commentary outlining:
- 1) What has happened
 - 2) Why it has happened
 - 3) What actions we are taking

4) When we will see improvement.

3.7.2 Commentary has come directly from the service experts to provide context to the judgement or data displayed.

3.8 Appendix 3 provides a specific trend report showing performance over time for the numeric measures performing below targeted levels. A variation of this graph with further options for exploring the data is available for all measures online to enable users to explore data more fully.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

4.1 This is the first report with the new reporting style. It is inevitable that there may be some tweaks we will need to apply to both content and format of the report as we develop and evolve the performance reporting of the new business plan.

5.0 Consultation

5.1 The annual customer satisfaction survey is being run in a slightly different format this year for CDC with a direct mailshot and online survey being conducted rather than surveying the citizens' forum. We received around 1,000 postal responses and around 150 online responses and results will be available in mid-August and will help to inform the business planning process for 2017/18.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: To request additional information on items and/or add to the work programme for review and/or refer to Overview and Scrutiny.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

7.1 Financial Effects - The resource required to operate the Performance Management Framework is contained within existing budgets. However the information presented may lead to decisions that have financial implications. These will be viewed in the context of the Medium Term Plan and Financial Strategy and the annual Service and Financial Planning process.

Comments checked by:

Paul Sutton – Chief Finance Officer, 03000 030106

Paul.Sutton@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Legal Implications

7.2 There are no legal issues arising from this report.

Comments checked by:

Nigel Bell, Team Leader – Planning and Litigation, 01295 221687
nigel.bell@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Risk Implications

7.3 The purpose of the Performance Management Framework is to enable the Council to deliver its strategic objectives. All managers are required to identify and manage the risks associated with achieving this. All risks are logged on the Risk Register and reported quarterly to the Audit Committee.

Comments checked by:

Louise Tustian – Senior Performance & Improvement Officer, 01295 221786
Louise.tustian2@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Data Quality

7.4 Data for performance against all indicators has been collected and calculated using agreed methodologies drawn up by accountable officers. The Council's performance management software has been used to gather and report performance data in line with performance reporting procedures.

Comments checked by:

Ros Holloway - Performance Information Officer, 01295 221758
Ros.Holloway@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision

Financial Threshold Met: No

Community Impact Threshold Met: No

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

The Performance Management Framework covers all of the Council's Strategic Priorities

Lead Councillor









Councillor Barry Wood, Leader of the Council

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
1	Sunburst showing the CDC Business Plan Priorities and Objectives: <i>The outer ring of the diagram shows the individual judgments and measures used to evidence the objective judgments in the middle ring. The exceptions are detailed in Appendix 2 and information about all measures can be reviewed in Appendix 4 and online.</i>
2	Exceptions <i>The table below provides details of all measures with a Red or Amber alert and also shows direction of travel from last period and last year. If commentary is not showing, we are awaiting an update from the appropriate service area.</i>
3	Trend Graphs for Numeric Exceptions <i>The graphs show the trend of performance for any numeric measure highlighted in Appendix 2 and compares against previous years' performance where applicable.</i>
4	Full measure and judgement list <i>All measures are shown in this appendix with commentary provided by the appropriate service area.</i>

Legend for Appendices

The following legend applies to all appendices:

Colour	Symbol	Meaning for Judgments	Meaning for Numeric Measures
Red		Significantly behind schedule	Significantly worse than target (more than 10% by default)
Amber		Slightly behind schedule	Slightly worse than target (up to 10% worse by default)
Dark Green		Delivering to plan	Delivering to target (up to 10% better by default)
Light Green		Ahead of schedule	Significantly better than target (more than 10% by default)
Blue	n/a	n/a	Target setting not appropriate
Grey		Not updated	Not updated
		Has improved since last month/quarter/year (arrow signifies which way performance has moved)	
		Has got worse since last month/quarter/year	
		Direction of Travel is not applicable as measures have not previously been reported	

Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Ed Bailey – Corporate Performance & Insight Manager
Contact Information	01295 221605 Edward.Bailey@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

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Appendix 1 – Sunburst and Counts



District of Opportunity						Safe, Clean, Green						A Thriving Community						Sound Budgets and Customer Focus						
KPI summary					Total	KPI summary					Total	KPI summary					Total	KPI summary					Total	
▲	●	★	✪			▲	●	★	✪			▲	●	★	✪			▲	●	★	✪	?		
0	7	10	0		17	0	2	5	4		11	0	3	24	10			0	5	8	0	3		16

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Appendix 2 - Exceptions

Objective	Measure	Frequency	Target (pd)	Actual (pd)	Period	vs last period	Target (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	YTD	vs last Year
CBP1.2 - Complete and implement the Masterplan for Bicester	CBP1.2.1 Northwest Bicester continue to facilitate the planning applications for the site	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	✖	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	✖
<p>1) What has happened? All NW Bicester planning applications have been reported to the Planning Committee. Resolutions to grant outline planning permission have been made for 3500 dwellings and supporting infrastructure and for the full planning permission for the road. However a further application for the main commercial area has been refused and an application has been deferred, although it is anticipated that it will be reported back to the planning committee later this year. Negotiations on legal agreements are on going.</p> <p>2) Why has it happened? The delivery of large scale development is complex particularly where the site has multiple landowners and developers. This has added to the complexity of dealing with planning applications at NW Bicester.</p> <p>3) What actions are we taking? Regular communication continues with developers and consultees to progress the determination of the applications and negotiation of legal agreements.</p> <p>4) When will we see improvement? The end of the calendar year is being targeted to have made progress with the applications subject to resolutions to grant planning permission.</p>										
CBP1.2 - Complete and implement the Masterplan for Bicester	CBP1.2.3a Graven Hill: Deliver the demonstration project on the Graven Hill site	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	➡	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	✖
<p>1) What has happened? Project progressing - 10 plots allocated. Agreeing foundation prices and securing planning compliance on all plots. Exchange of contracts expected on some of the plots in June to enable some of the Pioneers to be on site during quarter 2 and the remainder during the forthcoming months.</p> <p>2) Why has it happened? This is part of the on-going Graven Hill project work and timescales have altered as the project has progressed.</p> <p>3) What actions are we taking? Continuing with progress with the Pioneers and securing planning compliance.</p> <p>4) When will we see improvement? Exchange of contracts expected on some of the plots in June to enable some of the Pioneers to be on site during quarter 2 and the remainder during the forthcoming months.</p>										
CBP1.2 - Complete and implement the Masterplan for Bicester	CBP1.2.3b Graven Hill: Set up a sales and marketing suite to promote the plots	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	➡	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	➡
<p>1) What has happened? The sales process will open to those that live and work in the District on 11th July and nationally on 22nd August. A sales and marketing suite will open in central Bicester location in Autumn and in line with the delivery of phase 1 transfer to Graven Hill location during 2018. At present the activity is taking place from a temporary location in Bodicote House.</p> <p>2) Why has it happened? This work is on-going and dependent on a suitable location becoming available on the Graven Hill site.</p> <p>3) What actions are we taking? There is a temporary location set-up in Bodicote House.</p> <p>4) When will we see improvement? When sales and marketing suite opens in a central Bicester location in the Autumn.</p>										
CBP1.2 - Complete and implement the Masterplan for Bicester	CBP1.2.4 Engage with the community and stakeholders to deliver Garden Town Bicester	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	➡	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	?
<p>1) What has happened? Town-wide public consultation event held in March to understand the priorities and aspirations of the local community. Over 900 written responses were received and a summary of feedback has been produced. As a result the agreed next action was to undertake a 'you said, we did' exercise, drawing out the main things identified as important and setting how the council has/will respond to key issues. The 'you said' feedback element was first reported to the community at The Big Lunch on 12 June - this included a 'Top 5' list of what people like about Bicester and what they would like to see improved. The feedback is to be available on the Growing Bicester website. Bicester's retail offer and town centre was at the top of the improvements agenda and workshop discussions (facilitated by Economic Growth team and its consultants) between key CDC officers and external stakeholders have been programmed (26 May and 15 July) to devise a 'quick wins' action plan in response to the identified issues.</p>										

Appendix 2 - Exceptions

Objective	Measure	Frequency	Target (pd)	Actual (pd)	Period	vs last period	Target (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	YTD	vs last Year
<p>A multi-disciplinary team of consultants has been appointed to produce a new Bicester Masterplan in order to deliver the long-term aspirations for the town in a coordinated and comprehensive approach. Further consultation with the community and stakeholders will now be undertaken as part of that masterplanning process in Autumn 2016.</p> <p>2) Why has it happened? Future consultation fatigue resulting in disengagement meaning that the people of Bicester no longer influence and help control decisions and services that shape the town in which they live and work. Cynical confusion about the many overlapping labels and messages and how they relate to each other Fear and apprehension of change, particularly with a significant increase in population in the future, impacts on future consultation and results in hostility and negative feedback</p> <p>3) What actions are we taking? Production of an engagement and communications strategy that sets out agreed engagement principles and provides guidance particularly around how and with whom we engage.</p> <p>4) When will we see improvement? A multi-disciplinary team of consultants has been appointed to produce a new Bicester Masterplan in order to deliver the long-term aspirations for the town in a coordinated and comprehensive approach. Further consultation with the community and stakeholders will now be undertaken as part of that masterplanning process in Autumn 2016.</p>										
CBP1.3 - Complete and implement the Masterplan for Banbury	CBP1.3.1 Prepare a scheme for the redevelopment of the Bolton Road site	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	➔	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	✖
<p>1) What has happened? The Castleside multi-storey car park at Bolton Road, Banbury permanently closed on Friday 10 June 2016 after an inspection identified significant structural issues. This car park will now be demolished as a matter of urgency (out to tender) and a temporary facility created. This part of the town has been identified for significant regeneration, and on-going scoping and appraisal works are underway.</p> <p>2) Why has it happened? Significant structural issues were identified.</p> <p>3) What actions are we taking? This car park will now be demolished as a matter of urgency (out to tender) and a temporary facility created.</p> <p>4) When will we see improvement? When car park has been demolished and temporary facility set-up and scoping and appraisal work is completed.</p>										
CBP1.3 - Complete and implement the Masterplan for Banbury	CBP1.3.3a Secure start on site for Castle Quay 2	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	✖	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	✖
<p>1) What has happened? There has been some significant progress in recent months and Aberdeen Investments (the developer) are considering a communication update on the scheme in the near future.</p>										
CBP1.3 - Complete and implement the Masterplan for Banbury	CBP1.3.3b Maximise Council's income from Castle Quay 1	Quarterly	?	Slightly behind schedule	●	?	?	Slightly behind schedule	●	?
<p>1) What has happened? There are some very challenging trading circumstances impacting on retail outlets nationally.</p> <p>3) What actions are we taking? Officers have arranged to meet with Aberdeen Investments, along with their appointed FM provider, to review current trading conditions. We have indicated our intention to look at all potential options Aberdeen might wish to put on the table, to help improve the overall income position. Finance officers will also attend the planned meeting, and an update for members will be presented to members in due course"</p>										

Appendix 2 - Exceptions

Objective	Measure	Frequency	Target (pd)	Actual (pd)	Period	vs last period	Target (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	YTD	vs last Year
CBP2.4 - Reduce our carbon footprint and protect the natural environment	CBP2.4.1 Deliver the Council's Biodiversity Action Plan	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	✖	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	✖
<p>1) What has happened? 2016/17 Biodiversity Action Plan now scheduled for September Executive rather than July.</p> <p>2) Why has it happened? Requirement to deliver and administer Queen's 90th Birthday Celebration grant scheme was unexpected, and took up a large amount of officer time at the time of year when the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) would usually be prepared.</p> <p>3) What actions are we taking? BAP is currently being updated, alongside biodiversity input to Local Plan part 2.</p> <p>4) When will we see improvement? Updated BAP will be presented to September Executive. In the meanwhile, partners continue to deliver outputs in line with their service level agreements.</p>										
CBP2.4 - Reduce our carbon footprint and protect the natural environment	CBP2.4.2 Implement a new carbon management plan from 2015-2020	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	➡	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	➡
CBP3.3 - Provide High Quality Housing Options Advice & Support To Prevent Homelessness	CBP3.3.1a Number of households living in Temporary Accommodation (TA)	Monthly	41	42	●	✖	41	42	●	✖
<p>1) What has happened? During the quarter numbers in TA have risen and the numbers at the end of the month reflect an increase in those placed for a limited period, but are not owed full duties.</p> <p>2) Why has it happened? Numbers can often fluctuate depending on demand and we exceeded the target by 1 case in this particular week.</p> <p>3) What actions are we taking? We have anticipated this rise and have made arrangements to ensure adequate suitable accommodation is available at affordable rates.</p> <p>4) When will we see improvement? Numbers have already reduced to target.</p>										
CBP3.4 - Work to provide and support health and wellbeing across the district.	CBP3.4.1 Support CPN with financial, clinical & technological changes in health & social care sector	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	✖	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	?
<p>1) What has happened? Local concern has arisen over recruitment difficulties to maintain maternity services at the Horton DGH resulting in alternative service options which include downgrading the unit to a midwife led unit rather than a consultant led unit. Further assessment work is underway with a conclusion with proposed options to be available in August.</p> <p>2) Why has it happened? National recruitment difficulties with middle grade doctors where despite repeated recruitment processes and salary incentives, two out of eight posts have remained unfilled and three other postholders are about to leave.</p> <p>3) What actions are we taking? Contingency plan being developed. Further OUHFT recruitment underway. Alternative service delivery models being examined across the range of Horton services.</p> <p>4) When will we see improvement? Late August/early September will be the point at which new Horton service options will be finalised and whether the further recruitment process has been successful</p>										
CBP3.5 - Provide High Quality & Accessible Leisure Opportunities	CBP3.5.1a Number of visits/usage to District Leisure Centres	Monthly	123,306	119,536	●	✔	359,105	355,805	●	✖

Appendix 2 - Exceptions

Objective	Measure	Frequency	Target (pd)	Actual (pd)	Period	vs last period	Target (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	YTD	vs last Year
1) What has happened? Overall there has been a relatively consistent performance from the 3 Leisure Centres within the District with Spiceball Leisure Centre marginally up on the same period last year and Kidlington and Bicester marginally down on the same period last year. North Oxfordshire Academy usage is significantly up as part of the Joint Use facilities as is the Cooper School Sports Facility with Woodgreen Leisure Centre marginally up on the same period last year										
2) Why has it happened? The partial withdrawal of school use by Bicester Community College has had a negative effect on throughputs at Bicester Leisure Centre with approximately 1,000 less registered users for June 2016 compared to the same period last year. Both North Oxfordshire Academy and Cooper Sports Facility registered an increase in throughputs, primarily due to well attended one off events including operatic performance, athletics events and school supported activities. Kidlington Leisure Centre has shown a decrease in numbers for the 2nd successive month. Initially this was identified as a reduction in 'Club' use however further interrogation into their usage will be required once this information is available										
3) What actions are we taking? CDC officers in partnership with the leisure operator will look at measures to increase usage particularly at Kidlington Leisure Centre and further identify the reasons for the decrease in usage numbers compared to last year. Discussions will take place as part of the Leisure Meeting. The Leisure Operator has recently submitted their National Benchmarking Survey Action Plan to address any shortfalls in participation for particular target groups										
4) When will we see improvement? It is anticipated that improvement will take place within the next few months as new marketing strategies are developed to encourage greater participation across all facilities										
CBP4.1 - Reduce the cost of providing our services through partnerships	CBP4.1.1 Review key business processes to enhance performance, reduce cost & designed for customers	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	?	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	?
1) What has happened? Work has been undertaken during this period to transition to a new 2-way service. This has had the knock-on effect of delaying work to enhance the IT service as required.										
2) Why has it happened? Changing priorities due to move from 3-way to 2-way service.										
3) What actions are we taking? Currently undertaking IT infrastructure review which will result in improved performance and reduced costs.										
4) When will we see improvement? The IT service will start improving immediately now that we have re-launched as a 2-way service.										
CBP4.1 - Reduce the cost of providing our services through partnerships	CBP4.1.2 Increase the number of services that can be accessed and paid for online.	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	?	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	?
1) What has happened? Activities being undertaken include: Initiating a project to develop new council websites which will support improved functionality for online services; Developing payments integration for achieve forms; Initiating work to support online leisure bookings										
2) Why has it happened? Although we are slightly behind due to the transition activities, some good progress is being made.										
3) What actions are we taking? Work is being undertaken to support projects that have been initiated.										
4) When will we see improvement? Towards the end of 16/17.										
CBP4.1 - Reduce the cost of providing our services through partnerships	CBP4.1.5 Establish appropriate commercial arrangements.	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	?	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	✘
1) What has happened? Commercial opportunities have been identified and a draft action plan is due for review in July.										

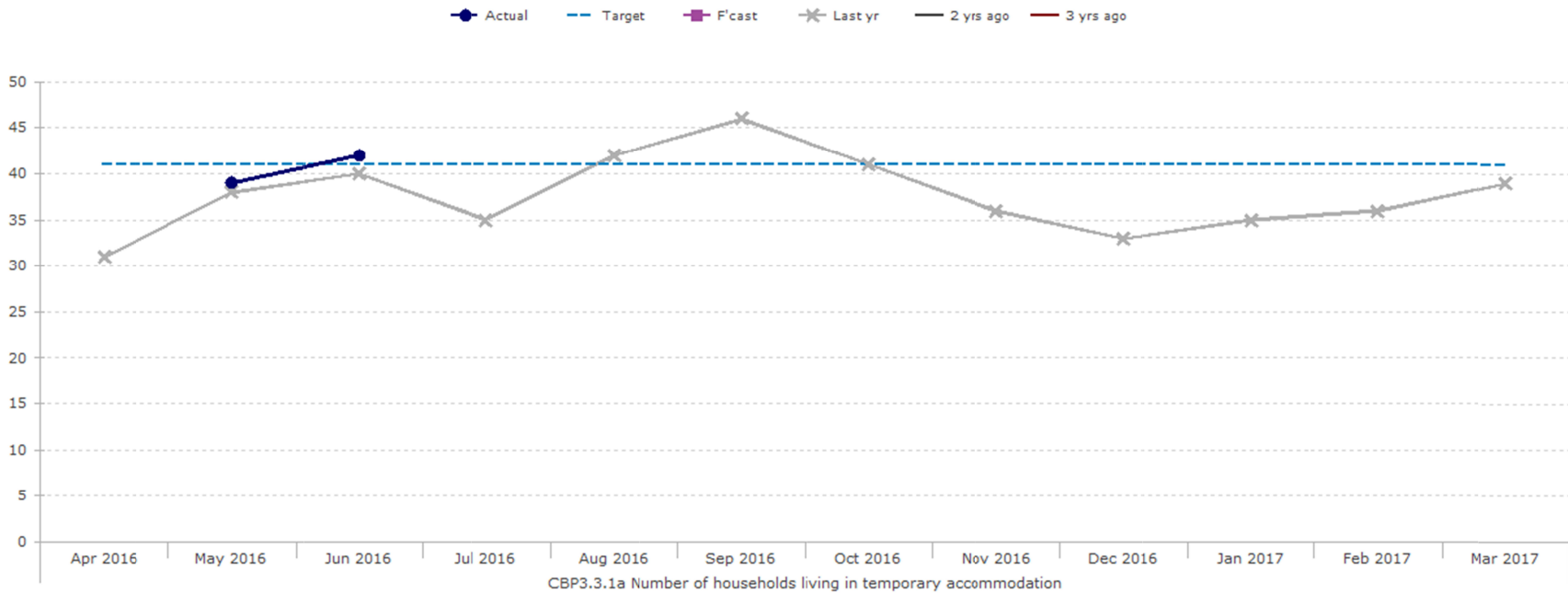
Appendix 2 - Exceptions

Objective	Measure	Frequency	Target (pd)	Actual (pd)	Period	vs last period	Target (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	YTD	vs last Year
2) Why has it happened? Programme resources and content review										
3) What actions are we taking? Resources allocated										
4) When will we see improvement? Q2										
CBP4.4 - Deliver below inflation increases to the CDC element of Council Tax.	CBP4.4.2 Percentage of Council Tax collected	Monthly	30.00	29.86	●	✓	30.00	29.86	●	✗
1) What has happened? Collection rate is slightly under target at end of quarter 1 (0.14%) despite good start in collections during April and May.										
2) Why has it happened? Reduction in collection rate										
3) What actions are we taking? Recovery action has started for those payments overdue from April and May.										
CBP4.4 - Deliver below inflation increases to the CDC element of Council Tax.	CBP4.4.3 Percentage of business rates collected	Monthly	31.00	30.36	●	✓	31.00	30.36	●	✗
1) What has happened? BHS has not paid the rates that it was due to pay.										
2) Why has it happened? BHS has gone into administration.										
3) What actions are we taking? None possible at the moment. Currently we do not expect to recover any of the outstanding debt.										
4) When will we see improvement? New business that start paying rates over the course of the current financial year will offset this loss.										

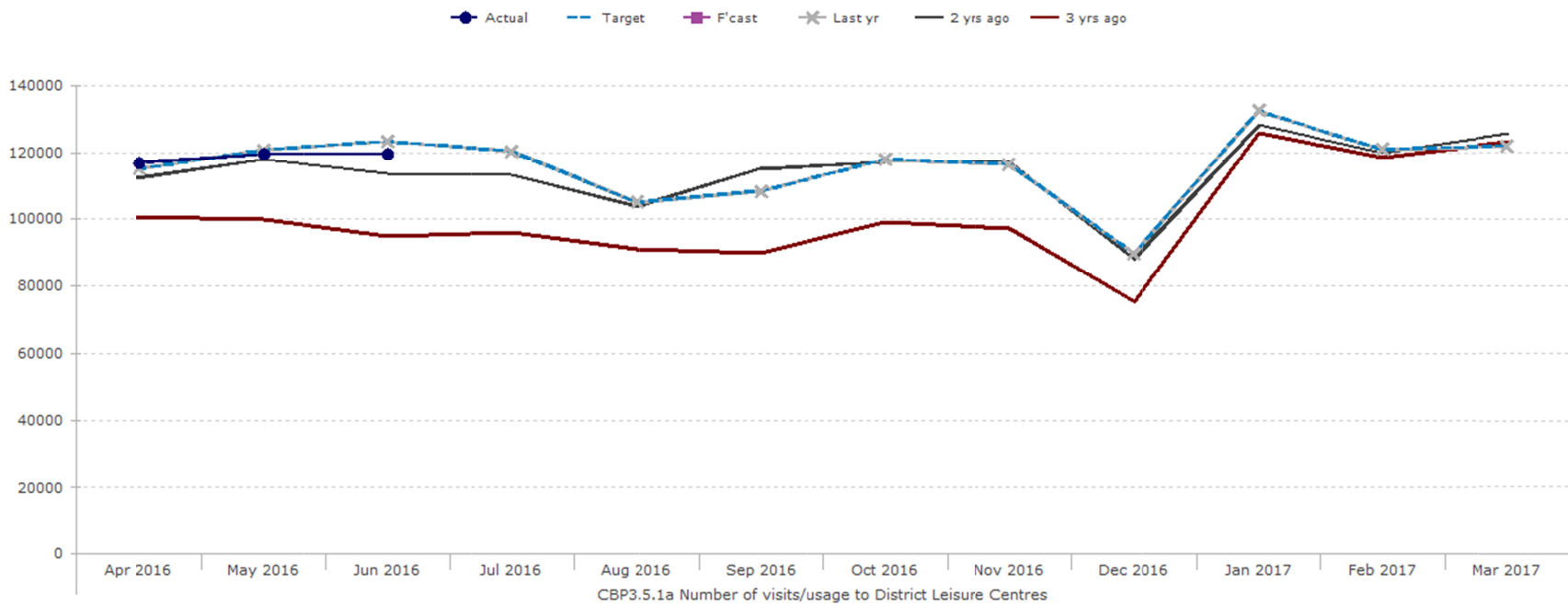
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Appendix 3 – Performance trend for Exception measures

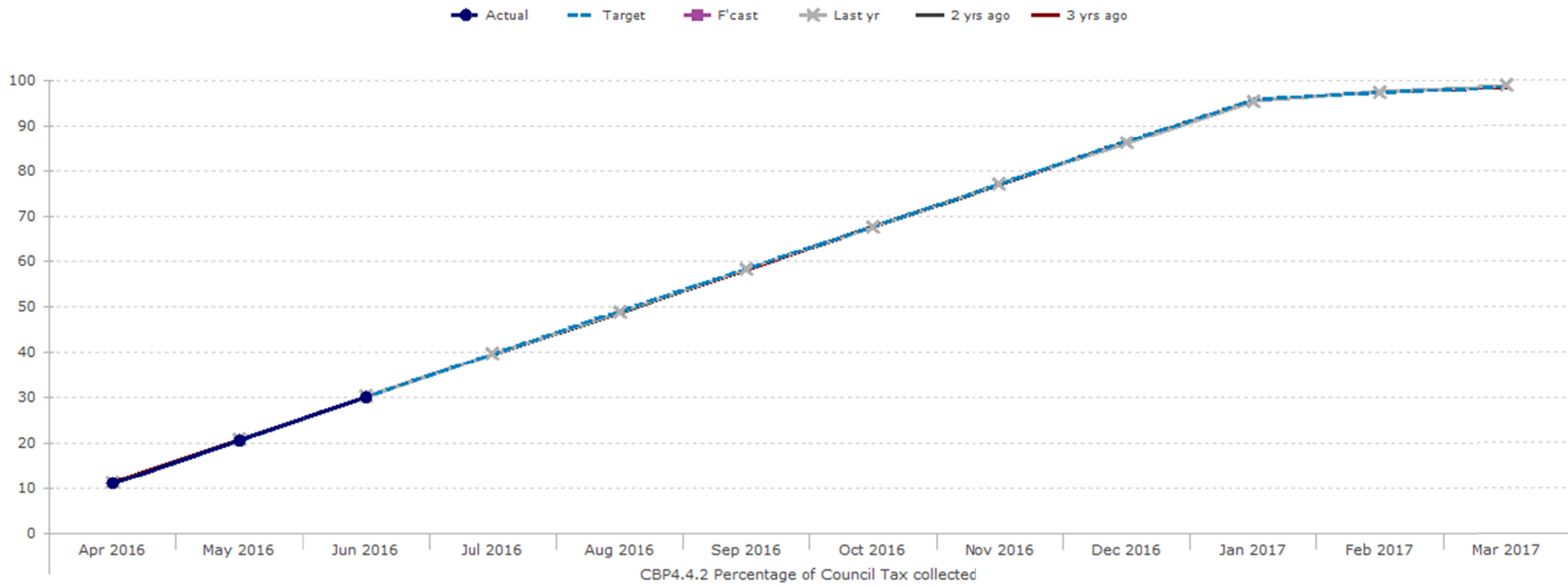
CBP3.3.1a Number of households living in temporary accommodation												
	Apr 2016	May 2016	Jun 2016	Jul 2016	Aug 2016	Sep 2016	Oct 2016	Nov 2016	Dec 2016	Jan 2017	Feb 2017	Mar 2017
Actual		39	42									
Target	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41
Perf.	?	★	●	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Change	?	?	✖	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
F'cast												
Last yr	31	38	40	35	42	46	41	36	33	35	36	39
2 yrs ago												
3 yrs ago												



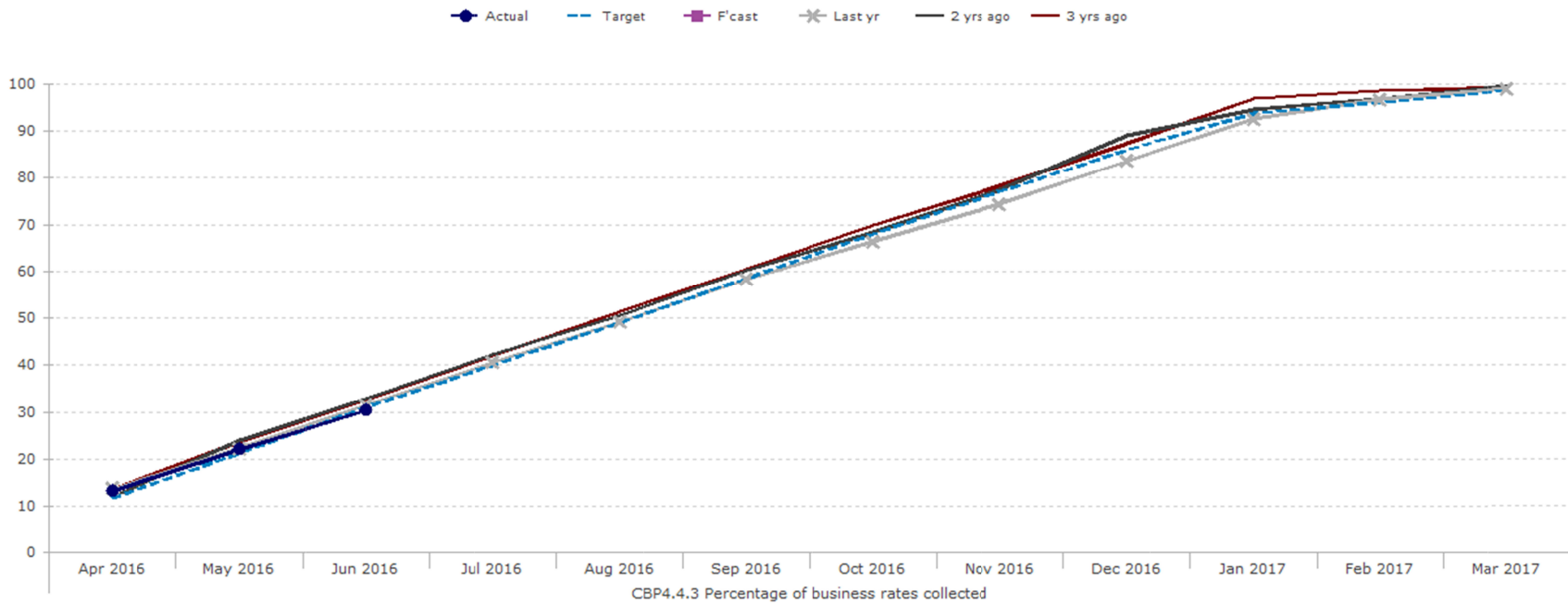
CBP3.5.1a Number of visits/usage to District Leisure Centres												
	Apr 2016	May 2016	Jun 2016	Jul 2016	Aug 2016	Sep 2016	Oct 2016	Nov 2016	Dec 2016	Jan 2017	Feb 2017	Mar 2017
Actual	116,867	119,402	119,536									
Target	115,019	120,780	123,306	120,349	104,974	108,392	117,837	116,431	89,766	132,408	120,891	121,811
Perf.	★	●	●	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Change	✖	✔	✔	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
F'cast												
Last yr	115,019	120,780	123,306	120,349	104,974	108,392	117,837	116,431	89,766	132,408	120,891	121,811
2 yrs ago	112,388	117,859	113,717	113,286	103,840	115,121	117,121	117,133	88,018	128,299	119,903	125,542
3 yrs ago	100,771	99,995	94,804	96,188	91,007	89,960	99,047	97,295	75,172	125,936	118,537	123,166



CBP4.4.2 Percentage of Council Tax collected												
	Apr 2016	May 2016	Jun 2016	Jul 2016	Aug 2016	Sep 2016	Oct 2016	Nov 2016	Dec 2016	Jan 2017	Feb 2017	Mar 2017
Actual	11.01	20.54	29.86									
Target	11.00	20.50	30.00	39.50	49.00	58.25	67.75	77.00	86.50	95.75	97.25	98.25
Perf.	★	★	●	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Change	✖	✔	✔	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
F'cast												
Last yr	11.18	20.65	30.05	39.49	48.80	58.19	67.65	77.00	86.10	95.41	97.44	98.65
2 yrs ago	11.00	20.42	29.88	39.38	48.65	58.16	67.69	76.93	86.43	95.55	97.42	98.49
3 yrs ago	11.22	20.65	29.96	39.51	48.82	58.09	67.65	76.92	86.41	95.51	97.38	98.27



CBP4.4.3 Percentage of business rates collected												
	Apr 2016	May 2016	Jun 2016	Jul 2016	Aug 2016	Sep 2016	Oct 2016	Nov 2016	Dec 2016	Jan 2017	Feb 2017	Mar 2017
Actual	13.25	22.00	30.36									
Target	11.75	21.25	31.00	40.00	49.00	58.50	68.00	77.00	86.00	93.75	96.00	98.50
Perf.	★	★	●	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Change	✖	✔	✔	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
F'cast												
Last yr	13.73	22.21	31.57	40.67	49.24	58.28	66.36	74.38	83.73	92.62	96.75	98.96
2 yrs ago	12.05	23.88	32.91	42.30	50.55	60.27	68.38	77.47	89.04	94.49	96.87	99.46
3 yrs ago	13.57	23.72	32.64	42.02	51.39	60.47	69.83	78.35	87.45	96.92	98.53	99.30



Objective	Measure	Frequency	Target (pd)	Actual (pd)	Period	vs last period	Target (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	YTD	vs last Year
CBP1.1 - Implement The Cherwell Local Plan As The Framework For Sustainable Housing	CBP1.1.1 Banbury and Kidlington Masterplans adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡
1) What has happened? To be adopted at October 2016 Council meeting										
CBP1.1 - Implement The Cherwell Local Plan As The Framework For Sustainable Housing	CBP1.1.2 Prepare draft Local Plan Part 2 and review of Local Plan Part 1	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	?
1) What has happened? Next stage on each Local Plan to be presented to Executive 2016.										
CBP1.2 - Complete and implement the Masterplan for Bicester	CBP1.2.1 Northwest Bicester continue to facilitate the planning applications for the site	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	✖	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	✖
1) What has happened? All NW Bicester planning applications have been reported to the Planning Committee. Resolutions to grant outline planning permission have been made for 3500 dwellings and supporting infrastructure and for the full planning permission for the road. However a further application for the main commercial area has been refused and an application has been deferred, although it is anticipated that it will be reported back to the planning committee later this year. Negotiations on legal agreements are on going.										
2) Why has it happened? The delivery of large scale development is complex particularly where the site has multiple landowners and developers. This has added to the complexity of dealing with planning applications at NW Bicester.										
What actions are we taking? Regular communication continues with developers and consultees to progress the determination of the applications and negotiation of legal agreements.										
When will we see improvement? The end of the calendar year is being targeted to have made progress with the applications subject to resolutions to grant planning permission.										
CBP1.2 - Complete and implement the Masterplan for Bicester	CBP1.2.2 Northwest Bicester: Delivery of the Eco - Bicester business centre	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡
1) What has happened? An architect has been appointed to develop a concept design for the building and further work is being done on the business case for the operation of the centre. The outcome of this work will be reported to the Executive in September.										
CBP1.2 - Complete and implement the Masterplan for Bicester	CBP1.2.3a Graven Hill: Deliver the demonstration project on the Graven Hill site	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	➡	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	✖
1) What has happened? Project progressing - 10 plots allocated. Agreeing foundation prices and securing planning compliance on all plots. Exchange of contracts expected on some of the plots in June to enable some of the Pioneers to be on site during quarter 2 and the remainder during the forthcoming months.										
2) Why has it happened? This is part of the on-going Graven Hill project work and timescales have altered as the project has progressed.										
3) What actions are we taking? Continuing with progress with the Pioneers and securing planning compliance.										
4) When will we see improvement? Exchange of contracts expected on some of the plots in June to enable some of the Pioneers to be on site during quarter 2 and the remainder during the forthcoming months.										
CBP1.2 - Complete and implement the Masterplan for Bicester	CBP1.2.3b Graven Hill: Set up a sales and marketing suite to promote the plots	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	➡	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	➡

Objective	Measure	Frequency	Target (pd)	Actual (pd)	Period	vs last period	Target (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	YTD	vs last Year
<p>1) What has happened? The sales process will open to those that live and work in the District on 11th July and nationally on 22nd August. A sales and marketing suite will open in central Bicester location in Autumn and in line with the delivery of phase 1 transfer to Graven Hill location during 2018. At present the activity is taking place from a temporary location in Bodicote House.</p> <p>2) Why has it happened? This work is on-going and dependent on a suitable location becoming available on the Graven Hill site.</p> <p>3) What actions are we taking? There is a temporary location set-up in Bodicote House.</p> <p>4) When will we see improvement? When sales and marketing suite opens in a central Bicester location in the Autumn.</p>										
CBP1.2 - Complete and implement the Masterplan for Bicester	CBP1.2.4 Engage with the community and stakeholders to deliver Garden Town Bicester	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	➡	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	?
<p>1) What has happened? Town-wide public consultation event held in March to understand the priorities and aspirations of the local community. Over 900 written responses were received and a summary of feedback has been produced. As a result the agreed next action was to undertake a 'you said, we did' exercise, drawing out the main things identified as important and setting how the council has/will respond to key issues. The 'you said' feedback element was first reported to the community at The Big Lunch on 12 June - this included a 'Top 5' list of what people like about Bicester and what they would like to see improved. The feedback is to be available on the Growing Bicester website.</p> <p>Bicester's retail offer and town centre was at the top of the improvements agenda and workshop discussions (facilitated by Economic Growth team and its consultants) between key CDC officers and external stakeholders have been programmed (26 May and 15 July) to devise a 'quick wins' action plan in response to the identified issues.</p> <p>A multi-disciplinary team of consultants has been appointed to produce a new Bicester Masterplan in order to deliver the long-term aspirations for the town in a coordinated and comprehensive approach. Further consultation with the community and stakeholders will now be undertaken as part of that masterplanning process in Autumn 2016.</p> <p>Why has it happened? Future consultation fatigue resulting in disengagement meaning that the people of Bicester no longer influence and help control decisions and services that shape the town in which they live and work.</p> <p>Technical confusion about the many overlapping labels and messages and how they relate to each other</p> <p>Fear and apprehension of change, particularly with a significant increase in population in the future, impacts on future consultation and results in hostility and negative feedback</p> <p>3) What actions are we taking? Production of an engagement and communications strategy that sets out agreed engagement principles and provides guidance particularly around how and with whom we engage.</p> <p>4) When will we see improvement? A multi-disciplinary team of consultants has been appointed to produce a new Bicester Masterplan in order to deliver the long-term aspirations for the town in a coordinated and comprehensive approach. Further consultation with the community and stakeholders will now be undertaken as part of that masterplanning process in Autumn 2016.</p> <p>8) Data delay Town-wide public consultation event held in March to understand the priorities and aspirations of the local community. Over 900 written responses were received and a summary of feedback has been produced. As a result the agreed next action was to undertake a 'you said, we did' exercise, drawing out the main things identified as important and setting how the council has/will respond to key issues. The 'you said' feedback element was first reported to the community at The Big Lunch on 12 June - this included a 'Top 5' list of what people like about Bicester and what they would like to see improved. The feedback is to be available on the Growing Bicester website.</p> <p>Bicester's retail offer and town centre was at the top of the improvements agenda and workshop discussions (facilitated by Economic Growth team and its consultants) between key CDC officers and external stakeholders have been programmed (26 May and 15 July) to devise a 'quick wins' action plan in response to the identified issues.</p> <p>A multi-disciplinary team of consultants has been appointed to produce a new Bicester Masterplan in order to deliver the long-term aspirations for the town in a coordinated and comprehensive approach. Further consultation with the community and stakeholders will now be undertaken as part of that masterplanning process in Autumn 2016.</p>										
CBP1.3 - Complete and implement the Masterplan for Banbury	CBP1.3.1 Prepare a scheme for the redevelopment of the Bolton Road site	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	➡	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	✖
<p>1) What has happened? The Castleside multi-storey car park at Bolton Road, Banbury permanently closed on Friday 10 June 2016 after an inspection identified significant structural issues. This car park will now be demolished as a matter of urgency (out to tender) and a temporary facility created. This part of the town has been identified for significant regeneration, and on-going scoping and</p>										

Appendix 4 - All Measures

Objective	Measure	Frequency	Target (pd)	Actual (pd)	Period	vs last period	Target (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	YTD	vs last Year
<p>appraisal works are underway.</p> <p>2) Why has it happened? Significant structural issues were identified.</p> <p>3) What actions are we taking? This car park will now be demolished as a matter of urgency (out to tender) and a temporary facility created.</p> <p>4) When will we see improvement? When car park has been demolished and temporary facility set-up and scoping and appraisal work is completed.</p>										
CBP1.3 - Complete and implement the Masterplan for Banbury	CBP1.3.2 Take steps to develop a Masterplan of Canalside in Banbury Town Centre for redevelopment	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡
<p>1) What has happened? Delivery on track with the technical assessment nearly finished. Draft Supplementary Planning Document follows.</p>										
CBP1.3 - Complete and implement the Masterplan for Banbury	CBP1.3.3a Secure start on site for Castle Quay 2	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	✖	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	✖
<p>1) What has happened? There has been some significant progress in recent months and Aberdeen Investments (the developer) are considering a communication update on the scheme in the near future.</p>										
CBP1.3 - Complete and implement the Masterplan for Banbury	CBP1.3.3b Maximise Council's income from Castle Quay 1	Quarterly	?	Slightly behind schedule	●	?	?	Slightly behind schedule	●	?
<p>1) What has happened? There are some very challenging trading circumstances impacting on retail outlets nationally.</p> <p>2) What actions are we taking? Officers have arranged to meet with Aberdeen Investments, along with their appointed FM provider, to review current trading conditions. We have indicated our intention to look at all potential options Aberdeen might wish to put on the table, to help improve the overall income position. Finance officers will also attend the planned meeting, and an update for members will be presented to members in due course"</p>										
CBP1.3 - Complete and implement the Masterplan for Banbury	CBP1.3.4 Support The Mill as the primary town centre arts provision in its development activities	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡
<p>1) What has happened? A meeting with the newly formed Mill Arts Centre Trust and County Council Partners took place recently to assess the business development opportunities and begin to scope the scale of investment needed.</p>										
CBP1.4 - Promote Inward Investment And Support Business Growth Within The District.	CBP1.4.1 Support business growth, skills & employment in local companies & visitor economy	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	?
<p>1) What has happened? Daily delivery of services to support business growth, including 84 detailed enquires during Q1 of 2016-17.</p> <p>The vitality of our town centres is being developed as follows: a) In Banbury: through the town team co-ordination programme and the commencement of a Business Improvement District feasibility study, and b) In Bicester: through the Retail Success programme to assist, amongst other objectives, traders with their business plans to maximise the benefits of a growing number of households in</p>										

Objective	Measure	Frequency	Target (pd)	Actual (pd)	Period	vs last period	Target (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	YTD	vs last Year
the town.										
Completion of another very successful Cherwell Business Awards 2016 programme, alongside partners from the voluntary, public and private sectors. The Council sponsored the Community and Charity Award and all applicants have been provided with free-of-charge business development advice.										
2) Why has it happened?										
The business support services are a result of a) responsiveness to businesses requesting help and b) pro-action to ensure that businesses have access to new markets, staff, land and premises.										
3) What actions are we taking?										
The action is delivered through services to:										
a) support recruitment and skills through weekly job clubs and quarterly job fairs in Banbury and Bicester.										
b) Comprehensive place marketing and business investment support service through www.Cherwell-M40.co.uk										
c) Advice to start-up businesses through providing a venue & promotion of Oxfordshire Business Enterprises service.										
d) Access to business grants and advice through providing a venue & promotion of SEMLEP and OxLEP business support services.										
e) Develop research to support the implementation of the Local Plan and revision of the Cherwell economic growth strategy.										
4) When will we see improvement?										
Improvement in the number of jobs created and safeguarded will be particularly notable in the autumn 2016. At this time, the results of work over the past 5 years will be evident as a number of indigenous and inward investing businesses will be operational at new premises.										
Excellent Performance										
The business clients have often recorded their appreciation of the assistance provided by the Council to assist with recruiting staff, gaining planning permission and overcoming operational issues. No complaints have been received.										
CBP1.4 - Promote Inward Investment And Support Business Growth Within The District.	CBP1.4.2 Continue to use the Cherwell Investment Partnership as a hub for inward investment	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡
What has happened?										
Leadership and daily support and liaison provided through the Cherwell Investment Partnership to ensure that business enquiries are effectively handled in partnership with commercial estate agents and other partners supporting local business growth.										
CBP1.4 - Promote Inward Investment And Support Business Growth Within The District.	CBP1.4.3 Produce marketing material to promote commercial and industrial business sites to the area	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡
1) What has happened?										
Research into new and existing commercial development sites has been completed. This is now being used to create a guide for businesses to identify landowners/developers/agents with whom to discuss their property needs.										
CBP1.5 - Deliver High Quality Regulatory Services	CBP1.5.1 Develop a whole council approach to supporting businesses	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡
1) What has happened?										
Two further successful Organisational Awareness Days were held in July 2016; this gave services a chance to work together to determine how both CDC and SNC can best provide services to businesses; the newly formed Regulators Forum continues to exchange legal good practice and to make regulatory services more efficient; the SEMLEP Better Business for All programme will roll out a regulatory awayday this year to seek ways to improve the way that regulators interact with businesses.										
5) Excellent Performance										
It has been a great year for Better Business. Approximately 200 staff attended four Organisational Awareness Days across Cherwell and South Northamptonshire which provided an opportunity for staff to experience what it felt like to be a start up business in our district and to shape how our services assist. 88% of delegates agreed that the workshops met a number of objectives including ensuring that services recognise and understand that they need to work together as a whole Council to support our businesses. Our programme with SEMLEP continues with a regulators workshops and a work programme which will include working with businesses to find out what the barriers are. We held workshops in Banbury with local businesses earlier in the year and developed a funded single regulatory point of contact based on feedback from businesses. We have extended this project as it is showing early signs of										

Objective	Measure	Frequency	Target (pd)	Actual (pd)	Period	vs last period	Target (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	YTD	vs last Year
success which will add value to the final evaluation.										
CBP1.5 - Deliver High Quality Regulatory Services	CBP1.5.2 Work proactively with developers to aid delivery of new commercial projects	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡
<p>1) What has happened? Developer Forum held in May to explore how the Council and developers can work more collaboratively to ensure delivery.</p> <p>3) What actions are we taking? 1) Reviewing the Local Validation List 2) Reviewing how pre-application advice is provided 3) Using design reviews for sensitive/ contentious developments 4) Streamlining the S106 process with OCC 5) Reducing the number of pre-commencement conditions - providing 'shovel ready consents'</p>										
CBP2.1 - Provide High Quality Recycling & Waste Services, Helping Residents Recycle	CBP2.1.1 Achieve 55% recycling rate	Monthly	55.00	62.78	★*	✔	55.00	61.01	★*	✔
<p>1) What has happened? Excellent performance for Q1, well in excess of target and higher than the same period last year (60.53%).</p> <p>5) Excellent Performance Several factors have contributed to this exceptional performance:- 1) Garden/Food waste is far higher than last year due to the weather with it being warm and wet, both June and July tonnages were higher than we have ever had before. 2) We've renegotiated the terms of the contract with our dry recycling processor so they now accept mixed glass which has increased the amount of dry recycling tonnage we've collected. 3) We've continued to publicise our recycling scheme through Cherwell link and all new properties are getting lots of start-up information.</p>										
CBP2.1 - Provide High Quality Recycling & Waste Services, Helping Residents Recycle	CBP2.1.4 Maintain Customer satisfaction with recycling and waste service (= >80%)	Quarterly	80.00	83.00	★	✔	80.00	83.00	★	✘
<p>1) What has happened? Increase in satisfaction rate during 2015/16. 2016/17 Satisfaction Survey results will be available in Q2.</p> <p>3) What actions are we taking? In order to maintain/enhance customer satisfaction on waste collection we will take the following measures:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all our collection staff are trained and competent. • Ensure all our collection are smart wearing corporate PPE and carry out their duties professionally. • Regularly remind staff of the need for high quality customer service through team briefings. • Ensure our supervisors monitor the performance of our collection staff in areas such as returning bins to the point of collection. • Investigate any complaints and put in place any actions needed. 										
CBP2.2 - Provide High Quality Street Cleansing Services, And Tackle Environmental Crime	CBP2.2.1 Maintain customer satisfaction with street cleansing	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	✘
<p>1) What has happened? The Street Cleansing Department has recently been involved in the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) In Bloom competition(s). The areas judged were Banbury, Bicester, and Kidlington.</p> <p>During the course all of the events the judges have commented very positively with regards the lack of litter and also about the general cleanliness of all of the areas inspected.</p> <p>5) Excellent Performance The high profile street cleansing work will continue.</p>										
CBP2.2 - Provide High Quality Street Cleansing Services, And	CBP2.2.1a Undertake 6 neighbourhood blitzes with	Quarterly	0	1	★*	✘	0	1	★*	➡

Objective	Measure	Frequency	Target (pd)	Actual (pd)	Period	vs last period	Target (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	YTD	vs last Year
Tackle Environmental Crime	community involvement									
<p>1) What has happened? We have recently had a neighbourhood blitz event in Banbury town centre which was very well received by residents and members of the public alike. This was carried out with the assistance of Street Wardens and Banbury Town Council.</p> <p>5) Excellent Performance There are six planned events this year during which we will encourage as much participation by residents and members of the public in making them a success.</p> <p>The next event is planned for Bicester town centre commencing 19 September 2016.</p>										
CBP2.2 - Provide High Quality Street Cleansing Services, And Tackle Environmental Crime	CBP2.2.1b Number of flytips	Monthly	44	34	🌟*	📈	150	146	🌟	📉
<p>1) What has happened? Very small fluctuations in the numbers of fly tips. We have noticed an increase in the number of fly tips around Cherwell's recycling banks at certain locations. For example: Poolside Close, Banbury, Admiral Holland car park, Banbury and the Red Lion car park in Yarnton.</p> <p>It seems to be a wide range of types of waste being dumped, ranging from general household waste to recyclable waste.</p> <p>We have been successful in issuing 2 fixed penalty notices on two individuals for depositing household waste.</p> <p>A range of initiatives are being looked at, and depending on the location overt cameras to be used. A variety of signage that could be used: -Which will advise the public that the site is under surveillance. -Asking customers that if the banks are full to find an alternative site or take it home -Asking residents to contact us if they witness any fly tipping taking place. Drop in the number of fly tips for this month, fluctuations are a regular occurrence. No trends appearing with either the type of waste or location.</p> <p>5) Excellent Performance Small fluctuations in the numbers of fly tips are a frequent occurrence throughout the year.</p>										
CBP2.2 - Provide High Quality Street Cleansing Services, And Tackle Environmental Crime	CBP2.2.1c Number of Enforcement actions	Monthly	15	26	🌟*	📈	47	65	🌟*	📈
<p>1) What has happened? 22 Warning letters sent out 4 Fixed penalty notices issued for low level fly tipping</p> <p>5) Excellent Performance 22 Warning letters have been sent out. 4 Fixed penalty notices have been issued for small amounts of fly tips.</p>										
CBP2.3 - Work With Partners To Help Ensure The District Remains A Low Crime Area	CBP2.3.1 To develop an alternative CCTV operational system for our Urban centres	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	🌟	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	🌟	➡
<p>1) What has happened? Thames Valley Police, are currently undertaking a review of CCTV across the force area. Their preferred option is for one control room in each County. The review will not be completed until the autumn. Then officers will need to collate the findings and produce a report for member decision.</p>										
CBP2.3 - Work With Partners To Help Ensure The District Remains A Low Crime Area	CBP2.3.1a Continue working with local police & licence holders to ensure town centres remain safe	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	🌟	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	🌟	➡

Appendix 4 - All Measures

Objective	Measure	Frequency	Target (pd)	Actual (pd)	Period	vs last period	Target (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	YTD	vs last Year
<p>1) What has happened? A joint night time economy action plan has been created and a calendar of events is being drawn up. Initial operations have proven quite useful in scoping the impact of violence in the Towns, which appears to be at lower levels than previous years.</p>										
CBP2.4 - Reduce our carbon footprint and protect the natural environment	CBP2.4.1 Deliver the Council's Biodiversity Action Plan	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	✖	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	✖
<p>1) What has happened? 2016/17 Biodiversity Action Plan now scheduled for September Executive rather than July. 2) Why has it happened? Requirement to deliver and administer Queen's 90th Birthday Celebration grant scheme was unexpected, and took up a large amount of officer time at the time of year when the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) would usually be prepared. 3) What actions are we taking? BAP is currently being updated, alongside biodiversity input to Local Plan part 2. 4) When will we see improvement? Updated BAP will be presented to September Executive. In the meanwhile, partners continue to deliver outputs in line with their service level agreements.</p>										
CBP2.4 - Reduce our carbon footprint and protect the natural environment	CBP2.4.2 Implement a new carbon management plan from 2015-2020	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	➡	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	➡
<p>The 2015-2020 Carbon Management Plan was adopted in November 2015 with a target of 2% reduction per year against a 2008/09 baseline. Quarter 1 data is not yet available although as emissions mostly occur during the winter months we anticipate being on track.</p>										
CBP3.1 - Deliver Affordable Housing & Work With Private Sector Landlords	CBP3.1.1 Deliver at least 190 units of affordable housing	Monthly	15	43	★*	✔	33	72	★*	✔
<p>The 43 units were delivered at: Springfield Farm (Ambrosden), Kingsmere (Bicester), Longford Park, North West Bicester (Eco Town). These figures reflect the continued good partnership working that is taking place between the district council and registered providers operating in Cherwell to continue to deliver the affordable homes that are needed. It also reflects the Council's strong policy position with regards to affordable housing. However, there will be increasing challenges in the coming months to ensure the Council continues to secure the affordable housing it needs to meet the affordable housing demand which the district has, not least because of the financial implications of the Brexit decision and the changing national housing and planning policy.</p>										
CBP3.1 - Deliver Affordable Housing & Work With Private Sector Landlords	CBP3.1.2 Promote the establishment of an off-site construction factory in Bicester	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡
<p>1) What has happened? The European Funding bid has been submitted on time and the outcome is awaited. 3) What actions are we taking? If the funding bid is successful then a 2 year pilot programme will be set up to produce housing prototypes before full time production in the 3rd year.</p>										
CBP3.1 - Deliver Affordable Housing & Work With Private Sector Landlords	CBP3.1.3 Encourage private sector landlords to improve their stock through grants action & advice	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡
<p>1) What has happened? 1. 2 private-rented properties were improved through CHEEP energy-efficiency grant contributions during the first quarter. (As reported in the last quarter of 2015-16, we are working with the leaseholders of 11 rented flats in a residential block to get window replacements installed and expect to see those 11 grant jobs completed in 2016-17.) 2. 1 private-rented property has been renovated by means of Landlord Home Improvement Grants securing nomination-rights and affordable rent. (Grant aided works are underway at 4 further properties.)</p>										

Objective	Measure	Frequency	Target (pd)	Actual (pd)	Period	vs last period	Target (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	YTD	vs last Year
CBP3.1 - Deliver Affordable Housing & Work With Private Sector Landlords	CBP3.1.4 Ensure the provision of extra care housing	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	?	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	?
1) What has happened? Cherwell currently has 233 units of Extra Care Housing across the district. These units are closely monitored by the Housing Registration Team who hold weekly virtual meetings with partners to review any vacancies and approve individuals with the greatest needs access this type of accommodation. The Investment and Growth team also meet regularly with the County Council about future needs for this type of accommodation locally. 78 units (23 affordable) have recently been approved planning permission in Bath Road, Banbury. Workers are currently on site with delivery anticipated in 2018/19. Conversations are also continuing with a range of partners to consider the need for other sites across the district which would have the potential to deliver over 100 further units if all were to proceed and receive planning approval.										
CBP3.2 - Work with partners to support financial inclusion	CBP3.2.1 Commissioning of high quality financial and debt advice for vulnerable residents	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	?	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	?
1) What has happened? The current money and debt advice contract with Citizens Advice is now in its final year and is due to expire 31 March 2017. The Housing Department have started initial discussions about re-tendering for a new service to start from 1 April 2017 and will need to progress further throughout the summer and will need to give consideration to the impacts of welfare reforms including the expected reduction in benefit cap from £26,000 to £20,000 for families and from £18,200 to £13,400 for single claimants being introduced towards the end of 2016. The introduction of Universal Credit will also result in individuals receiving one payment per month instead of the current weekly/fortnightly payments. This may result in people experiencing further financial difficulties in the future and will require robust financial advice services to be available within the district.										
The existing contract continues to be monitored through quarterly meetings with Citizens Advice, Operations manager who provides a detailed report of the work completed and the outcomes achieved for local residents. In the first quarter of 16/17, 1707 individuals received support about Money and Debt issues from Citizens Advice.										
CBP3.2 - Work with partners to support financial inclusion	CBP3.2.2 Effective implementation of welfare reform and administration of benefits	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡
CBP3.2 - Work with partners to support financial inclusion	CBP3.2.2a Average time taken to process new Housing Benefit claims	Monthly	14.00	13.13	★	✔	14.00	13.29	★	✔
1) What has happened? Good performance for period and year to date although down against performance in 2015 (12.75 days)										
CBP3.2 - Work with partners to support financial inclusion	CBP3.2.2b Average time taken to process change in circumstances	Monthly	12.00	4.85	★*	✘	12.00	3.60	★*	✘
1) What has happened? On average changes continue to be processed well within target. This is due to the volume of information received electronically from DWP that can be uploaded directly into our systems.										
CBP3.2 - Work with partners to support financial inclusion	CBP3.2.2c Average time taken to process new claims and changes for HB	Monthly	12.00	5.31	★*	✘	12.00	4.04	★*	✘
1) What has happened? The Benefit team continues to exceed the target for this measure by a big margin to the performance on changes of circumstances.										
CBP3.2 - Work with partners to support financial inclusion	CBP3.2.3 Number of covert surveillance exercises that have been applied for	Quarterly	0	0	★	?	0	0	★	✔
1) What has happened? No requests for covert surveillances were made during the year.										
	CBP3.2.4 Support skills									

Objective	Measure	Frequency	Target (pd)	Actual (pd)	Period	vs last period	Target (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	YTD	vs last Year
CBP3.2 - Work with partners to support financial inclusion	development/apprenticeships/job clubs to keep unemployment at low level	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡
<p>Weekly job clubs have been provided continuously since 2009, alternating between Banbury and Bicester. The number of clients each week averages around 12 with significantly more (around 300) attending the occasional job fairs, including the Oxfordshire Apprenticeship Service and other services to support skills development.</p> <p>The venue at Bicester is now the new library and this has been a successful transition whereby job seekers can now gain access to job seeking resources (computers, books, etc.) throughout the week. In Banbury, the Town Hall continues to be a popular venue, supplemented by additional support at the library and job centre.</p> <p>Unemployment is at 0.5% (JSA claimants) and additional activity is being provided through the Brighter Futures in Banbury programme (employment theme) to equip job seekers with work ready skills and support.</p> <p>The opening of the Studio Technology School in Bicester is on target for September 2016 and, whilst being the culmination of several years development support by CDC, will also in future provide a venue for interaction between students and business through job fairs, etc.</p>										
CBP3.3 - Provide High Quality Housing Options Advice & Support To Prevent Homelessness	CBP3.3.1 Deliver the actions identified within the revised Homelessness prevention strategy	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡
<p>1) What has happened? The Homeless Action Plan for 2016/17 was approved by Executive on 4 January 2016 and was launched 22 March 2016.</p> <p>The first steering group meeting for the action plan which includes representation from Economic Development, OCCG, local community workers and Citizens Advice was held on 9 June at Cherwell District Council. The meeting reviewed the 31 action points identified to be delivered throughout the year and discussed opportunities to support the delivery of actions not being achieved or started. The meeting also provided an opportunity to understand what is happening within different areas that impact upon people who are homeless and to help improved joined up approach to tackling homelessness within Cherwell.</p> <p>The new Homeless Pathway continues to be monitored closely with the first monitoring meetings having taken place over the first quarter of this year and remain on target to deliver the expected outcomes for local residents.</p> <p>Housing staff also continue to ensure that there is representation at Oxfordshire County Council meetings about re-commissioning homeless services for rough sleepers. As a result of budgetary cuts the county are having to make to the Housing Related Support budget which provides support within the emergency accommodation for rough sleepers to zero by April 2017.</p>										
CBP3.3 - Provide High Quality Housing Options Advice & Support To Prevent Homelessness	CBP3.3.1a Number of households living in Temporary Accommodation (TA)	Monthly	41	42	●	✖	41	42	●	✖
<p>1) What has happened? During the quarter numbers in TA have risen and the numbers at the end of the month reflect an increase in those placed for a limited period, but are not owed full duties.</p> <p>2) Why has it happened? Numbers can often fluctuate depending on demand and we exceeded the target by 1 case in this particular week.</p> <p>3) What actions are we taking? We have anticipated this rise and have made arrangements to ensure adequate suitable accommodation is available at affordable rates.</p> <p>4) When will we see improvement? Numbers have already reduced to target.</p>										
CBP3.3 - Provide High Quality Housing Options Advice & Support To Prevent Homelessness	CBP3.3.1b Housing Advice: repeat homelessness cases	Monthly	0	0	★	➡	0	0	★	➡

Objective	Measure	Frequency	Target (pd)	Actual (pd)	Period	vs last period	Target (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	YTD	vs last Year
1) What has happened? We have had no repeat cases of homelessness as defined by DCLG in this quarter.										
CBP3.4 - Work to provide and support health and wellbeing across the district.	CBP3.4.1 Support CPN with financial, clinical & technological changes in health & social care sector	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	✖	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	?
1) What has happened? Local concern has arisen over recruitment difficulties to maintain maternity services at the Horton DGH resulting in alternative service options which include downgrading the unit to a midwife led unit rather than a consultant led unit. Further assessment work is underway with a conclusion with proposed options to be available in August.										
2) Why has it happened? National recruitment difficulties with middle grade doctors where despite repeated recruitment processes and salary incentives, two out of eight posts have remained unfilled and three other postholders are about to leave.										
3) What actions are we taking? Contingency plan being developed. Further OUHFT recruitment underway. Alternative service delivery models being examined across the range of Horton services.										
4) When will we see improvement? Late August/early September will be the point at which new Horton service options will be finalised and whether the further recruitment process has been successful										
CBP3.4 - Work to provide and support health and wellbeing across the district.	CBP3.4.2 Enable the development of volunteer transport schemes to support vulnerable residents	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡
1) What has happened? The final stages of the current contract are being administered to ensure that CDC receives the detailed monitoring as laid out in the contract. Retendering will begin in earnest in the autumn.										
CBP3.4 - Work to provide and support health and wellbeing across the district.	CBP3.4.3 With partners help improve lives of most vulnerable from Brighter Futures initiative	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	?
1) What has happened? Further Brighter Futures theme work is underway supported by a multi agency workshop on child poverty to understand the issue, the relevance locally and actions to improve the current position.										
CBP3.5 - Provide High Quality & Accessible Leisure Opportunities	CBP3.5.1 Maintain a minimum usage level of visits to leisure facilities	Monthly	133,615	132,904	★*	✔	133,615	132,904	★*	✖
1) What has happened? Both Bicester and Kidlington Leisure Centres have shown an increase in June 2016 against May 2016 with Spiceball demonstrating a slight decrease in usage. Overall the actual Year to Date is showing a marginal decrease against the same period last year, however this can be attributed to the withdrawal of usage at Bicester Leisure Centre by Bicester Community College (school use).										
5) Excellent Performance As mentioned previously both Bicester and Kidlington Leisure Centres demonstrated an increase in usage compared to the previous month										
CBP3.5 - Provide High Quality & Accessible Leisure Opportunities	CBP3.5.1a Number of visits/usage to District Leisure Centres	Monthly	123,306	119,536	●	✔	359,105	355,805	●	✖
1) What has happened? Overall there has been a relatively consistent performance from the 3 Leisure Centres within the District with Spiceball Leisure Centre marginally up on the same period last year and Kidlington and Bicester marginally down on the same period last year. North Oxfordshire Academy usage is significantly up as part of the Joint Use facilities as is the Cooper School Sports Facility with Woodgreen Leisure Centre marginally up on the same period last year										
2) Why has it happened? The partial withdrawal of school use by Bicester Community College has had a negative effect on throughputs at Bicester Leisure Centre with approximately 1,000 less registered users for June 2016 compared to the same period last year. Both North Oxfordshire Academy and Cooper Sports Facility registered an increase in throughputs, primarily due to well attended one off										

Appendix 4 - All Measures

Objective	Measure	Frequency	Target (pd)	Actual (pd)	Period	vs last period	Target (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	YTD	vs last Year
<p>events including operatic performance, athletics events and school supported activities. Kidlington Leisure Centre has shown a decrease in numbers for the 2nd successive month. Initially this was identified as a reduction in 'Club' use however further interrogation into their usage will be required once this information is available</p> <p>3) What actions are we taking? CDC officers in partnership with the leisure operator will look at measures to increase usage particularly at Kidlington Leisure Centre and further identify the reasons for the decrease in usage numbers compared to last year. Discussions will take place as part of the Leisure Meeting.</p> <p>The Leisure Operator has recently submitted their National Benchmarking Survey Action Plan to address any shortfalls in participation for particular target groups</p> <p>4) When will we see improvement? It is anticipated that improvement will take place within the next few months as new marketing strategies are developed to encourage greater participation across all facilities</p>										
CBP3.5 - Provide High Quality & Accessible Leisure Opportunities	CBP3.5.1b Number of visits/usage to WGLC, NOA and Cooper	Monthly	10,309	13,368	★ [†]	✔	9,354	10,780	★ [†]	✔
<p>1) What has happened? When comparing the Cooper Sports Facility, North Oxfordshire Academy (NOA) and Woodgreen Leisure Centre (WGLC) against May 2016 the increase would be primarily due to the opening of the Outdoor Pool at WGLC and the increase in One Off Events/Athletics events at Cooper/NOA</p> <p>5) Excellent Performance As mentioned previously all 3 facilities increased their usage against the previous months with the reason behind this being highlighted in the 'what has happened' section</p>										
CBP3.5 - Provide High Quality & Accessible Leisure Opportunities	CBP3.5.2 Complete Phase 2 pavilion works for SW Bicester Sports Village	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	?	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	?
<p>1) What has happened? The Tender process is complete with four bids submitted. These have been evaluated and a report recommending the successful construction contractor will be reported to a special Executive meeting and then to the Full Council meeting both of which are to be held on 18 July 2016.</p>										
CBP3.5 - Provide High Quality & Accessible Leisure Opportunities	CBP3.5.3 Increase access to leisure & recreation opportunities through development & outreach work	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Ahead of schedule	★ [†]	?	Delivering to plan	Ahead of schedule	★ [†]	?
<p>1) What has happened? Taking Part, social prescribing and Singing for Health are all meeting project milestones early.</p> <p>5) Excellent Performance There is a real appetite for work that engages with people in new and creative ways. Our projects are proving cost effective and attracting good levels of participation.</p>										
CBP3.5 - Provide High Quality & Accessible Leisure Opportunities	CBP3.5.4 Commence the improvement of Woodgreen Leisure Centre and a long term operating contract	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	?	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	?
<p>1) What has happened? Parkwood Leisure took over management operation on 4 May 2016 and dry side refurbishment works have commenced as planned.</p>										
CBP3.5 - Provide High Quality & Accessible Leisure Opportunities	CBP3.5.5 Deliver with the aid of external funding the redevelopment of The Hill in Banbury	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	?	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	?
<p>1) What has happened? External funding anticipated to enable the funding plan to be completed.</p> <p>Construction procurement underway for the appointment of the architects following which there will be planning, construction procurement and construction processes.</p>										
CBP3.5 - Provide High Quality & Accessible Leisure Opportunities	CBP3.5.6 Establish new management arrangements for Stratfield Brake Sports Ground	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	?	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	?

Objective	Measure	Frequency	Target (pd)	Actual (pd)	Period	vs last period	Target (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	YTD	vs last Year
	for Kidlington PC									
1) What has happened? Now progressing with drafting of contract documents. Tender process due to commence September 2016.										
CBP3.6 - Provide Support To The Voluntary & Community Sector	CBP3.6.1 Implement social & community infrastructure for housing developments across the District	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	?
1) What has happened? The Cherwell Community Spaces development study has been adopted by members and work continues to integrate this into Local Plan part 2 and Community Infrastructure Levy. The interim Cherwell Community Spaces and Development Study (CCSDS) analysed and made recommendations for community centre provision and community development work on new housing developments. It was reported to and approved by CDC Exec on 01 Feb 2016.										
CBP3.6 - Provide Support To The Voluntary & Community Sector	CBP3.6.2 Support the voluntary sector and community groups	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	?
1) What has happened? We get quarterly reports from Citizens Advice detailing which organisations volunteers have been placed with. In Q4 of 2015/16, 47 volunteers were placed with 23 organisations, including Age UK, British Heart Foundation, Radio Horton, Royal Voluntary Service and Parkrun. An additional 19 volunteers were recruited for one-off 'Clean for the Queen' events.										
5) Excellent Performance Voluntary organisations being supported through contract with CAB to provide volunteering opportunities										
CBP3.6 - Provide Support To The Voluntary & Community Sector	CBP3.6.3 Support the growth & development of neighbourhood community associations	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	?	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	?
1) What has happened? The Countryside & Communities team provides guidance and signposting to Community associations in Banbury & Bicester. More intensive development work is ongoing with the newly formed Kingsmere (SW Bicester) and embryonic Longford Park (Banbury Bankside) Community Associations.										
CBP3.6 - Provide Support To The Voluntary & Community Sector	CBP3.6.4 Increase and promote volunteering opportunities throughout the District.	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	?	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	?
1) What has happened? Citizens Advice Bureau offer supported volunteering opportunities through contract for services. This is about helping and encouraging new volunteers rather than organisations. Contract with Citizens Advice is due to expire on 31/03/17.										
CBP3.6 - Provide Support To The Voluntary & Community Sector	CBP3.6.5 Support the Local Strategic Partnership in addressing the key issues in the District	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	?
1) What has happened? LSP Board has approved updated Terms of Reference and membership. Next meeting (04 August) will consider Brighter Futures in Banbury annual report 2015/16.										
CBP3.7 - Protect Our Built Heritage	CBP3.7.1 Continue programme of Conservation Reviews (5pa)	Quarterly	0	0	★	✖	0	0	★	➡
1) What has happened? The research process for the Conservation Area Appraisals has begun for Banbury, Hethe and Tadmarton. Banbury will be prepared for early 2017. Hethe and Tadmarton should be complete by November 2016										
CBP3.7 - Protect Our Built Heritage	CBP3.7.2 Provide design guidance on major developments	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	?
1) What has happened? Design and masterplanning advice is being provided on all strategic sites and most major development sites to promote high quality development across the District.										
CBP3.7 - Protect Our Built Heritage	CBP3.7.3 Processing of major applications within 13 weeks	Monthly	60.00	77.78	★*	✖	60.00	84.26	★*	✖
1) What has happened?										

Appendix 4 - All Measures

Objective	Measure	Frequency	Target (pd)	Actual (pd)	Period	vs last period	Target (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	YTD	vs last Year
<p>A performance figure of 78% was achieved in June. Whilst this is a drop on the previous month this is due to the small number of major applications determined, with only two applications going over time.</p> <p>5) Excellent Performance 78% far exceeds the target for major applications and this has been achieved through the pro-active use of Planning Performance Agreements and negotiating extensions of time limits.</p>										
CBP3.7 - Protect Our Built Heritage	CBP3.7.4 Processing of minor applications within 8 weeks	Monthly	65.00	91.67	★*	✖	65.00	94.62	★*	✔
<p>1) What has happened? Performance in June was 92% which is only slightly down on the previous month's figures during a busy period whilst having to deal with staff leave.</p> <p>5) Excellent Performance Performance for June was significantly above the target of 65%. This has been achieved through effective performance management and negotiating extensions of time limits with agents and applicants.</p>										
CBP3.7 - Protect Our Built Heritage	CBP3.7.5 Processing of other applications within 8 weeks	Monthly	80.00	95.45	★*	✖	80.00	96.72	★*	✔
<p>1) What has happened? Performance in June was 95% which is only slightly down on the previous month's figures during a busy period whilst having to deal with staff leave.</p> <p>5) Excellent Performance Performance on Other applications remains high and continues to far exceed the 80% target.</p>										
CBP3.7 - Protect Our Built Heritage	CBP3.7.6 Planning appeals allowed	Monthly	30.00	16.67	★*	?	30.00	16.67	★*	✔
<p>1) What has happened? The application which was allowed on appeal was refused by the case officer.</p> <p>Appeals on major applications: We have kept within the government's stated threshold for the quality of a local planning authority's performance (i.e. no more than 20 per cent of an authority's decisions on applications for major development should be overturned at appeal).</p> <p>5) Excellent Performance Appeals on major applications: The percentage against this measure at the last designation was 4.5% and the current performance is 0.5%.</p>										
CBP3.8 - Work To Ensure Rural Areas Are Connected To Local Services.	CBP3.8.1 Work with BT/BDUK & Oxfordshire County Council to extend Superfast Broadband District wide	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡
<p>The Council is investing £545,000 over two years from January 2016 towards Phase Two of the Oxfordshire Superfast Broadband Project. This will extend coverage of speeds greater than 24mbps from 90% of premises (business and residential) to 95%. During Q1, progress with the roll-out has been made to target which means that not only can more and more rural properties gain an enhanced service but also that gaps in urban coverage have been filled.</p>										
CBP4.1 - Reduce the cost of providing our services through partnerships	CBP4.1.1 Review key business processes to enhance performance, reduce cost & designed for customers	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	?	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	?
<p>1) What has happened? Work has been undertaken during this period to transition to a new 2-way service. This has had the knock-on effect of delaying work to enhance the IT service as required.</p> <p>2) Why has it happened? Changing priorities due to move from 3-way to 2-way service.</p> <p>3) What actions are we taking? Currently undertaking IT infrastructure review which will result in improved performance and reduced costs.</p> <p>4) When will we see improvement? The IT service will start improving immediately now that we have re-launched as a 2-way service.</p>										
CBP4.1 - Reduce the cost of providing our services through partnerships	CBP4.1.2 Increase the number of services that can be accessed and paid for online.	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	?	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	?

Appendix 4 - All Measures

Objective	Measure	Frequency	Target (pd)	Actual (pd)	Period	vs last period	Target (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	YTD	vs last Year
1) What has happened? Activities being undertaken include: Initiating a project to develop new council websites which will support improved functionality for online services; Developing payments integration for achieve forms; Initiating work to support online leisure bookings 2) Why has it happened? Although we are slightly behind due to the transition activities, some good progress is being made. 3) What actions are we taking? Work is being undertaken to support projects that have been initiated. 4) When will we see improvement? Towards the end of 16/17.										
CBP4.1 - Reduce the cost of providing our services through partnerships	CBP4.1.3 Deliver the Information communications Technology Strategy.	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	?	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	?
1) What has happened? We successfully launched the new 2-way IT service on 4th July as planned and are on track to complete all separation tasks by 31st July. The IT infrastructure review that is required to inform the strategy is now underway and the initial draft will be ready in September.										
Excellent Performance On track to meet agreed timeline.										
CBP4.1 - Reduce the cost of providing our services through partnerships	CBP4.1.4 Maximise income coming into the authority to include NHB/NNDR/CTax/ external funding.	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡
1) What has happened? Work is on-going to maximise all income coming in to the authority. We have seen a further 299 properties become subject to council tax in the first quarter of 2016-2017 which means additional income from council tax as well as New Homes Bonus. We are continuing to implement and deliver strategies for NNDR, but we have seen a fall in rateable value in this quarter which impacts negatively on income. This is a variable we have little control over although we seek to mitigate this by having efficient processes in place to identify and monitor growth. During this quarter we went live with a product called GrantFinder and anticipate that this will help us to start to capture funding from external sources.										
CBP4.1 - Reduce the cost of providing our services through partnerships	CBP4.1.5 Establish appropriate commercial arrangements.	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	?	Delivering to plan	Slightly behind schedule	●	✖
1) What has happened? Commercial opportunities have been identified and a draft action plan is due for review in July. 2) Why has it happened? Programme resources and content review 3) What actions are we taking? Resources allocated 4) When will we see improvement? Q2										
CBP4.2 - Continue To Communicate Effectively With Local Residents & Businesses	CBP4.2.1 Continue to increase use of social media to communicate with residents & local businesses	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡
1) What has happened? Social media is considered one of our key communications channel. Both likes and engagement continue to increase as do shares, comments and posts.										

Appendix 4 - All Measures

Objective	Measure	Frequency	Target (pd)	Actual (pd)	Period	vs last period	Target (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	YTD	vs last Year
CBP4.2 - Continue To Communicate Effectively With Local Residents & Businesses	CBP4.2.1a Social media ratings : Facebook (Target 12000 likes)	Quarterly	8,544	8,661	★	👍	8,544	8,661	★	👍
1) What has happened? The Facebook page continues to grow at a steady pace. In the lead up to elections and the referendum, Facebook was key to promoting voter registration and details of both polling days.										
CBP4.2 - Continue To Communicate Effectively With Local Residents & Businesses	CBP4.2.1b Social media ratings : Twitter (9000 Hits)	Quarterly	6,160	6,235	★	👍	6,160	6,235	★	👍
1) What has happened? Changes have been made to how Twitter is used including the use of more hashtags and images. Hootsuite is now used to ensure it is now populated on weekends as well as weekdays in line with Facebook.										
CBP4.2 - Continue To Communicate Effectively With Local Residents & Businesses	CBP4.2.3 Continue to develop our business focused communications	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡
1) What has happened? The team continues to work with the Economic Development team to support Job Clubs, Job Fairs and the Town Centre coordinators. E-bulletin has been revamped and a new wordle identity has been implemented across a number of publications and online applications.										
CBP4.3 - Deliver the five year business strategy	CBP4.3.1 Deliver annual balanced budget setting out 5 year financial plan (MTFS)	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡
1) What has happened? This is being delivered to plan.										
CBP4.3 - Deliver the five year business strategy	CBP4.3.1a Budget variance on capital within 2%	Quarterly	?	?	?!	?	?	?	?!	?
8) Data delay This is an annual target										
CBP4.3 - Deliver the five year business strategy	CBP4.3.1b Budget variance on revenue within 2%	Quarterly	?	?	?!	?	?	?	?!	?
8) Data delay This is an annual target										
CBP4.3 - Deliver the five year business strategy	CBP4.3.2 Deliver the savings targets £500k within the agreed timescales	Quarterly	?	?	?!	?	?	?	?!	?
8) Data delay This is an annual target										
CBP4.4 - Deliver below inflation increases to the CDC element of Council Tax.	CBP4.4.1 CDC Council Tax element frozen for 16/17	Quarterly	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	➡	Delivering to plan	Delivering to plan	★	?
1) What has happened? Done										
CBP4.4 - Deliver below inflation increases to the CDC element of Council Tax.	CBP4.4.2 Percentage of Council Tax collected	Monthly	30.00	29.86	●	👍	30.00	29.86	●	✖
1) What has happened? Collection rate is slightly under target at end of quarter 1 (0.14%) despite good start in collections during April and May.										
2) Why has it happened? Reduction in collection rate										

Page 7/15

Objective	Measure	Frequency	Target (pd)	Actual (pd)	Period	vs last period	Target (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	YTD	vs last Year
3) What actions are we taking? Recovery action has started for those payments overdue from April and May.										
CBP4.4 - Deliver below inflation increases to the CDC element of Council Tax.	CBP4.4.3 Percentage of business rates collected	Monthly	31.00	30.36			31.00	30.36		
1) What has happened? BHS has not paid the rates that it was due to pay.										
2) Why has it happened? BHS has gone into administration.										
3) What actions are we taking? None possible at the moment. Currently we do not expect to recover any of the outstanding debt.										
4) When will we see improvement? New business that start paying rates over the course of the current financial year will offset this loss.										

Cherwell District Council

Executive Committee

5 September 2016

Quarter 1 2016-17 – Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report

Report of Chief Finance Officer

This report is public

Purpose of report

This report summarises the Council's Revenue and Capital position as at the end of the first three months of the financial year 2016-17 and projections for the full year.

1.0 Recommendations

Executive Committee is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the projected revenue and capital position at June 2016.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 In line with good practice budget monitoring is undertaken on a monthly basis within the Council. The revenue and capital position is formulated in conjunction with the joint management team and reported formally to the Budget Planning Committee on a quarterly basis. The report is then considered by the Executive.
- 2.2 The revenue and capital expenditure in quarter 1 has been subject to a detailed review by Officers.

3.0 Report Details

Projected Revenue Outturn

- 3.1 At quarter one the Council is projecting an overspend of £803,000 at the year end. Analysis by directorate can be found in Appendix 1.

CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL
MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS AS AT JUNE 2016

SUMMARY BY SERVICE AREA

	Actual v Profile				Projected v Budget			
	Budget YTD £000	Actual YTD £000	Variance (Under) / Over £000	Concern Key	Budget £000	Projected £000	Variance (Under) / Over £000	Concern Key
Chief Executive	44	54	10	R	173	207	34	R
CHIEF EXECUTIVE Total	44	54	10	R	173	207	34	R
Bicester Regeneration Projects	291	204	(87)	A	1,163	963	(200)	A
Regeneration and Housing	695	927	232	R	1,642	2,152	510	R
Human Resources	130	220	90	R	524	528	4	G
Information Services	510	517	7	G	1,444	1,472	28	A
Business Transformation	57	321	264	R	229	394	165	R
COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT Total	1,683	2,189	506	R	5,002	5,509	507	R
Corporate Finance	334	385	51	R	1,380	1,516	136	R
Revenues	(46)	(24)	22	R	(182)	(182)	0	G
Benefits	189	189	0	G	92	92	0	G
Procurement	26	30	4	R	104	116	12	R
CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER Total	503	580	77	R	1,394	1,542	148	R
Strategic Planning & the Economy	305	322	17	R	1,219	1,161	(58)	A
Development Management	74	51	(23)	A	296	296	0	G
Communications	74	83	9	R	295	295	0	G
Improvement	0	0	0	G	0	0	0	G
Business Support Unit	22	19	(3)	A	87	87	0	G
Performance	49	59	10	R	197	179	(18)	A
Law and Governance	251	272	21	R	1,005	1,005	0	G
STRATEGY AND COMMISSIONING Total	775	806	31	R	3,099	3,023	(76)	G
Community Services	1,265	1,290	25	A	5,060	5,131	71	G
Environmental Services	1,260	1,375	115	R	5,039	5,158	119	A
OPERATIONS AND DELIVERY Total	2,525	2,665	140	R	10,099	10,289	190	A
TOTAL DIRECTORATES	5,530	6,294	764	R	19,767	20,570	803	R

Concern Key

Overspent more than 2.5% of budget	R
Underspent more than 2.5% of budget	A
Overspent between 1.5% and 2.5% of budget	A
Anything else	G

Projected Capital Outturn

3.2 The net Capital projection as at June 2016 is within budget tolerances (projected variance is less than 1% of the Approved Budget). The projected slippage relates to the North West Bicester Eco Business Centre, the profile of spend for this project will become clearer once the procurement exercise is completed in September. A detailed breakdown by capital scheme is presented at Appendix 2.

Directorate	APPROVED BUDGET £000	YTD BUDGET £000	ACTUAL £000	PROJECTION £000	SLIPPAGE £000	VARIANCE £000
Strategy & Commissioning	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chief Finance Officer	38	0	(169)	38	0	0
Commercial Development	65,111	8,700	3,922	63,270	2,500	659
Operations & Delivery	6,046	770	1,113	6,046	0	0
Total	71,195	9,470	4,865	69,354	2,500	659

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

4.1 It is recommended that the contents of this report are noted.

5.0 Consultation

Cllr Ken Atack – Lead member
for Financial Management

Cllr Atack is content with the report and
supportive of the recommendations contained
within it.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

6.2 Option 1: This report illustrates the Council's performance against the 2016-17 Financial Targets for Revenue and Capital. As this is a monitoring report, no further options have been considered. However, members may wish to request that officers provide additional information.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

7.1 These are contained in the body of the report. There are no direct costs or other direct financial implications arising from this report.

Comments checked by:

George Hill, Corporate Finance Manager, 01295 221731
george.hill@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Legal Implications

- 7.2 There are no legal implications. Presentation of this report is in line with the CIPFA Code of Practice.

Comments checked by:

Kevin Lane, Head of Law and Governance

0300 0030107 kevin.lane@cherwellsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Risk management

- 7.3 The position to date highlights the relevance of maintaining a minimum level of reserves and budget contingency to absorb the financial impact of changes during the year. Any increase in risk will be escalated through the corporate risk register.

Comments checked by:

Ed Bailey, Corporate Performance Manager, 01295 221605

edward.bailey@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Equality and Diversity

- 7.4 Impact assessments were carried out in advance of setting the 2016-17 budget.

Comments checked by:

Caroline French, Corporate Policy Officer, 01295 221586

caroline.french@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

8.0 Decision Information

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

All

Lead Councillor

Councillor Ken Atack – Lead Member for Financial Management

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
1	Directorate Analysis of Revenue Expenditure 2016-17
2	Directorate Analysis of Capital Expenditure 2016-17
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Paul Sutton, Chief Finance Officer
Contact Information	03000 030106 Paul.sutton@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

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CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL
MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS AS AT JUNE 2016

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

	Actual v Profile				Projected v Budget			
	Budget YTD £000	Actual YTD £000	Variance (Under) / Over £000	Concern Key	Budget £000	Projected £000	Variance (Under) / Over £000	Concern Key
Chief Executive	44	54	10	R	173	207	34	R
CHIEF EXECUTIVE Total	44	54	10	R	173	207	34	R

Reasons for major variance : Purchase Order commitments not in budget include contribution to OCC Devolution Project £25k, whereas actual costs include this contribution.

Concern Key (based on YTD budget)

Overspent more than 2.5% of budget	R
Underspent more than 2.5% of budget	A
Overspent between 1.5% and 2.5% of budget	A
Anything else	G

CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL
MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS AS AT JUNE 2016

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

	Actual v Profile				Projected v Budget			
	Budget YTD £000	Actual YTD £000	Variance (Under) / Over £000	Concern Key	Budget £000	Projected £000	Variance (Under) / Over £000	Concern Key
Biscester Regeneration Projects	291	204	(87)	A	1,163	963	(200)	A
Regeneration & Housing	695	927	232	R	1,642	2,152	510	R
Human Resources	130	220	90	R	524	528	4	G
Information Services	510	517	7	G	1,444	1,472	28	A
Business Transformation	57	321	264	R	229	394	165	R
COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT Total	1,683	2,189	506	R	5,002	5,509	507	R

Reasons for major variance :

Biscester Regeneration Project: Relates to Graven Hill commitment fees; will be approx £200k by year end for 2016-17.

Non-Biscester Regeneration Project: The use of Agency staff in various teams, based on contracts upto October 2016 have resulted in a projected adverse budget variance of £361k. The remainder if the variance refers to Property Maintenance and Professional Fees.

It is not envisaged that these costs can be recovered within the existing budget for the year.

NOTE: Since the production of these figures a meeting has been held with the agents of Castle Quay and following the close of British Home Stores, the budgeted income for this cost centre will not be received. A detailed analysis of the potential loss of income is currently being carried out.

Business Transformation The forecasted variance of £165k relates to a) ICT support for the transition (£70k) and b) Institute of Directors re training (£95k).

Concern Key (based on YTD budget)

Overspent more than 2.5% of budget	R
Underspent more than 2.5% of budget	A
Overspent between 1.5% and 2.5% of budget	A
Anything else	G

CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL
MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS AS AT JUNE 2016

CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

	Actual v Profile				Projected v Budget			
	Budget YTD £000	Actual YTD £000	Variance (Under) / Over £000	Concern Key	Budget £000	Projected £000	Variance (Under) / Over £000	Concern Key
Corporate Finance	334	385	51	R	1,380	1,516	136	R
Revenues	(46)	(24)	22	R	(182)	(182)	0	G
Benefits	189	189	0	G	92	92	0	G
Procurement	26	30	4	R	104	116	12	R
CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER Total	503	580	77	R	1,394	1,542	148	R

Reasons for major variance :

The Procurement variance relates to agency costs forecasted to be greater than the budget. It is currently not envisaged that this will be covered by savings made elsewhere within the team.

The Corporate Finance forecasted variance primarily relates to additional agency costs £110k, Audit fees relating to quarter 4 of 2015-16 of £15k and £8k re Capita Treasury Solutions. It is not currently envisaged that this will be covered by savings made elsewhere within the team.

Concern Key (based on YTD budget)

Overspent more than 2.5% of budget	R
Underspent more than 2.5% of budget	A
Overspent between 1.5% and 2.5% of budget	A
Anything else	G

CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL
MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS AS AT JUNE 2016

STRATEGY AND COMMISSIONING SUMMARY

	Actual v Profile				Projected v Budget			
	Budget YTD £000	Actual YTD £000	Variance (Under) / Over £000	Concern Key	Budget £000	Projected £000	Variance (Under) / Over £000	Concern Key
Strategic Planning and the Economy	327	341	14	R	1,306	1,248	(58)	A
Development Management	74	51	(23)	A	296	296	0	G
Communications	74	83	9	R	295	295	0	G
Performance	49	59	10	R	197	179	(18)	A
Law and Governance	251	272	21	R	1,005	1,005	0	G
STRATEGY AND COMMISSIONING Total	775	806	31	R	3,099	3,023	(76)	G

Reasons for major variance :

Actual

Strategic Planning and the Economy: Shared Services costs yet to go through, a salary analysis model is being developed to allow proper review of payroll data.
Management restructure has been halted pending Unitary investigations.
Overspends within Economic Development & Local Plan will be covered by reserves if overspent at year-end.

Development Management: Planning Income down by £152k.
Planning fees income received in advance not shown against current year, will be rectified in Q2.

Communications: Cross charging of shared services yet to take place across CDC/SNC.

Performance: Cross charging of shared services yet to take place across CDC/SNC.
Vacant post within Performance - shared post. Likely to be vacant for the remainder of the year.

Law & Governance Expenditure relating to the Elections, reimbursement due (£131k).
Cross charging of shared services yet to take place across CDC/SNC.
Some expenditure relating to full year gone though in commitments, budget profiling to be adjusted for Q2.

Projected

Strategic Planning and the Economy: Management restructure has been halted pending Unitary investigations. Business case for savings being developed.

Performance: Vacant post within Performance - shared post. Likely to be vacant for the remainder of the year.

Concern Key (based on YTD budget)

Overspent more than 2.5% of budget	R
Underspent more than 2.5% of budget	A
Overspent between 1.5% and 2.5% of budget	A
Anything else	G

CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL
MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS AS AT JUNE 2016

OPERATIONS AND DELIVERY SUMMARY

	Actual v Profile				Projected v Budget			
	Budget YTD £000	Actual YTD £000	Variance (Under) / Over £000	Concern Key	Budget £000	Projected £000	Variance (Under) / Over £000	Concern Key
Community Services	1,265	1,290	25	A	5,060	5,131	71	G
Environmental Services	1,260	1,375	115	R	5,039	5,158	119	A
OPERATIONS AND DELIVERY Total	2,525	2,665	140	R	10,099	10,289	190	A

Reasons for major variance :

Potential overspend in Customer Service Centre to be investigated in detailed Q2 salary monitoring.
 Bolton road car park now closed so no further income will be received until December 2016.
 Domestic Waste Collection costs anticipated to overspend due to overtime and additional agency staff required to cover for a combination of long term sickness and for a growth in the number of collection properties.

Concern Key (based on YTD budget)

Overspent more than 2.5% of budget	R
Underspent more than 2.5% of budget	A
Overspent between 1.5% and 2.5% of budget	A
Anything else	G

CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL
MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS AS AT JUNE 2016

SUMMARY BY SERVICE AREA

	Actual v Profile				Projected v Budget			
	Budget YTD £000	Actual YTD £000	Variance (Under) / Over £000	Concern Key	Budget £000	Projected £000	Variance (Under) / Over £000	Concern Key
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CHIEF EXECUTIVE Total	44	54	10	R	173	207	34	R
Bicester Regeneration Projects	291	204	(87)	A	1,163	963	(200)	A
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Development Management	74	51	(23)	A	296	296	0	G
Communications	74	83	9	R	295	295	0	G
Improvement	0	0	0	G	0	0	0	G
Business Support Unit	0	0	0	G	0	0	0	G
Performance	49	59	10	R	197	179	(18)	A
Law and Governance	251	272	21	R	1,005	1,005	0	G
STRATEGY AND COMMISSIONING Total	775	806	31	R	3,099	3,023	(76)	G
Community Services	1,265	1,290	25	A	5,060	5,131	71	G
Environmental Services	1,260	1,375	115	R	5,039	5,158	119	A
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TOTAL DIRECTORATES	5,530	6,294	764	R	19,767	20,570	803	R

Concern Key

Overspent more than 2.5% of budget	R
Underspent more than 2.5% of budget	A
Overspent between 1.5% and 2.5% of budget	A
Anything else	G

CHERWELL DISTRICT CAPITAL SPEND AND YEAR END PROJECTIONS

Appendix 2

Page 759

CODE	DESCRIPTION	APPROVED BUDGET £000	YTD BUDGET £000	ACTUAL £000	PROJECTION £000	SLIPPAGE £000	VARIANCE £000	COMMENTS
		0	0	0	0		0	
Strategy & Commissioning Total		0	0	0	0	0	0	
40096	Financial System Upgrade	0	0	(169)	0		0	Requires investigation into credit balance at Q1 relating to other projects.
	HR / Payroll System replacement	38	0	0	38		0	Negotiations with current supplier to continue provision until replacement system implemented.
Finance & Procurement Total		38	0	(169)	38	0	0	
Chief Finance Officer Total		38	0	(169)	38	0	0	
40093	Bicester Community Building	758	0	442	758		0	£250k fit out for the 2nd floor remains unspent but plans are being drawn up to spend this in 16/17.
40094	Graven Hill	44,428	5,279	0	44,428		0	We area waiting a revised cash flow forecast from the company.
40095	NW Bicester Eco Business Centre	4,000	0	1	1,500	2,500	0	Once the procurement exercise is complete in Sept the expected cash flow will become clearer. We should expect the majority of spend to be incurred in 2017/18
Bicester Regeneration Projects Total		49,186	5,279	443	46,686	2,500	0	
40062	East West Railways	580	73	0	580		0	Planned to spend in 2016/17 - 5yr capital contributions
40063	Build Programme	11,531	2,883	2,524	11,531		0	per CS anticipated will be spent in 2016/17 - Payment profile to be ascertained
40065	23&24 Thorpe Place Roof Lights	4	0	0	4		0	Retention money held since at least 2013/14
40066	Condition Survey Works	176	0	102	176		0	Expenditure on schemes involving the Solihull Partnership is under review and detailed forecasts will be provided for Q2.
40067	Bradley Arcade Roof Repairs	98	0	14	98		0	Expenditure on schemes involving the Solihull Partnership is under review and detailed forecasts will be provided for Q2.
40071	Upgrade Uninterrupted Pwr Supp Back up	337	0	0	337		0	Expenditure on schemes involving the Solihull Partnership is under review and detailed forecasts will be provided for Q2.
40072	Improvmts to Amenities Orchard Way	25	0	0	25		0	Expenditure on schemes involving the Solihull Partnership is under review and detailed forecasts will be provided for Q2.
40073	Woodgreen - Condition Survey Works	30	0	12	30		0	Planned to be spent in 2016/17 as part of the WGLC upgrade or to replace flat roof
40074	Banbury Museum Emergency Lighting Replac	0	0	71	71		71	Spend was in 15-16, this may be a duplicate requiring investigation in Q2.
40075	Orchard Way Shopg Arcade Front Serv	300	0	0	300		0	Expenditure on schemes involving the Solihull Partnership is under review and detailed forecasts will be provided for Q2.
40076	21 23 Thorpe Place Replace Roof Lights	0	0	45	45		45	Spend was in 15-16, this may be a duplicate requiring investigation in Q2.
40077	Bodicote House - Access Control System	27	0	43	43		16	Additional Contractor Costs
40080	Old Bodicote House	73	0	18	73		0	Query if complete as started in 2015/16
40081	Bicester Town Centre Redevelopment	99	0	5	99		0	
40082	Kidlington High Street Pedestrianisation	2	0	0	2		0	Scheme completed in 2015/16 - small additional costs incurred
40085	Thorpe Lane Depot - CCTV Replacement	40	0	0	40		0	Expenditure on schemes involving the Solihull Partnership is under review and detailed forecasts will be provided for Q2.
40086	Bodicote House - CCTV Upgrade	15	0	0	15		0	Expenditure on schemes involving the Solihull Partnership is under review and detailed forecasts will be provided for Q2.
40087	Banbury Bus Station - Refurbishment	90	23	0	90		0	Planned to be spent in Q3 and Q4 2016/17
40088	Banbury Museum - Refurbishment Programme	250	63	0	250		0	Further investigation on profile of spend being carried out in Q2.
40089	Community Buildings - Remedial Works	150	38	0	150		0	Further investigation on profile of spend being carried out in Q2.
40090	Car Parks Resurfacing	100	25	0	100		0	Further investigation on profile of spend being carried out in Q2.
40091	Ferriston Shop Parade Resurface Car park	40	10	0	40		0	Further investigation on profile of spend being carried out in Q2.
40092	Spiceball Riverbank Reinstatement	50	13	0	50		0	Further investigation on profile of spend being carried out in Q2.
40102	Cher Comm Led Prog Local Hsg Co	0	0	5	5		5	LHC Legal Fees
40104	Higham Way	0	0	14	14		14	PO Commitment for feasibility study
40107	Cher Com Led Prog The Hill Com Centre	0	0	7	7		7	Topo and asbestos survey costs
40113	St Johns House Banbury	0	0	9	9		9	Final Payment re work at St Johns House
40115	Juniper Court/Drapers	0	0	32	32		32	Application 14 from Contractor plus Security costs
40117	Town Centre House	0	0	25	25		25	Professional Fees plus PO commitments for Internal and External fittings
40120	Prototype Project	0	0	1	1		1	Consultancy Costs re project
40124	Spring Gardens	0	0	1	1		1	Bolton Road Car Park costs prior to Demolition
40125	Newton Close	0	0	422	422		422	Lincoln House Project brought forward from 2015/16, classified as inventory and likely to be funded through capital receipts.
	Biscester Cattle Market	90	0	0	90		0	Slipped from 2015-16.
Assets Facilities Management Total		14,107	3,125	3,350	14,756	0	649	
40083	Disabled Facilities Grants	831	188	70	831		0	Grants awarded as required. Anticipate all will be used in 2016/17

CODE	DESCRIPTION	APPROVED BUDGET £000	YTD BUDGET £000	ACTUAL £000	PROJECTION £000	SLIPPAGE £000	VARIANCE £000	COMMENTS
40084	Discretionary Grants Domestic Properties	504	69	42	504		0	Grants awarded as required. Anticipate all will be used in 2016/17
40069	Empty Homes Work-in-Default Recoverable	100	0	0	100		0	Grants awarded as required. Anticipate all will be used in 2016/17
Private Sector Housing Total		1,435	256	112	1,435	0	0	
40032	Microsoft Licensing Agreement	39	0	0	39		0	Funding will be required in 2017/18
40035	Corporate Bookings System	8	0	0	8		0	was forecasted to be complete in 2015/16. TS to investigate.
40036	Extended Contract for Website Hosting	36	0	0	36		0	was forecasted to be complete in 2015/16. TS to investigate.
40044	Lync 2013 prof fees, equip IT hardware	0	0	1	1		1	No Budget see 2015/16
40045	Desktop PC Replacement	0	0	1	1		1	No Budget see 2015/16 - removed from capital programme - BPC 9/09/15
40050	Hyper V Environment (IT hardware)	0	0	2	2		2	No Budget see 2015/16 - removed from capital programme - BPC 9/09/15
40052	VMware Virtual Centre Disaster Recy Mngr	35	0	0	35		0	Slippage to 2016/17 pending review of IT strategy, new strategy expected to be agreed in October 16
40054	Land & Property Harmonisation	0	0	6	6		6	No Budget see 2015/16
40056	5 Year Rolling HW / SW Replacement Prog	50	13	4	50		0	5 year rolling programme
40057	Business Systems Harmonisation Programme	40	10	3	40		0	Five year rolling programme - £40,000/year
40059	Website Redevelopment	66	17	0	66		0	Slippage to 2016/17 pending review of IT strategy, new strategy expected to be agreed in October 16
	Visualifies Upgrade	32	0	0	32		0	TS to investigate with Legal Team the latest position on this upgrade
	Planning and Building Control replacement of ICLIP	77	0	0	77		0	Slippage to 2016/17 pending review of IT strategy, new strategy expected to be agreed in October 16
Information Technology Total		383	39	17	393	0	10	
Commercial Development Total		65,111	8,700	3,922	63,270	2,500	659	
40001	Biomass Heating Bicester Leisure Centre	84	0	0	84		0	Addressing insurance requirement for additional works including an escape hatch and also have additional consultant fees to come in due to issue with Renewable Heating Initiative application.
40002	Cooper Sports Hall Roof	100	0	87	100		0	Project currently on hold whilst Joint User Agreement long term arrangements are finalised. Works will be required to align with agreement. Roof needs replacing urgently but Academy have no funds (53:47 split). Raised as H&S concern
40003	Customer Self-Service Portal CRM Solutn	80	0	0	80		0	
40004	The Hill Youth Community Centre	850	113	1	850		0	Target completion for Q4.
40005	Bicester Sports Village	835	11	0	835		0	Target completion for Q4.
40006	Community Centre Refurbishments	84	0	0	84		0	
40007	Solar Photovoltaics at Sports Centre	80	0	0	80		0	
40009	Football Development Plan in Banbury	20	0	0	20		0	
40010	North Oxfordshire Academy Astroturf	150	0	0	150		0	
40011	South West Bicester Sports Village	955	0	36	955		0	Target completion for Q4.
40013	Stratfield Brake Repair Works	22	0	0	22		0	
40015	Car Park Refurbishments	5	0	0	5		0	
40016	Implementing Vehicle Parks Proposals	17	0	0	17		0	
40017	Sports Centre Modernisation Programme	86	0	(0)	86		0	
40018	WGLC Dry Side Refurbishment	1,200	300	261	1,200		0	Further investigation required.
40019	Bicester Leisure Centre Extension	150	38	0	150		0	
40020	Spiceball Leis Centre Bridge Resurfacing	30	8	0	30		0	
Community Services Total		4,748	469	384	4,748	0	0	
40021	Energy Efficiency Projects	24	0	7	24		0	
40022	Glass Bank Recycling Scheme	8	0	4	8		0	
40023	Recycling Bank Scheme	5	0	5	5		0	
40025	Public Conveniences	25	0	0	25		0	
40026	Off Road Parking Facilities	18	0	0	18		0	
40028	Vehicle Replacement Programme	948	233	713	948		0	Five year rolling programme, expenditure depends on vehicle condition.
40029	Wheeled Bin Replacement Scheme	240	60	0	240		0	Programme expenditure depends on condition and demand based on new build.
40031	Urban Centre Electricity Installations	30	8	0	30		0	
Environmental Services Total		1,298	301	729	1,298	0	0	
Community & Environment Total		6,046	770	1,113	6,046	0	0	
Capital Total		71,195	9,470	4,865	69,354	2,500	659	

Cherwell District Council

Executive

5th September 2016

Update on the development of a devolution deal with Government and the associated independent study into options for local government reform in Oxfordshire.

Report of Head of Transformation

This report is public

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to update the Executive on progress in relation to the development of a devolution deal between the Oxfordshire councils, the former Government ministers and the new Government ministers, and the associated study into options for the potential reform of local government within Oxfordshire, conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC).

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended to:

- 1.1. receive the independent study of PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) into options for local government reform in Oxfordshire, including the proposition of the district and city council leaders' in respect of their preferred model arising from that study.
- 1.2 note that following discussions with the Department of Communities and Local Government, the leaders of the district, city and county councils have agreed to focus on identifying areas for collaborative working and the reshaping of a devolution deal that does not incorporate proposals for the reform of local government within Oxfordshire.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 At the beginning of 2016 the Oxfordshire councils, the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group worked together to develop a devolution deal for Oxfordshire.

Final, post DCLG consultation.

- 2.2 Initial feedback from the Government was that consideration should be given to the governance arrangements that would facilitate the delivery of the devolution deal, if it was to be agreed.
- 2.3 As a consequence of that feedback, the district and city councils commissioned PricewaterhouseCoopers to undertake a study into the options for reform of local government in Oxfordshire.
- 2.4 The district and city councils have been awaiting the conclusions of that study before making recommendations to Government and their respective councils on a way forward. In the meantime, the devolution deal has not been progressed further given its association with the study being undertaken by PwC.

3.0 Report Details

3.1 Devolution Deals

- 3.2 The Government, under the former Prime Minister and the former Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government had been in the process of negotiating devolution deals as a means of providing greater powers and funding to local areas to stimulate economic growth and reform the way that public services are designed and delivered locally. As part of this, the Government required new collaborative governance arrangements in the form of combined authorities to be accompanied by either a directly elected Mayor and/or a move to unitary councils. The Cities and Devolution Act has provided the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government with new simplified powers to create Unitary Authorities which have local support.
- 3.3 In support of a devolution deal for Oxfordshire, the five district councils agreed to explore proposals for a new model of local government for the local area.
- 3.4 The district councils' ambition was to create a viable and sustainable structure for local government in Oxfordshire that would:
 - Serve the interests of residents, businesses and communities and reflect local challenges and priorities in the most effective and efficient way
 - Streamline local government with one council responsible for services in each area
 - Meet the government's objectives for revised governance structures required for a devolution deal which would secure significant investment in infrastructure, housing and skills
 - Deliver significant efficiency savings needed to deal with reducing budgets and increasing demand for services
 - Deliver better and more responsive public services and promote public sector service transformation
 - Enable economic and housing growth so that all areas can meet their potential while reflecting the different interests of market towns and rural communities.
 - Help to deal with the demographic pressures on adult social care and improve outcomes through integration with health services.
 - Ensure a system for children's services that is better at protecting and safeguarding children.

Final, post DCLG consultation.

3.5 Against this backdrop, the five district councils in Oxfordshire commissioned an independent study by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) to assess whether the options for a unitary and combined authority local government model in Oxfordshire would in principle be both feasible and better placed to deliver this ambition.

3.6 The PwC study considered the 5 options set out in table 1:

Table 1: the options for reform considered by PwC:

Option		Geography
1UA	A single Unitary authority covering all of the current Oxfordshire region	1) Oxford City, Vale of White Horse, South Oxfordshire, Cherwell and West Oxfordshire
2UA	Two Unitaries based around the current City Council and a separate authority for the wider region	1) Oxford City 2) Vale of White Horse, South Oxfordshire, Cherwell and West Oxfordshire
2UA+	As above but with an expanded boundary of the City Council	1) Oxford City (expanded boundary) 2) Vale of White Horse, South Oxfordshire, Cherwell and West Oxfordshire An expanded boundary for the city has been developed which includes new strategic-scale urban extensions around the edge of Oxford that have a close functional link.
3UA	Three Unitaries based around the current city, combining the two districts in the north of the region and likewise in the south of the region	1) Oxford City 2) Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire 3) Cherwell and West Oxfordshire
4UA	As above but with districts in the north remaining separate.	1) Oxford City 2) Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire 3) West Oxfordshire 4) Cherwell

- 3.7 The PwC study, detailed in full as appendix 1, did not recommend a single preferred model, but instead set out the viability of each of the identified options, leaving the district and city council leaders to determine which, if any, they wished to recommend to Government, their respective councils and other key stakeholders.
- 3.8 Having considered the feedback from stakeholders, along with the analysis and evidence of PwC's report, the leaders of the five district and city councils were persuaded that a strong case exists for a district unitary and combined authority solution to improve public services and local accountability as part of a devolution deal for Oxfordshire.
- 3.9 The leaders of the district and city councils agreed that their preferred model would be for three unitary authorities to be responsible and accountable for all local government services in this area and developed a joint proposition, detailed as appendix 2 that reflected this model, to sit alongside the PwC report.
- 3.10 The leaders of the district and city councils agreed that a new model for local government in Oxfordshire would have addressed the future challenges and constraints of our area and deliver better services for our residents.
- 3.11 The proposition of the leaders of the district and city councils was to replace the current two-tier system of local government with new unitary authorities that would be accountable for all local government services in their area at a level which reflects the diverse characteristics and different interests across the county. The leaders were persuaded that this would reduce confusion and complexity, enable greater joining up of decisions and deliver significant efficiency savings, whilst ensuring all services would be responsive and accountable to local communities.

The three unitary authorities preferred by the district and city council leaders were agreed as:

- **Northern Oxfordshire** (comprising of current Cherwell and West Oxfordshire District Councils with a geographical area of 1,303km²)
 - **Oxford City** (comprising of current Oxford City Council with a geographical area of 46km²)
 - **Southern Oxfordshire** (comprising of current South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils with a geographical area of 1,257km²)
- 3.12 The county council similarly commissioned their own external consultants, Grant Thornton, to conduct a study into options for the possible reform of local government within Oxfordshire. Unlike the PwC report, the final report of Grant Thornton makes clear that it had found that a single county unitary authority would be the strongest model of local government within this area. This has had the effect of highlighting that agreement between the district, city and county council's in relation to any potential new structure for local government in this area would be difficult to achieve.
- 3.13 **A changing external environment**
- 3.14 Whilst PwC were in the process of conducting their study and preparing their report on behalf of the district and city councils the macro external environment was changing.

- 3.15 The public referendum regarding Britain's membership of the European Union (EU) took place on 23rd June 2016 resulting in a decision to leave the EU. It also led to the resignation of the then Prime Minister, David Cameron.
- 3.16 A new Prime Minister, the Rt. Honourable. Theresa May MP was appointed on 13th July 2016 and she in turn appointed a new Cabinet, including a new Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, the Rt. Honourable Sajid Javid MP.
- 3.17 As a consequence of these national changes, officials from the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) met with representatives of the district, city and county councils. Advice was given that the Government had given clear signals that it would be changing its priorities and/or approach in many areas, including in relation to devolution deals and public service reform. As part of this advice, it was also made clear that the Government and new Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government would not agree to any public service reform where the areas and key stakeholders had been unable to reach agreement amongst themselves. DCLG have subsequently advised that they will continue to work closely with local areas and remain open to discussion on any devolution proposals that include strong, accountable governance and clear accountability. Consequently such governance arrangements would need to be factored into the development of a Deal.
- 3.18 Running parallel to these discussions was a recognition amongst all of the leaders of the need to publish the respective studies into options for the potential reform of local government within Oxfordshire, and to be transparent with the findings. The district, city and county council leaders therefore agreed to publish the two studies at the same time on 17th August 2016.
- 3.19 This in turn has led to the current position, where the leaders of the district, city and county councils have now agreed to focus on reshaping the devolution deal proposal to reflect the new priorities of Government and the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, and identifying areas for collaborative working, but without a proposal for local government reform in Oxfordshire.
- 3.20 It is hoped that once agreement can be reached on a devolution deal that reflects the priorities of the Government, this will bring additional funding to Oxfordshire, whilst also enabling strategic decisions to be made in the areas of local infrastructure, skills and business support. In the meantime it is important that the Executive formally receives the report of PwC.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 As a consequence of the recent changes in Government, including the appointment of a new Prime Minister and a new Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government it has been made clear that local authorities should expect to see changes to Government priorities in the short term, including specifically in relation to devolution deals, local government reform and other areas of policy. DCLG officials have also confirmed that the focus and priorities of the Government will become clearer when the Autumn Statement is announced in/around December 2016, and through changes to business rates retention policy, which will be introduced through a new Bill, probably in January 2017.

- 4.2 In the meantime DCLG has made clear that the Government will not agree to any proposals for local government reform where those proposals do not have the agreement of the areas.
- 4.3 The leaders of the district, city and county councils have agreed that they will now focus on identifying areas for collaborative working and the reshaping of a devolution deal with the new Government that does not incorporate proposals for structural reform. Consequently, it is not intended to seek decisions on the respective studies of the two independent consultants', PwC and Grant Thornton, beyond formally receiving them. Discussions between the district, city and county councils will continue to take place over the forthcoming weeks with a view to achieving an acceptable devolution deal proposal.

5.0 Consultation

Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG)

The DCLG has advised the district, city and county councils of the following:

that the Government and new Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government will not agree any proposals for public service reform that do not have the agreement of the areas and key stakeholders

that they will continue to work closely with local areas and remain open to discussion on any devolution proposals that include strong, accountable governance and clear accountability.

that the Government and the new Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government have emerging changing priorities that will become clearer with the announcement of the Autumn Statement and through other policy/legislative changes.

The leaders of Oxfordshire district, city and county council's

The district, city and county council leaders have agreed to focus on identifying areas for collaborative working and the reshaping of a devolution deal for Oxfordshire, to take account of the new priorities of the new Government and new Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1:

To proceed with stakeholder consultation in respect of the district and city council leaders' preferred model for a new local government structure within Oxfordshire.

This is rejected due to the advice given by DCLG that the Government and new Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government will not accept proposals for local government reform or indeed a devolution deal without the agreement of the areas, and wide support amongst key stakeholders.

To undertake stakeholder consultation on the district and city council leaders preferred model or indeed any other potential new structural model at this stage would risk wasting public funds when it is clear that the study undertaken by Grant Thornton, the county council consultants, has concluded that a county based unitary authority would be the strongest model for local government in Oxfordshire.

The county council is expected to formally receive the Grant Thornton study on 13th September (Full Council) and 20th September (Cabinet) 2016; therefore the content of their report can still only be regarded as representing the views of Grant Thornton. At this stage it is more appropriate that the focus should be upon reshaping a devolution deal with the county council that does not include proposals to reform local government in Oxfordshire, and also identifying areas for positive collaborative working, as agreed with DCLG.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 At this stage the only financial implications would be associated with a potential decision to undertake stakeholder consultation on the proposition of the district and city council leaders arising from the PwC study.

As set out above, DCLG has advised that the Government will not agree to any reform of local government within Oxfordshire unless it has the agreement of all parties. The immediate focus will therefore be upon working with the county council and DCLG on a devolution deal proposal that would more likely be acceptable to Government.

Comments checked by:

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Legal Implications

- 7.2 There are no legal implications arising from this report given the recommendations made above.

Comments checked by:

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8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision

Financial Threshold Met: No

Community Impact Threshold Met: No

Wards Affected

All.

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

Sound budgets and customer focused council; reduce the cost of providing our services through partnerships, joint working and other service delivery models.

Lead Councillor

Councillor Barry Wood, Leader of the Council.

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
1.	Report of PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) into the study of options to reform local government within Oxfordshire.
2.	The proposition of the district and city council leaders arising from the PwC report.
Background Papers	
None	
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Oxfordshire Unitary Government Study

July 2016

Review of proposed Unitary
Authority options with a Combined
Authority



Contents

Important notice	5
Executive summary	6
1. Introduction.....	12
1.1 Background context.....	12
1.1.1 Oxfordshire	12
1.1.2 Purpose of the study	12
1.1.3 The options	13
2. The case for change	15
2.1 Devolution	15
2.2 Local government reform	15
2.3 The opportunity for Oxfordshire	16
2.4 Responding to the opportunity in Oxfordshire.....	18
2.5 The current model	20
2.5.1 Current expenditure.....	20
2.5.2 Current resources	22
2.5.3 Current business models	22
3 Analysing the Unitary Authority options	26
3.1 Four Unitary Authorities	26
3.2 Three Unitary Authorities	27
3.3 Two Unitary Authorities	28
3.4 Two Unitary Authorities – Expanded Oxford City	29
3.5 One Unitary Authority	29
3.6 Population impacts of the UA options	30
4 Financial analysis.....	32
4.1 Financial analysis of UA options.....	32
4.1.1 Underlying baseline position.....	32
4.1.2 Efficiency, transformation and transition costs.....	33
4.1.3 The analysis	33
4.2 Four Unitary Authorities	34
4.3 Three Unitary Authorities	35
4.4 Two Unitary Authorities	36
4.5 Two Unitary Authorities – Expanded Oxford City	36
4.6 One Unitary Authority	37
4.7 Transition savings and cost of UA options.....	38
4.7.1 Introduction.....	38
4.7.2 Transformation savings.....	41
4.7.3 Summary of transition costs.....	42

4.8 Council tax harmonisation	46
4.9 Payback period.....	46
4.10 Conclusions on the financial analysis.....	46
5 Qualitative analysis	49
5.1 Ensure strong and accountable local leadership and governance	49
5.1.1 The ratio of democratic representation.....	49
5.1.2 Balancing the need for strategic and local decision making.....	49
5.2 Delivering better public services	50
5.2.1 The current operating model.....	50
5.2.2 Customer contact and assessment	51
5.2.3 Service delivery	52
5.2.4 Enabling activity	52
6 Summary of unitary authority options	54
7 Combined Authority.....	60
7.1 Functions of the Oxfordshire Combined Authority	60
7.2 Enablers of the Combined Authority.....	61
7.3 Governance	61
7.4 Organisation	62
7.5 Conclusion	63
8 Children’s services	64
8.1 Context.....	64
8.2 Devolution proposals.....	66
8.3 Future ambition	68
8.4 Principals within a unitary model	73
9 Adults services	74
9.1 Context.....	74
9.2 Devolution proposals.....	77
9.3 Future ambition.....	79
9.4 Principles within a unitary model	86
10 Key findings	88
10.1 Current local government arrangements.....	88
10.1.1 Unitary Authority Options	88
10.2 Population size.....	89
10.3 Financial analysis	89
10.4 Strong and accountable local leadership.....	90
10.5 Delivering better services	91
10.6 Combined Authority	91
10.7 Children’s services	91
10.8 Adults services	92
10.9 Conclusion	92
Appendix A – Shared Services	94

Appendix B – Baseline Analysis	95
Appendix C – Transition costs	99
Transition cost evidence	105
Appendix D – Assumptions log	107
Appendix E – Stakeholder engagement.....	118

Important notice

This document has been prepared by PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (“PwC”) for Oxford City Council, Cherwell District Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, the Vale of White Horse District Council, West Oxfordshire District Council, Cotswold District Council and South Northamptonshire District Council (“Commissioning Councils”). Cotswold and South Northamptonshire District Councils were included as commissioning councils since the original terms of the work included looking at the option of unitary councils that would cover their areas. This was ruled out as an option during the work (rationale explained further within the document), however the two councils retain an interest in the outcomes of the study. Accordingly, the contents of this document are strictly private and confidential.

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Executive summary

Introduction

To support delivery of a devolution deal for Oxfordshire, the five District Councils in Oxfordshire have been developing proposals for reorganising the existing two tiers (County Council and District Councils) of local government into a single tier i.e. a unitary local government model.

The current two-tier local government structure in Oxfordshire is under scrutiny and challenge for several key reasons:

1. ***Rising demand and declining budgets means that traditional approaches are not sustainable.*** Oxfordshire County Council's use of reserves to balance the budget for each of the last four years is not sustainable in the long run and it needs a fundamental transformation.
2. ***A sustainable solution requires integration across the whole system and a wholesale commitment by all parties to truly integrated outcomes to start shifting activity up stream to reduce long run demand.*** This is particularly the case in adult social care, and to a lesser extent children's services, where the level of demand, costs involved and importance of protecting the vulnerable demands a robust, ambitious and innovative response that recognises no single organisation can do it alone. Some stakeholders are not convinced the County recognises that it needs new skills and capabilities to effectively work in different ways without being in direct control.
3. ***Long standing frustrations with planning, transport and housing delivery are now having a material impact on operational performance and will increasingly hold back the potential of the region.*** The split of governance, decision making, strategic development and service provision across the two-tier system has not provided a whole-place approach to these issues. Therefore the current rate of economic growth will be increasingly constrained by the lack of capacity of the transport network, unmet demand for affordable housing and commercial space, and a lack of clear strategic planning vision. Stakeholders are already citing practical examples where they are struggling to fill posts due to the consequences of these issues. A unitary model could help achieve this.

Against this backdrop, the five District Councils in Oxfordshire have commissioned a study to assess whether the options for a unitary and combined authority local government model in Oxfordshire would in principle be both feasible and better placed to deliver this ambition. In considering the unitary authority options, consideration has been given to:

- The viability and sustainability of the options – estimating the resources and expenditure of the unitary authority (UA) options and taking account of the transition costs and savings from establishing UAs;
- Service transformation and redesign – identifying the potential scale of savings that could be achieved from integration and designing new operating models;
- Operation of a combined authority (CA) – identifying which functions it would be beneficial for a combined authority to be responsible for.

The five options considered in this study are:

Option		Geography
1UA	A single Unitary authority covering all of the current Oxfordshire region	1) Oxford City, Vale of White Horse, South Oxfordshire, Cherwell and West Oxfordshire
2UA	Two Unitaries based around the current City Council and a separate authority for the wider region	1) Oxford City 2) Vale of White Horse, South Oxfordshire, Cherwell and West Oxfordshire
2UA+	As above but with an expanded boundary of the City Council	1) Oxford City (expanded boundary) 2) Vale of White Horse, South Oxfordshire, Cherwell and West Oxfordshire An expanded boundary for the city has been developed which includes new strategic-scale urban extensions around the edge of Oxford that have a close functional link.
3UA	Three Unitaries based around the current city, combining the two districts in the north of the region and likewise in the south of the region	1) Oxford City 2) Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire 3) Cherwell and West Oxfordshire
4UA	As above but with districts in the north remaining separate.	1) Oxford City 2) Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire 3) West Oxfordshire 4) Cherwell

Population size

1. A single UA option for Oxfordshire would make it the third largest UA in England, third to Birmingham and Leeds. Oxfordshire's population could reach 883,637 by 2031 if the 100,000 housing need was met as outlined in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment. Whilst there are other single tier authorities of this size, the others are either city UAs or county UAs that do not have a large city within them.
2. The four UA option creates three of what would be the smallest UAs in population terms in England and would be unequal in proportion to South Oxfordshire.
3. The three UA option creates a more equal distribution of population between the Northern and the Southern UAs, with the city having a lower population in general, but a higher proportion of working age population. This option also recognises and reflects the distinct socio-economic conditions of the City.
4. The two UA option creates the 9th largest single tier authority in England, but also one of the 18th smallest. This creates a potential imbalance that could be addressed by expanding the city boundary.

Financial analysis – value for money and cost of transition

- The 2015/16 General Fund Revenue Account outturn data ("RA data") for the five District Councils and Oxfordshire County Council has been used to disaggregate resources and expenditure using

appropriately selected drivers. Further detail on the methodology is contained within Section 4, and the assumptions used in 4.1.3.

- Based on this methodology, the 4UA and 3UA options are in deficit with the exception of Southern Oxfordshire UA which is in a surplus of £20.1m (pre transformation). For the 4UA, 3UA, 2UA options, Oxford City has the largest pre-transformation deficit in both 2015/16 and 2020/21 (£10.7m and £16.8m respectively), though these amounts represent just 1% and 2% of total revenue expenditure across Oxfordshire. For the expanded 2UA option, Oxford City has lower deficits of £6.2m and £12.4m for 2015/15 and 2020/21 respectively. For the 1UA option, there is no surplus or deficit. This revenue neutral position is to be expected given that the 1UA option encompasses all five Districts and the County Council.
- After transformation savings and efficiency costs, (of between £113.3m and £56.4m over a 5 year period), all the UA options are in a surplus, with the exception of Oxford City.
- Based on the analysis we have undertaken and the assumptions we have used, an Oxford City UA would be in deficit post transformation, except with an expanded boundary. If the Oxford City UA is expanded, its deficit is replaced with a small surplus of £1.9m.
- This is due to a disparity between the funding and expenditure for children's services, and a lesser extent adults services. All UAs are sensitive to this service, and in any of the UA models, there must be a commitment to shared commissioning and delivery mechanisms and pooled grant to ensure that funds are allocated on a needs basis as opposed to a geographical basis. By sharing the commissioning and delivery of these services (and funding these through pooled resources), the financial disparity is significantly reduced between the different UAs, providing Oxford City with a surplus of £5.5m in 2021, increasing Cherwell's surplus to £10.6m, whilst reducing Southern Oxfordshire and West Oxfordshire surpluses to £17.3m and £3.1m respectively).
- On its existing boundary, Oxford City generates significant business rates and is a net contributor to the Treasury, which in a future local government finance system with the 100% retention of business rates, will improve the Oxford City financial position.
- The ability to deliver the planned growth up to 2031 will also have a material impact on the financial position of all UA options– it has the potential, if managed properly, to have a positive impact on the overall financial capacity and resilience of the Oxford City unitary. The extent of this will depend on the level of investment required both to facilitate the growth and the net growth in funding (i.e. the net of the increase in income receipts against increase in costs to deliver services).
- Based purely on our analysis, a single Unitary Authority has the potential to generate the most financial benefits due to the economies of scale (an estimated net saving of £113.3m over a 5 year period).
- A 2UA option (based on the existing city boundary) provides £94.5m net savings and has similar financial benefits as the Expanded Oxford City option. However, the mismatch and imbalance between the population size, resources and service levels between the two Unitary Authorities does need to be considered. By design it creates a new two tier status, but in this case, between the two Unitaries.
- A 3UA option provides net savings of £75.5m over 5 years, and based on our analysis, two of the authorities are financial stable. The Oxford City Unitary (for reasons outlined above) would be in deficit in revenue terms by £16.8m in 2020/21 (pre-transformation). This deficit would need to be remedied through a needs based spending settlement but it is not material in terms of the total spending across the local government system. This option reduces the mismatch between the population sizes of the UAs (157,997, 252,652 and 261,867).
- The 4UA option provides the least financial benefit (£56.4m net savings over 5 years), whilst also having significant differences in the financial position of the various UAs (South Oxfordshire in a surplus of £20.1m in 2020/21 (pre-transformation) and the remaining three UAs in a deficit.

- The savings estimates outlined in our analysis are modelled on a consistent basis across all the UA options and do not take into account past track record in the Districts and County Councils of managing a balanced budget and delivering transformation programmes. As an illustration, the Districts have balanced budgets for the next 4 years and have undertaken transformation and efficiency programmes, and the County Council has in recent years appropriated £39.6m from its reserves (as per the 2015/16 RA data). The scale of savings achieved by each future UA, will depend heavily on the level of ambition for transformation and the scale of transformation successfully delivered by each of the UAs.

Strong and accountable local leadership

- The 4 UA model provides the maximum level of democratic accountability and connectivity to local communities.
- The 3 UA model would provide a balance between addressing local needs in communities, increased accountability through three democratic structures within Oxfordshire, and it would reflect and recognise distinct urban and rural issues, and different socio-economic characteristics that any new local government settlement needs to address.
- The 2 UA option recognises the difference between urban and rural priorities and the different demographic and socio economic characteristics. However the scale of the expanded area of Oxfordshire dilutes democratic accountability in the rural geography, with a population of 452,246 and a geographical area of 2,245km².
- A single UA will be viewed as similar to the current County arrangement which risks a remoteness of services and gives rise to loss of accountability with potentially lower levels of political representation at decision making committees than other models. This would need to be addressed through the creation of sub-structures and area committees which could result in reduction of benefits from economies of scale, albeit greater representation. Routes of accountability would need to be made clear in this option.

Delivering better services

- All councils across Oxfordshire need to further transform service delivery as part of the move to a self-financing model for local government. This is an opportunity to further redesign services around users and communities with the ability to reflect local priorities and plans for growth.
- A single UA will generate economies of scale but this needs to be balanced with the fact that it will become the third largest single tier authority in England that will need to provide District level services to a city and rural areas. This option carries a risk of a lack of responsiveness to the diversity and vast differences in local needs across the County geography. A bureaucracy of this scale may be less flexible and agile to the changing nature of need and demand, so mechanisms would need to be created to enhance responsiveness of the 1UA option.
- A 2 UA option enables a tailored approach to rural and urban geographies, but is imbalanced between City and 'donut' (population size, demography and economics).
- A 3 UA options provides better alignment to geographic and urban / rural settings and economy and tailoring services to rural and urban geographies. This option addresses the imbalances of City and 'donut' option and builds on existing relationship in the South of the County.
- Whilst providing the opportunity for the most extensive tailoring of services to local needs, a 4 UA option would provide limited opportunities to achieve economies of scale.

Combined Authority

- A Combined Authority for Oxfordshire would provide a collaborative vehicle for Oxfordshire wide decision making and accountability for delivery of the issues that are restraining economic growth - in particular strategic planning, housing, transport and infrastructure.

- The Combined Authority provides a mechanism for pooling funds, resources and raising income to maximise growth or address need/ service demand.
- At the same time, the CA model allows a degree of local UA flexibility and efficient delivery through UAs and partners, and provides a strong platform for ongoing dialogue with government to secure further investment and devolution.
- It would also provide a means to give business, health, police and other key partners a seat at the table and a voice in collective decision making, providing overall leadership and coordination of the public sector in a single decision making body.

Children's services

- Children's services in Oxfordshire are generally good, but faced with rising demand and declining budgets there are concerns that capability and capacity will become stretched and result in a retrenchment into statutory protective responsibilities. Protecting vulnerable children must remain the overriding priority, but alongside those that need intensive support is a need to focus on those on the edge of care to help prevent more children from requiring intensive support through early identification and action.
- The ambition is to progressively reduce the number of children needing intensive support through earlier identification and action, while improving the outcomes for any children that do come into care. The goal is to enable local government, health and police authorities work ever closely together to provide leadership on a shared ambition for children across the region.
- Helping prevent children needing external support and helping families help themselves is a shared responsibility, requiring a commitment across local government, the NHS, the police, the wider public sector, as well as the voluntary and community sectors and the engagement and commitment of children and young people, their families and their communities. It requires system wide reform which the combined authority would be committed to leading.
- Alongside the protective duties of local government, a unitary and combined authority model as part of a devolution deal would complement a fundamental review of the whole system so that it focusses on building on the strengths of the current system while also designing in early and preventative work with children and young people, their families and their communities.

Adults services

- Adult social care is a system under strain nationally and locally. There is universal recognition that better co-ordination of health and social care designed around the person is needed to both improve service outcomes and to reduce costs. Shifting care into the community, closer to home, making care more personalised and supporting people to live independently for longer is the overall aim.
- The challenge in Oxfordshire is making this shift happen. There is overall agreement on the need for integration of commissioning but the execution of those plans are still at a formative stage and linked to specific services. In addition there is a need for one team delivery of out of hospital services, which a unitary solution for local government would help create. Greater alignment and collaborative working could be designed in with synergies across community services such as housing, recreation and leisure that help to keep people out of hospital and enable them to live independently for longer.
- The overall state of health in Oxfordshire is good, and has improved, but it is recognised that to continue improving a more comprehensive approach to tackling health challenges is needed. Integration of health and social care was a key element of the devolution proposals which all parties in Oxfordshire agreed. That remains the case, but there is an increasing ambition to move forward at pace and truly integrate the resources, responsibilities and roles in a shared approach across health and local government. A joined up approach to service delivery and effective demand management is the aim of

pooling budgets and jointly commissioning services through a Combined Authority with CCG membership and full participation.

- Integrating commissioning is one pillar but further work will be needed to align all stakeholders behind a clear set of outcomes and a clear set of interventions identified that will deliver change in both community services and in hospital health settings. That work needs the comprehensive approach and agreed principles for developing for the right solution in Oxfordshire, including the development of the appropriate Local Care Organisation.

Conclusion

Oxfordshire now has to make a choice.

If it maintains the status quo, political and chief officer effort will increasingly be focused on the incessant challenge of managing and delivering core service provision across a diverse geography against the backdrop of budget reductions and rising demand. In doing so, local government will not be fulfilling its wider duty - the duty to ensure Oxfordshire retains and leverages its competitive advantage for the benefit of the people and places it serves and the universities and businesses that are located in and have chosen to invest in Oxford and Oxfordshire.

There is now an opportunity to look at a new local government settlement for Oxfordshire - one that is sustainable and equitable and aligns innovation in service delivery with a new structure that is powered through and empowered by a Unitary and Combined Authority solution that delivers; resilience, growth, and a devolution deal.

Our conclusion is that, based on the work undertaken and the analysis carried out, now is the time for a decision to be made on a new settlement for the structure and form of government and governance in Oxfordshire. A new settlement that will create new structures for the administration and delivery of key public services across health and social care and children's and adults services and also have responsibility for both economic and housing growth.

There is now a need for politicians in Westminster and across Oxfordshire to assess the evidence, evaluate the options and to engage with stakeholders. If this is done in the right way, we are hopeful that agreement will be reached on the design of a new structure of governance and accountability that will deliver better public services, drive economic growth and be a better fit for the future.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background context

This study explores the options for Unitary Government and a Combined Authority in Oxfordshire.

1.1.1 Oxfordshire

Oxfordshire has a population of 672,516¹ and covers a geography of 2,606 km squared. It is administered by a two-tier local government system.

Oxfordshire County Council is responsible for children's services, social care, highways, waste disposal, some education services, and passenger transport. The County is also responsible for the Fire & Rescue service.

The five District Councils, namely Cherwell, Oxford City, South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse and West Oxfordshire, are responsible for housing, waste collection, planning, environmental health and leisure recreation and take a leading role in promoting local wellbeing, economic development and place shaping in partnerships with the statutory and voluntary sectors locally.

There are also 234 Parish Councils and 15 Town Councils within Oxfordshire, responsible for local amenities such as playing fields, footpaths, bus shelters and allotments.

The Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership is a voluntary partnership responsible for driving economic growth and identifying investment priorities. Its membership comprises both tiers of local government, the business community, academia and education.

Established in 2013, and covering a geographical area in the main part coterminous with the County, the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) purchases health services on behalf of everyone in Oxfordshire. Thames Valley Police are responsible for policing Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire and the force is split into twelve Local Policing Areas (LPAs). Three of these LPAs are situated in Oxfordshire and are coterminous with local authority boundaries: Cherwell and West Oxfordshire LPA; Oxford LPA and South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse LPA.

In 2006 the District Councils in Oxfordshire made an unsuccessful bid for unitary status in partnership with each other based on a three unitary North, South and City model in response to the Local Government White Paper 'Strong & Prosperous Communities' which set out a clear timetable and assessment criteria for submissions.

1.1.2 Purpose of the study

To support delivery of a devolution deal for Oxfordshire, the five District Councils in Oxfordshire have been developing proposals for reorganising the existing two tiers (County Council and District Councils) of local government into a single tier i.e. a unitary local government model. The ambition is to create a unitary authority model for Oxfordshire which is designed to:

- Deliver better public services - in ways which are more cost effective and reflective of local priorities;
- Provide value for money – by achieving efficiencies from the two-tier system; building on innovative cost-saving management and service delivery models already adopted by the District Councils;
- Ensure strong and accountable local leadership and governance – which balances the need for strategic and local decision making;
- Help to deal with the demographic pressures on adult social care and improve outcomes through integration of commissioning with health services and development of a starting a journey to a much more integrated accountable care organisation (ACO) type model increasingly focussed on

¹ Office National Statistics - 2014

- prevention and health promotion;
- Ensure a system for children’s services that delivers a robust approach to child protection and safeguarding while reducing demand through a preventative approach to supporting children and families on the edge of care based upon leading practices;
- Help support the economic and housing growth being planned for in Local Plans and secure the necessary infrastructure identified in Oxfordshire’s Devolution Deal proposals;
- Enable development and growth across the area to meet its potential whilst effectively reflecting the different interests of the City, market towns and rural communities;
- Support the growth of the knowledge and skills economy;
- Benefit from potential service synergies from unitary authorities having responsibility for planning and delivering services such as spatial planning, economic development, housing, transport infrastructure, social care and health.

The five District Councils in Oxfordshire have commissioned a study to assess whether the options for a Unitary and Combined Authority local government model in Oxfordshire would in principle be both feasible and better placed to deliver this ambition. In considering the unitary authority options, consideration has been given to:

- The viability and sustainability of the options – estimating the resources and expenditure of the unitary authority (UA) options and taking account of the transition costs and savings from establishing UAs;
- Service transformation and redesign – identifying the potential scale of savings that could be achieved from integration and designing new operating models;
- Operation of a combined authority – identifying which functions it would be beneficial for a combined authority to be responsible for.

The study involved extensive engagement with key stakeholders from business, health, academic, public sector and local government.

1.1.3 The options

The five options in scope of this study are outlined in Table 1

Table 1: The Unitary Options

Option		Geography
1UA	A single Unitary authority covering all of the current Oxfordshire region	1) Oxford City, Vale of White Horse, South Oxfordshire, Cherwell and West Oxfordshire
2UA	Two Unitaries based around the current City Council and a separate authority for the wider region	1) Oxford City 2) Vale of White Horse, South Oxfordshire, Cherwell and West Oxfordshire
2UA+	As above but with an expanded boundary of the City Council	1) Oxford City (expanded boundary) 2) Vale of White Horse, South Oxfordshire, Cherwell and West Oxfordshire An expanded boundary for the city has been developed which includes new strategic-scale urban extensions around the edge of Oxford that have a close functional link.
3UA	Three Unitaries based around the current city, combining the two districts in the north of the region and likewise in the south of the region	1) Oxford City 2) Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire 3) Cherwell and West Oxfordshire

4UA	As above but with districts in the north remaining separate.	1) Oxford City 2) Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire 3) West Oxfordshire 4) Cherwell
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An alternative 4 UA 'outer-County' option was initially within scope of the study which included a West Oxfordshire & Cotswold unitary option and a Cherwell & South Northamptonshire unitary option that built on existing working relationships. However this option was removed from the scope following discussions we held with local and national stakeholders which concluded that this option was not feasible within reasonable timescales given the additional complexity and consequential impacts it would have on additional areas outside of scope. It was clear that the lack of support for such an approach made any further analysis of this option of limited value.

2. The case for change

2.1 Devolution

The devolution of powers from central government to local government has continued to be one of the defining political narratives for 2016. There has been widespread agreement that the balance of power between central and local government is no longer effective. The devolution revolution, announced by Chancellor George Osborne in 2015, set out to address this through the establishment of Combined Authorities with elected mayors to agree and then deliver Devolution Deals.

The opportunities from devolution largely fall into four inter-related elements:

- a rebalancing of the economy with inclusive growth;
- public service reform with better value services;
- enhanced public engagement and accountability for the delivery of local services; and
- improved local outcomes – putting service providers closer to the end service user.

To deliver against these opportunities, in the context of decreasing budgets and the potential for more accountability and control over functions, local authorities recognise that they have to be able to influence and co-ordinate strategy, investment and delivery of services across a much broader range of public sector organisations. Council leadership has shifted from being about directing delivery, to providing the place leadership for a more inclusive and collaborative arrangement that works not just for the wider public sector but which also engages and empowers leading firms, knowledge institutes and engages citizens².

A whole system approach is needed with partners across a place establishing a shared vision for the outcomes they want to achieve, and keeping a firm focus on the impact they can deliver by working collaboratively. Taking such an approach offers the potential to deliver better for less by reducing costs and demand and moving towards a goal of fiscal neutrality.

Combined Authorities are being established as the vehicle from which to develop and implement this whole systems strategic approach collaboratively, to take on devolved powers and funding, and be the mechanism for effective strategic decision making and streamlined accountability and joined up services. To date there have been seven Combined Authorities established, each with different devolution deals and governance arrangements, recognising the different needs and issues of each locality.

The Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016 now enables any public authority function relating to an area, including health, to be conferred on a council and any local government function to be conferred on a combined authority, removing the limitation that restricted this to economic development, regeneration and transport. The Act also introduced directly-elected mayors to combined authorities and the ability for devolved policing powers and other functions to Mayors.

2.2 Local government reform

The past five years have seen a period of unprecedented change for local authorities. Local government is now one of the most efficient parts of the public sector having adapted to budget reductions of 40% since 2010. Local authorities have been pushed to the point where they are not only more compact, but to where they have to ask fundamental questions about the role of local government and their place in society. Yet local government continues to face real financial challenges. Having already seen a period of rapid efficiency improvements, by the end of this Parliament the Government's ambition is for local authorities to be more

² Euricure and PwC, 2016, iUrban Enabling sustainable city competitiveness through distributed leadership

fiscally independent, to work across boundaries at scale and to take a greater role in driving growth and public service reform.

Councils have embraced an agenda of transformation that has not yet been seen in many other areas across the public sector. The last six years have seen a period of fundamental change for local government. For many years, local authorities sought to improve outcomes for citizens primarily by managing the delivery, or by commissioning the delivery, of services in their local areas. The prolonged austerity has meant the ability to support vulnerable people, help children and young people reach their potential, grow local economies and keep communities safe through traditional service delivery has been severely compromised. In an annual survey of local authority leaders and chief executives PwC found a high expectation that some local authorities will fail to deliver the essential services that residents require, rising from 43% in the next year to 77% in the next three to five years. Over the last five years the public acceptance of cuts in local authority funding has fallen from nearly half to just under a third³.

For some authorities, facing rapidly changing, growing and complex demands while dealing with almost certain contraction in Government funding has led to an exploration of how to manage withdrawal and retreat to core and statutory services. For others, the outlook is different and they are exploring what they want to achieve, assessing everything they do and foster new ideas, innovation and thinking about how they deliver outcomes⁴.

In a two tier system of local government responding to these pressures can amplify the tensions that have existed since the system was created in 1972. Arrangements can work well where there are strong relationships at all levels and a shared vision and ambition between councils within an area. However, it can also become increasingly unsustainable where different authorities have conflicting priorities, aims and beliefs.

Since 1972 nearly half of the original two tier areas have been replaced in successive rounds of reorganisation during the 1990s and in 2009. Local Government reorganisation in response to delivering economic growth was also highlighted in 2012 with Lord Heseltine's report 'No stone unturned – in pursuit of growth' where he stated that local government had become disempowered by 'centralising power and funding' and remained 'overly complex and inefficient'.⁵ The report advocated for a system of single unitary authorities with clear accountability and responsibilities. Devolution has been one of the defining policy narratives since the election of the current Government in May 2015.

2.3 The opportunity for Oxfordshire

Oxfordshire is a great place to live, work and visit. It has:

- the fastest growing economy of any LEP area since the recession, with economic growth of over 20% GVA between 2009 and 2013⁶
- the lowest JSA claimant count in the country (2178 (0.5%) - July 2015)
- world renowned knowledge-based and quality of life competitive advantages;
- been named as the most innovative area in the country⁷, second only to London for growth of fast growing businesses⁸

³ PwC, 2016, The Local State We're In

⁴ PwC, 2016, Beyond Control, Local government in the age of participation

<http://pwc.blogs.com/publicsectormatters/2016/03/beyond-council-control-harnessing-the-power-of-participation.html>

⁵ The RT Hon Lord Heseltine: No stone unturned – in pursuit of growth 2012

⁶ <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcn%3A77-393471>

⁷ Benchmarking local innovation – the innovation geography of the UK, Enterprise Research Centre, June 2015, <http://www.enterpriseresearch.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Benchmarking-Local-Innovation1.pdf>

⁸ Enterprise Research Centre

- one of the largest concentrations of research and development activity in Western Europe, and hosts the global headquarters and principal research and development facilities of some of the world's leading technology companies.

So why change?

Whilst the local economy is growing steadily, there are serious underlying challenges which need to be addressed in Oxfordshire, in order to maintain and enhance the sustainability of the economic growth and future prosperity of Oxfordshire. The Oxfordshire Innovation Engine⁹ report published in 2014 found that the rate of growth in Oxfordshire had been constrained and could be significantly improved by:

- addressing the need to accommodate additional growth in the 'Knowledge Spine' running between Harwell, Oxford and Bicester to accommodate high tech business and employment;
- improving capacity of the strategic and local transport infrastructure, including fast public transport services; growing and developing business networks;
- developing measures to encourage increased institutional investment building upon the strong and nationally significant sector propositions including Life science, Advanced Engineering (motorsport), satellite and space related technology and creative and digital sector;
- meeting the demand for housing and commercial premises to respond to the urgent needs of the growing business base and economy; and
- providing strong public and private sector leadership to realise Oxfordshire's potential through a new and agreed governance structure.

This view was supported by the stakeholders we spoke to who said that Oxfordshire's economic potential was being held back by wider issues - in particular housing, transport and planning. This is having an operational impact such as on the ability to retain staff due to cost of living pressures and frustration on issues such as traffic congestion. One organisation had had an increasing number of potential staff turning down roles due to being unable to afford to live in the area. Another organisation felt that potential investment from the health and life science industry risked being lost if these issues were not resolved with urgency.

In March 2016, Lord Adonis launched the National Infrastructure Commission. The review will provide the Government with proposals and options for the "long-term infrastructure priorities to unlock growth, jobs and housing within the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford corridor over the next 30 years." The establishment of the Commission recognises that the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford corridor "encompasses global centres of research expertise in Oxford and Cambridge and advanced manufacturing and logistics in Milton Keynes. The review will make recommendations to maximise the potential of the area as a single, knowledge-intensive cluster that competes on a global stage, whilst both protecting the area's high quality environment and securing the homes, and jobs, the region needs"¹⁰.

To address this, through the Strategic Economic Plan and Strategic Housing Market Assessment, the Oxfordshire local authorities, and the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership have already committed to provide 100,000 new homes and 85,000 new jobs by 2031. However, this will depend on the ability to provide the necessary infrastructure to support this unprecedented rate of growth and equip the workforce, particularly young people, with the skills to thrive in this environment.¹¹

In response to the Government's request for devolution proposals, the Oxfordshire local authorities, Oxfordshire clinical commissioning group and Oxfordshire LEP have developed a strong case for devolution

⁹ <http://www.sqw.co.uk/insights-and-publications/oxfordshire-innovation-engine/>

¹⁰ A plan for unlocking growth, housing and jobs in the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford corridor Terms of Reference

¹¹ Oxford and Oxfordshire City Deal

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/276205/Oxford-Oxfordshire-City-Deal.pdf

with proposals to tackle the challenges and constraints described above, to unlock Oxfordshire's full economic potential.

The locally agreed devolution proposals for Oxfordshire makes the case for greater powers and funding, and reform to public services to allow:

- Acceleration of housing delivery to meet the pressing need for more affordable homes to support growth;
- Acceleration of enabling infrastructure to address transport challenges throughout the region;
- People to aspire and acquire the skills and competencies they need in the STEM industries and other clusters that will drive economic prosperity;
- Reformed public services to adapt to reduced funding and shift to preventing higher cost demand; and
- Health and well-being services to be redesigned around the user with integration of provider and commissioner responsibilities.

The proposal to Government includes:

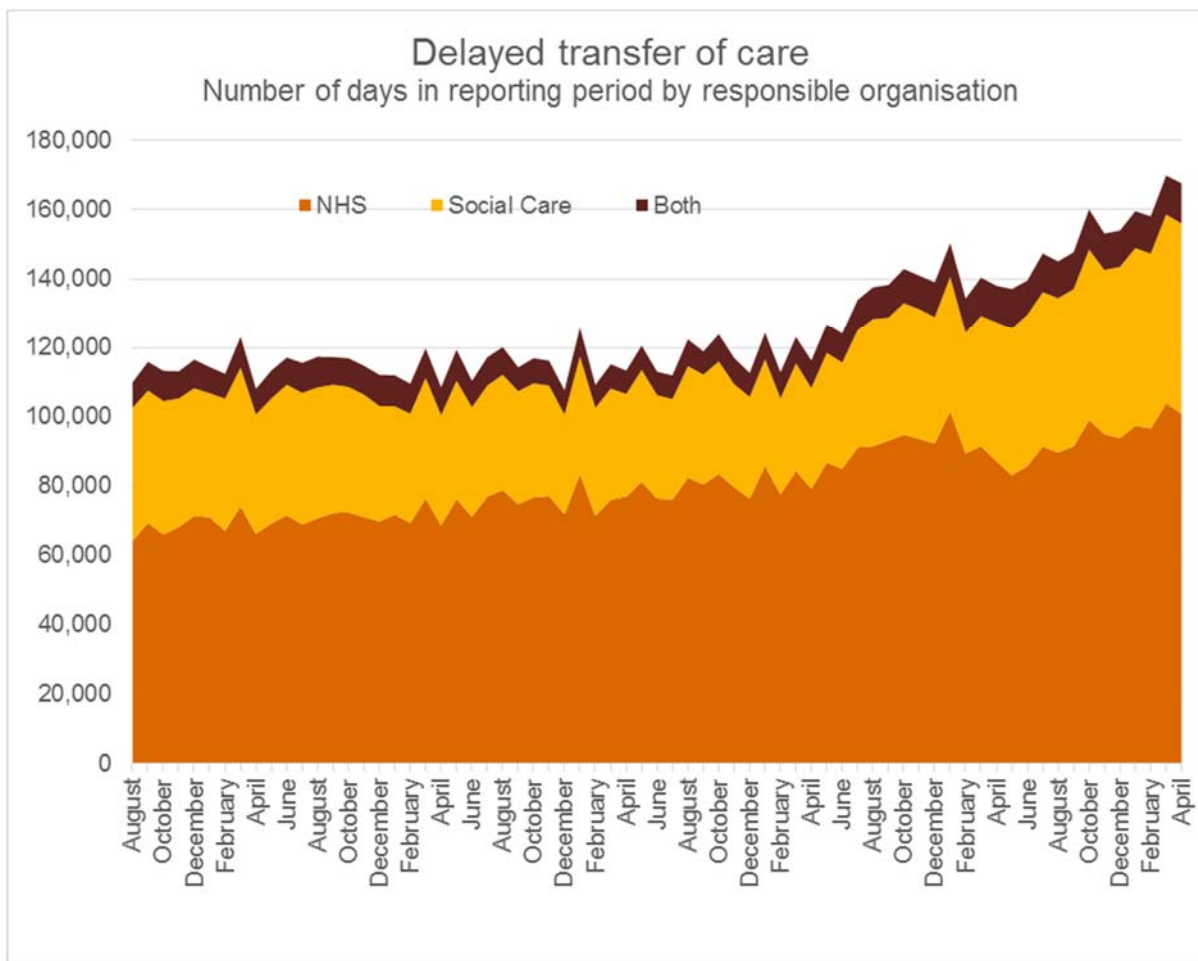
- The creation of a new infrastructure investment fund to deliver an infrastructure programme to support the development of housing and employment sites; development of a Housing Investment Strategy with the HCA and access to a revolving housing investment fund to unlock housing delivery; locally set planning fees to increase and align resources needed to support the significant growth in strategic site delivery. It is estimated this will generate £11.8bn of GVA up to 2031 from the creation of 85,600 jobs and enable the delivery of 22,900 homes by 2020.
- The devolution of skills budgets, joint procurement role for the commissioning of 16-18 provision in schools and of commissioning of 16-18 and 19+ apprenticeships to achieve a more productive skills system resulting in 85% of Oxfordshire's population qualified to at least NVQ Level 2 and an additional 1,150 apprenticeship places by 2020.
- A devolved approach to business support with £3m per annum funding to deliver 750 private sector jobs.
- A strengthened Health & Wellbeing Board to take on devolved responsibilities and budgets for local NHS and local government to improve specific health outcomes for Oxfordshire's population and reduce health inequalities.

2.4 Responding to the opportunity in Oxfordshire

Devolution is an opportunity for public bodies in Oxfordshire to consider how local government and other public services/agencies can be organised so that it is better placed to respond to the changing dynamics in both their own operating environment but also the wider economy. In doing so Oxfordshire needs a solution for local government that balances the need for strategic and local decision making, and enables local authority leaders and their partners to work together to:

- **Fund local services** – The local government finance system is undergoing widespread reform. The funding for local government comes from a combination of government grants, business rates, council tax and additional sources such as locally generated income such as rents, fees & charges and investment. Government grants are continuing to decline, particularly the main revenue support grant which is intended to reduce to zero by 2020 as the Government looks to local areas to become more self-financing. Business rates are being reformed so local areas retain more of the proceeds of local economic growth, but additional new pressures as yet unspecified, are due to be transferred to authorities as part of the deal. Council tax is constrained by national limits and rules on what levels can be set and, in the case of the social care surcharge, what the revenue can be used for. In addition to which local authority spending represents only around a quarter of the total spend on public services in any locality. Devolution is an opportunity for the local authorities in Oxfordshire to seek greater influence, direction, coherence over the funds that are spent and a return on investment. It has the potential for realigning spend to locally set priorities. It also could provide greater certainty to allow for more strategic planning and focus on transforming local outcomes.
- **Respond to demand pressures** – Changing demographics and a growing population are increasing pressures on council services. The challenge is particularly acute in social care where responsible

authorities can spend as much as 70-80 per cent of their budget on social care services. Councils face steeply rising demand with around one-in-five of their residents aged over 65, while mental health is the leading cause of workplace sickness in the UK and dementia is estimated to cost the UK £26.3bn. Within Oxfordshire the need for integration between health and social care is pressing. There is an urgent need



to ensure that hospital beds are available by reducing patient flow into hospital and enabling patient flow out of hospital through better working arrangements in localities across the care system. Delayed transfers of care have been increasing nationally and in Oxfordshire the cause is both the NHS and social care in a much higher proportion than nationally (21% of days compared to 7% in England). These issues need a targeted response but are also symptomatic of a wider need to properly integrate planning, commission and provision of a whole system response.

- **Enable economic growth** - As economic growth becomes an imperative the importance of education and skills services to respond to the needs of businesses and develop the pipeline of talent they require is critical. To enable growth, local government, working in partnership with business, will be expected to respond to the pressure for more homes and infrastructure. Establishing a framework that enables the right strategic framework alongside the right delivery mechanisms is fundamental to responding to the need for change in Oxfordshire. For business leaders it is important that any change in local government does not water down but enhances the ability to deliver on the strategic and regional ambition, and that there is a clear and accountable leadership arrangement for economic growth.
- **Build effective partnerships** – Local government is used to working in partnership with others to get things done. Increasingly the ability for leaders to work in partnership, across organisational boundaries is as important as being able to manage the organisation they lead. Within Oxfordshire partnerships exist at both district and county level. This can be a potential area for duplication and confusion between the different geographies but also between the organisational boundaries involved in governance, commissioning and delivery.

- **Establish the right delivery vehicles** – For many of the universal and corporate services there are well established models of delivery which the respective areas would like to maintain and enhance through new unitary areas. But in others there is a need for new and innovative thinking, learning from and advancing emerging practice from across the county. This is especially the case for integrated health and social care where the model of different accountable care organisations is in its infancy across the country. This is an area where there is a need for certainty about the structures and functions of local government partners to enable further development and planning of the integrated care organisation. In other areas such as housing, there is a similar need to work together on how the strategic plans and proposals in the devolution offer will be executed most effectively.

In the consideration of the Unitary and Combined Authority options, any new settlement will need to be able to accommodate demand side pressures (including through new service delivery models), demonstrate financial robustness and create the capacity and capability to drive growth and investment.

In our discussions with stakeholders, some organisations expressed a view that local government organisational change in Oxfordshire provides an opportunity to reduce the disconnects between transport, housing, planning, health and social care, but that at the same time, balance that with a recognition that Oxfordshire is a diverse county and locality characteristics need to be respected and maintained to recognise issues between rural and city areas.

There was also a view that through the unitary government opportunity, there is a need to rethink the role of local government to be strategic, enabling, collaborative, innovative, flexible, agile and value focussed – that it should not be transactional and cost focussed or have a top-down dialogue with partners. District Councils have demonstrated ambition, problem-solving ability and appetite to change and it is important that future local government structures are lean and achieve economies of scale, with savings reinvested into quality service delivery or as local match funding to the devolution deal.

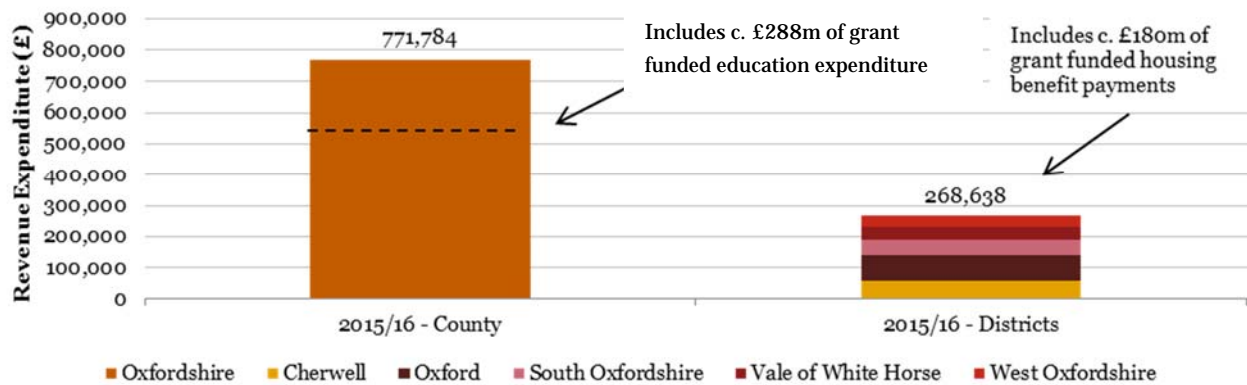
2.5 The current model

2.5.1 Current expenditure

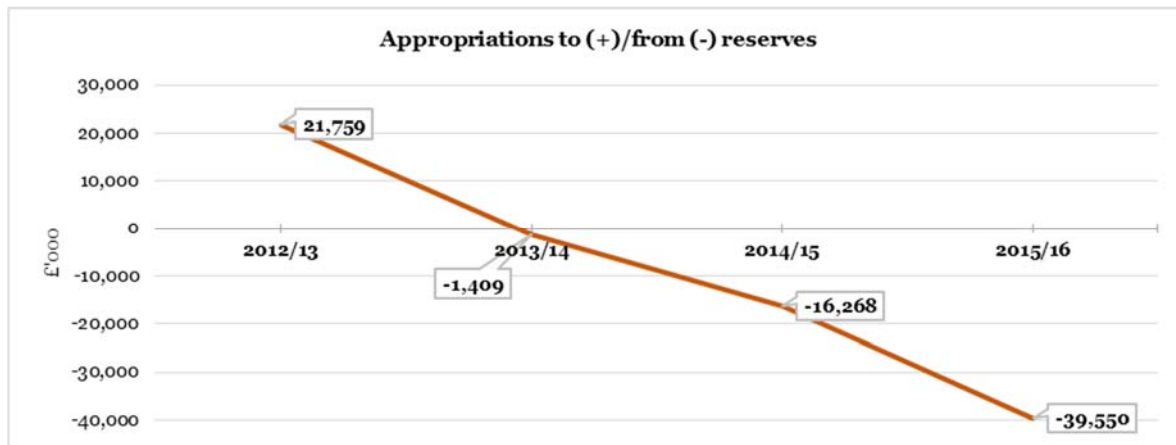
The County Council currently operates on a much larger scale compared to the five District Councils. As evidenced by the 2015/16 RA data, the County's revenue expenditure budget totals £793.5m; 8.7 times larger than the combined revenue expenditure of the five districts (£91.1m). Education services account for 42% of the County's spend, whilst adult social care makes up 23% of its total revenue expenditure. Of the five districts, Oxford City has the greatest revenue expenditure (£25.9m per 2015/16 RA data) whilst West Oxfordshire is the smallest with a revenue expenditure budget of just £12.9m.

The chart below compares total County Council net current expenditure to the total spend at a district level per Local Authority Revenue expenditure 2015/16 budget. Net current expenditure captures all spending on service provision however it does not reflect that some services such as education at a County level and housing benefits at a district level are directly funded by government grant. Stripping out £288m education related grants at a County level and £180m housing benefit grants received by the districts suggests that total County current expenditure (£484m) is approximately 5.4 times that of total district spend (£89m).

Net Current Expenditure in 2015/16 per RA data



Whilst the County Council has been in a position to make contributions to its financial reserves as recently as 2012/2013 (+£21.8m); since then it has found itself having to appropriate from its reserves on an annual basis and to an increasing extent, with appropriations totalling £39.6m as per the 2015/16 RA data. The Districts have balanced budgets for the next 4 years, hence only the County data is considered here.



Over the period to 2019/20, the County Council are projecting the need for substantial increases in council tax yield of approximately 6% per annum¹².

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Council Tax Yield Projected	288.2	305.9	327.3	345.7	365.1
Projected Growth		6%	7%	6%	6%

As the table below indicates, if a growth of 3.99% (1.99% base council tax and 2% precept for adult social care), is assumed a marked difference arises between the two projected levels of council tax yield with a shortfall of approximately £28,1m opening up by 2019/20.

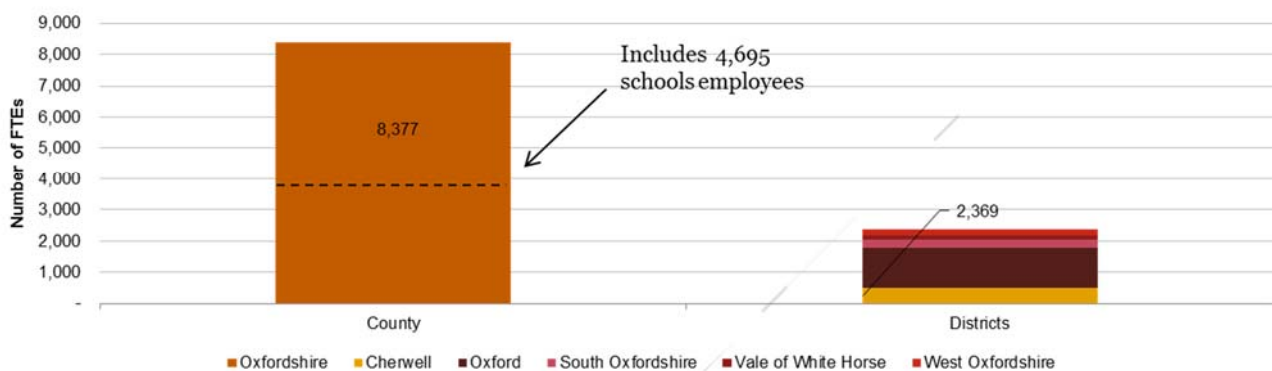
¹² Oxfordshire County Council data

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Growth		3.99%	3.99%	3.99%	3.99%
Council Tax Yield (assuming 3.99%)	288.2	299.7	311.7	324.1	337.0
Difference	0.0	-6.2	-15.6	-21.6	-28.1

2.5.2 Current resources

The chart below shows the amount of staff resource working across the current local authorities as FTE headcount at a County and District level. Including schools staff of 4,695, the County has 8,377 FTEs. When school staff are excluded the County's FTE count falls to 3,682, which is still 1.6 times more than the total number of FTEs employed across all five districts. Of the 2,369 FTEs employed by the districts, 55% are employed by Oxford City whilst just 9% are employed by West Oxfordshire.

Number of Full Time Employees (FTE) 2015/16



2.5.3 Current business models

As well as the structure of local government changing so has its business model. Local authorities used to deliver services directly, and whilst many still do, there is a much greater diversity of authority's delivery of services with greater use of commissioning, joint ventures and other operating models.

Some councils, such as Oxford City Council, are predominately still a delivery authority, while others such as the Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire, are predominately a commissioning authority. Nearly all authorities have some mix based on what they believe is right for their locality. Current transformation programmes such as Vision 2020 in West Oxfordshire are designed to further enhance efficiencies from the current approach. The current mix of staff versus supplier spend can be seen by a distribution of the proportion of council spend between internal staff and external suppliers, as shown in Table 2: Proportion of staff spend versus third party spend.

It is also recognised that there is potential to separate the governance role of an authority from the employment of the staff that support it. This is already the case in some combined authorities which have no staff, but is also relevant to potential future UAs where staff could work for and on behalf of two or more 'councils' and/or teckal companies.

Table 2: Proportion of staff spend versus third party spend

	Staff Spend					Third Party Spend					
Cherwell District Council	25%										75%
Oxford City Council	53%										47%
South Oxfordshire District Council	19%										81%
Vale of White Horse District Council	20%										80%
West Oxfordshire District Council	17%										83%
Oxfordshire County Council	23%										77%
Total	25%										75%

Some of the districts have also adopted models which are working across traditional boundaries, sharing between councils of management, governance and service delivery models. This has been driven in part by the need to deliver savings but the models and ways of working that have developed as a result are valued by those authorities as making better use of their resources and focus on income generation. Within all the current Oxfordshire authorities there are plans and programmes to further enhance their efficiency and effectiveness. Each authority wants to retain the strengths of their respective approaches but also to recognise that there are things they need to do together to scale the impact.

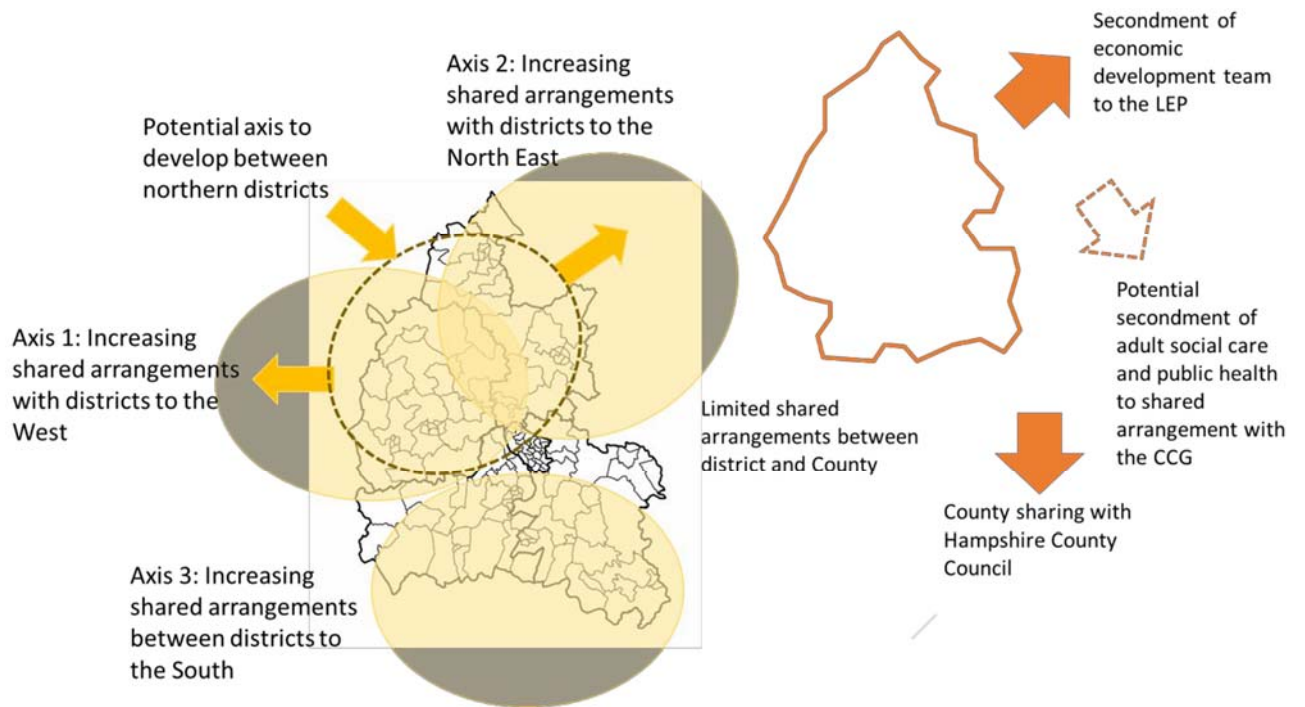
The principal current alignments between District Councils are between:

- West Oxfordshire District Council with Cotswold District Council (located within Gloucestershire) and beyond** – Shared service management arrangements are in place, although operational service delivery is often undertaken at a single council level. This shared working arrangement is being further developed through a Vision 2020 plan to increase shared services between the authorities and with Cheltenham Borough Council and Forest of Dean Borough Council. Some major services are currently outsourced to third parties through single council contracts and a significant minority of services continue to operate on a single council basis at both management and delivery level e.g. Planning and Strategic Housing; Democratic and Member Services and Communications.
- Cherwell District Council and South Northamptonshire District Council (located in Northamptonshire)** – This extensive joint working arrangement is now managed through a joint committee and a strategic transformation programme. The authorities have adopted the model as it “streamlines the complexity associated with collaborative working and drives the operational performance and delivery of commissioned services”. The respective Executive and Cabinet have agreed to move to a confederation model with councils as parents of Teckal and other independent companies for service delivery to trade with public sector organisations and the private sector. The goal is to improve growth and self-sustainability with full transition by 2018. The new delivery arrangements offer a flexible alternative to more traditional arrangements, combining the opportunities for cost savings with the development of valuable future revenue streams. Most services are delivered in-house, with staff remaining employed by their council of employment prior to sharing of services. There is an expectation that staff divide their working time equally between each council. Costs are apportioned on a service-by-service basis according to an agreed business case.
- Vale of White Horse District Council and South Oxfordshire District Council** - Due to their proximity they have many common issues, particularly as regards growth. Their merging of services started in 2008 with a decision to create one shared management team, building on some joint work in financial functions. The decision meant an initial reduction of senior management posts from 21 to 12, creating recurring savings with one off redundancy and pension costs. South Oxfordshire had outsourced more of its service management and delivery to external companies in

areas such as engineering support and customer services. The vision and ambition to share services at all levels quickly developed as a result of the obvious financial benefits from effective implementation of early merged functions. The success of this approach meant that the two councils felt confident in wider shared service arrangements and are now working with Havant Borough Council, Hart Borough Council and Mendip Borough Council, even though they are geographically separated on a shared outsource arrangement, to deliver further savings in corporate functions.

- **Oxford City** - Oxford City Council operates as a single council with no shared service arrangements currently in place. Council services are provided in-house, with exception of management of leisure centres (outsourced to Fusion Leisure in March 2009, contract ends April 2024) and ICT services. The Council achieved the MJ council of the year award in 2014 and was awarded Investors in People Gold and Champion status in 2015. The council has retained housing stock of 7500 dwellings. It recently agreed to establish a wholly owned Housing Company to undertake new build and investment in housing. The council has also set up joint venture LLP companies to deliver housing and regeneration schemes. The first is in partnership with Grosvenor to deliver more than 800 new homes at Barton, the second is partnership with Nuffield College to deliver between 300-500 new homes and regeneration of the West End of the City. The council has set up a fraud investigation team which has saved over £3 million in avoided losses and provides services to surrounding authorities. The City Council provides road maintenance services in the City on minor roads. Additionally the council undertakes external trading with public sector organisations, private individuals and businesses providing services such as building maintenance, vehicle repairs, refuse collection and engineering services.
- **Oxfordshire County Council** - The County Council also have shared service arrangements, primarily in partnership with Hampshire County Council for back office functions. The county and districts tend not to have too many shared functions because of their different responsibilities. In 2010, the council agreed a ten year partnership agreement with WS Akins for highways maintenance, design and construction which was transferred to Skanska in 2013 following a restructuring of the suppliers UK business. In 2012 another ten year contract was agreed with Carillion for the provision of a broad range of facilities management and maintenance services.
- **Additional planned collaborations** – In addition to these existing collaborations both West Oxfordshire and Cherwell District Councils have been discussing the potential for further amalgamation of their responsibilities within an extended shared management and potential delivery arrangement.

Figure 1: Principal Current Alignments



3 Analysing the Unitary Authority options

A Unitary Authority (UA) creates a single tier of local government and takes responsibility for all local government services within its geography. Whilst developing options for possible UA geographies, a number of factors need to be taken into consideration:

Financial analysis (feeds into ‘value for money’ and costs against efficiency savings)

- The financial viability of the UA including payback from transition;
- The scale of efficiency savings possible from the two-tier system and service transformation;
- Ability to build on innovative cost-saving management and service delivery models already adopted by the councils;

Ensure strong and accountable local leadership and governance

- The ratio of democratic representation;
- Balances the need for strategic and local decision making;
- Maintains effective span of control;

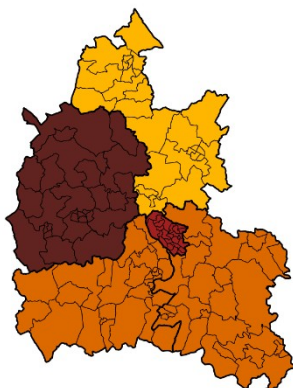
Delivering better public services

- Ability to reflect local priorities and the interests of different communities, including those of the city, of market towns and rural communities - enabling a responsiveness to local needs;
- Enables development and growth across the area to meet its economic potential and sustainability, supporting the economic and housing growth planned;
- Helps to deal with the demographic pressures on adult social care and improve outcomes through integration with health services;
- Ensures a system for children’s services that delivers a robust approach to child protection and safeguarding based upon need and through transformation;
- Benefits from potential service synergies from unitary authorities having responsibility for planning and delivering services such as spatial planning, economic development, housing, transport infrastructure, social care and health;
- Supports the growth of the knowledge economy.

These factors have been considered for the five UA options described below:

3.1 Four Unitary Authorities

The four Unitary Authorities includes the following:



West Oxfordshire (comprises current West Oxfordshire District Council with a geographical area of 714km²)

Oxford City (comprises current Oxford City Council with a geographical area of 46km²)

Cherwell (comprises current Cherwell District Council with a geographical area of 589km²)

Southern Oxfordshire (comprises current South Oxfordshire and

Vale of White Horse District Councils with a geographical area of 1,257km²)

Demographics

Southern Oxfordshire, with a 2014 population of 261,867, is the largest of the four proposed unitary authorities; 2.4 times the size of the smallest authority, West Oxfordshire. Oxford City will experience the largest population growth (in percentage terms) over the period to 2031, during which its population will increase by 43% from 157,997 to 222,495. West Oxfordshire will experience the smallest growth over the same period with its population increasing by 25% whilst Cherwell will see its population increase by 32% over the period to 2031, growing from 144,494 to 191,006.

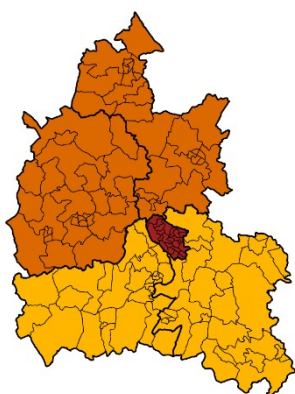
Population data for 2031 are shown for illustrative purposes and reflect housing growth projected in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment¹³. The net financial impact of these have not been analysed as part of this report. This is because there are no long-term (past 2021) budget projections for the local authorities in Oxfordshire, and this, coupled with an unknown future of the local government finance system means that any modelling would be of limited value as it would be reliant on too many overlaid



assumptions. Southern Oxfordshire has the joint lowest proportion of working age adults (18-64) with 58% and the joint highest proportion of both individuals under the age of 18 (22%) and those 65 and over (20%). In contrast, those 65 and over account for only 11% of Oxford City's population, whilst its working age population is the largest, in percentage terms of the four UAs, making up 70% of its total population.

3.2 Three Unitary Authorities

This option has the following three unitary authorities:



- **Northern Oxfordshire** (comprises current Cherwell and West Oxfordshire District Councils with a geographical area of 1,303km²)
- **Oxford City** (comprises current Oxford City Council with a geographical area of 46km²)
- **Southern Oxfordshire** (comprises current South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils with a geographical area of 1,257km²)

Demographics

Southern and Northern Oxfordshire UAs are of a similar size, in terms of population, with 261,867 and 252,652 inhabitants respectively; totals, which by 2031, will have grown by 28% and 29%. Oxford City

¹³ GL Hearn – Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment, April 2014

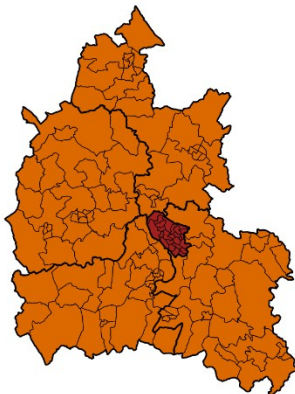
Unitary is the most densely populated of the three proposed authorities, with a geographical area of just 46km² home to a population of 157,997; a number which itself is set to grow by 41% to 222,495 over the period to 2031.

Again, whilst Southern and Northern Oxfordshire have very similar population distributions, Oxford City has a greater number of individuals of a working age. 70% of its population are between the ages of 18-64, compared to 60% for Northern Oxfordshire and just 59% for Southern Oxfordshire.



3.3 Two Unitary Authorities

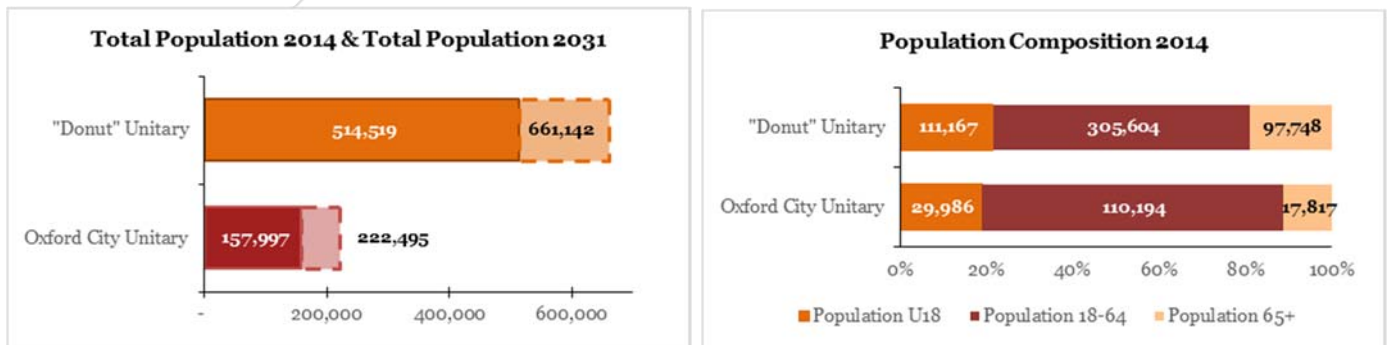
This option has the following two unitary authorities:



- **Oxford City** (comprises current Oxford City Council with a geographical area of 46km²)
- **“Donut”** (comprises current Cherwell, South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse and West Oxfordshire District Councils with a geographical area of 2,560km²)

Demographics

With 514,519 inhabitants, the Donut unitary has a population 3.3 times greater than that of Oxford City unitary, a figure which will have decreased slightly to 3.0 times by 2031.



3.4 Two Unitary Authorities – Expanded Oxford City

This option sees the establishment of two unitary authorities for the region. To offset some of the mismatch in the population sizes, we have expanded the city boundaries to include 13 additional surrounding wards, a list of which can be found in Appendix D – Assumptions log. Areas within these wards have functional links and/or land appropriate for housing development, but the expanded boundary is on the basis of whole wards since that is what the legislation requires. It is also the lowest level of disaggregated data that we analysed.



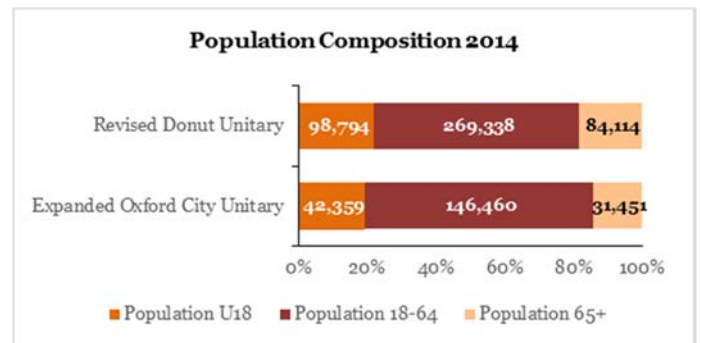
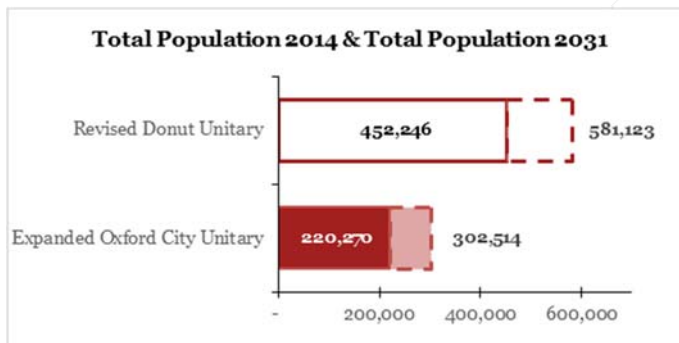
- Expanded Oxford City** (comprises current Oxford City Council + 3 Cherwell wards, 4 South Oxfordshire wards, 5 Vale of White Horse wards and 1 West Oxfordshire ward with a geographical area of 361km²)

- Revised Donut** (comprises all other wards in current Cherwell, South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse and West Oxfordshire District Councils with a geographical area of 2,245km²)

Demographics

Whilst the Expanded Oxford City unitary has a population 39% larger than the original Oxford City unitary, it is nonetheless 2.1 times smaller than the Revised Donut Unitary. The Revised Donut Unitary sees its population increase by 28% over the period to 2031 to 581,123, whilst the Expanded Oxford City Unitary sees growth resulting in a population size of 302,514.

Expanding the Oxford City boundary results in a reduction in its proportion of working age adults; down from 70% under the original Oxford City unitary to 66% with expanded boundary (which is still greater than the Revised Donut Unitary (60%).



3.5 One Unitary Authority

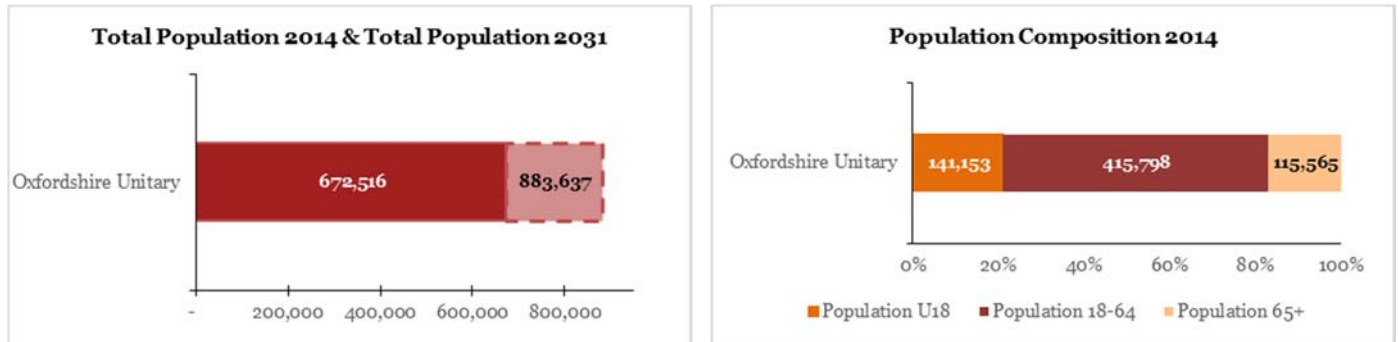
This option sees the establishment of a single unitary authority for the region.



- Oxfordshire Unitary** (comprises entire Oxfordshire County with a geographical area of 2,606km²)

Demographics

The Oxfordshire unitary encompasses all 672,516 individuals within Oxfordshire; a figure which is set to grow by 31% to 883,637 by 2031. The working age population constitutes 62% of the total population whilst those under 18 and those over the age of 65 account for 21% and 17% respectively.



3.6 Population impacts of the UA options

Figure 2: English single tier local authority population mid-year 2014 (ONS) below displays the population size of the Oxfordshire UA options compared to existing single tier local authorities. This displays the different options in comparison to one another if solely comparing them based on population size. As the figure shows, a single UA option for Oxfordshire would make it the third largest UA in England, third to only Birmingham and Leeds. Oxfordshire's population could reach 883,637 by 2031 if the 100,000 housing need was met. Whilst there are other single tier authorities of this size, the others are either City UAs or County UAs that do not have a large city within them.

The 2 UA option would result in one very large population (covering the donut/ residual Oxfordshire) and one very small population covering the city. This dichotomy in sizes would create the 9th largest single tier authority in England, but also one of the 18th smallest. This creates an imbalance that could be addressed by expanding the city boundary.

The 3 UA option would result in fairly comparable population sizes for Northern and Southern Oxfordshire, but again, would have a very small Oxford City population. The three UA option creates a more equal distribution of population between the Northern and the Southern UAs, with the city having a lower population in general, but a higher proportion of working age population. This option also recognises and reflects the distinct socio-economic conditions of the City.

For the 4 UA option, all UAs would have very small population sizes. The four UA option creates three of what would be the smallest UAs in population terms in England and would be unequal in proportion to South Oxfordshire.

4 Financial analysis

The table below provides a summary of the methodology employed to assess the value for money of the unitary options under consideration, including:

- The financial viability of the UAs including payback from transition;
- The scale of efficiency savings possible from the two-tier system and service transformation;

Step		Approach
1	Financial disaggregation of income and expenditure	Income and service expenditure incurred by both the Districts and County was analysed, and disaggregated by the 'key driver' for that income or expenditure (e.g. by population, children, rateable value, etc.) to each ward within Oxfordshire.
2	Financial viability analysis of UA options	Each UA was then re-constructed based on the wards it includes. This analysis outlines the aggregate level of service consumed by each UA and the corresponding contribution it makes based on current and forecast expenditure. However, at this stage, it does not reflect any transitional costs or change in the way services are provided
3	Transition savings/costs for UAs	Based on the data provided, our experience from other projects and evidence from previous local government reorganisation, we have estimated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FTE reductions from removing duplication and creating efficiencies. • Employee severance costs • New management structures • Election / democratic savings • Asset disaggregation (change in the level of core office space required due to changes in staffing levels) • Transformation savings • Other transition costs (which includes project/change management costs, Business/systems costs, ICT integration, Closedown of authorities, Signs / logos / rebranding).
4	Payback	Based on the analysis undertaken above, we undertook an assessment of the payback periods for each option

4.1 Financial analysis of UA options

The following section presents the results of our financial analysis, together with assumptions used, for each of the proposed unitary authorities.

4.1.1 Underlying baseline position

The figures shown below for 2020/21 represent the surplus/deficit for that stand alone year rather than the cumulative surplus/deficit to that point. For baseline comparison, where reserves have been used to fund revenue shortfalls within the County accounts, then these have assumed to also be utilised (i.e. we have not shown these as a negative within the charts to enable like for like comparisons). The projected council tax rates

have been assumed to be as provided to us (i.e. we have not capped these).¹⁴ Similarly, we assumed that there will be no changes to the local government finance system during the period to 2020/21.

The 2015/16 General Fund Revenue Account outturn data (“RA data”) for the five District Councils and Oxfordshire County Council has been used as the starting point for our analysis. This data is publicly available from the Department for Communities and Local Government. The RA data has been disaggregated to ward level using appropriately selected drivers. We have sought confirmation from the districts with respect to the drivers used.

For projected future costs, we used the data provided within the Districts’ and County’s ‘Budget Books’ and their Medium Term Financial Plans, again seeking confirmation of the projection rates used from the District and the County Councils.

Details of the Baseline analysis are provided in Appendix B – Baseline Analysis .

4.1.2 Efficiency, transformation and transition costs

We then considered the potential efficiencies, transformation savings and transition costs associated with any move to a new local government structure. These types of costs and savings are important to consider alongside the financial impact on income and expenditure, in order to calculate the potential ‘net’ impacts over time. Although arguably the position in year 5 will be of most importance to decision makers as that represents the longer term sustainable position, once transition and transformation have occurred.

In the context of Oxfordshire, the transition costs will be the short to medium term costs and savings, between 3 and 5 years, of transitioning (and transforming) from current arrangements to any new Unitary Authority arrangement. These are based on an evidence review of the business cases publically available on transition costs of the unitary authority submissions in 2008/9 for Central Bedfordshire, Cornwall, Leicestershire, Suffolk and Wiltshire.

In reality, the exact transition costs will depend on what service reform aspects are considered, and on the nature and scale of the proposed option. Therefore, further research into actual transition costs expected for Oxfordshire would be required in any future business case for local government reform to ensure that the potential costs and savings are analysed with greater specificity.

We have also analysed the transformative potential of any new UA arrangement, and conducted some independent analysis using evidence-based assumptions to assess the potential impact from transformation. Further detail is contained within section 4.7.

4.1.3 The analysis

The results of our financial analysis is shown below. However, when considering the financial analysis results, it should be noted that:

- Our analysis allocates current service consumption and revenues to a ward level based on key ‘drivers’ or ‘disaggregate factors’. In some instances we have used high level approximate drivers in the absence of more accurate data. For instance, the actual Revenue Support Grants (RSG) received by local authorities are calculated (for both district and county level authorities) based on ‘need’. In the event of Unitary Authorities being established, the RSGs will also be recalculated based on the need-based formula. We have not attempted to calculate the need-based formula (which is highly complex), instead we have used a broader driver.

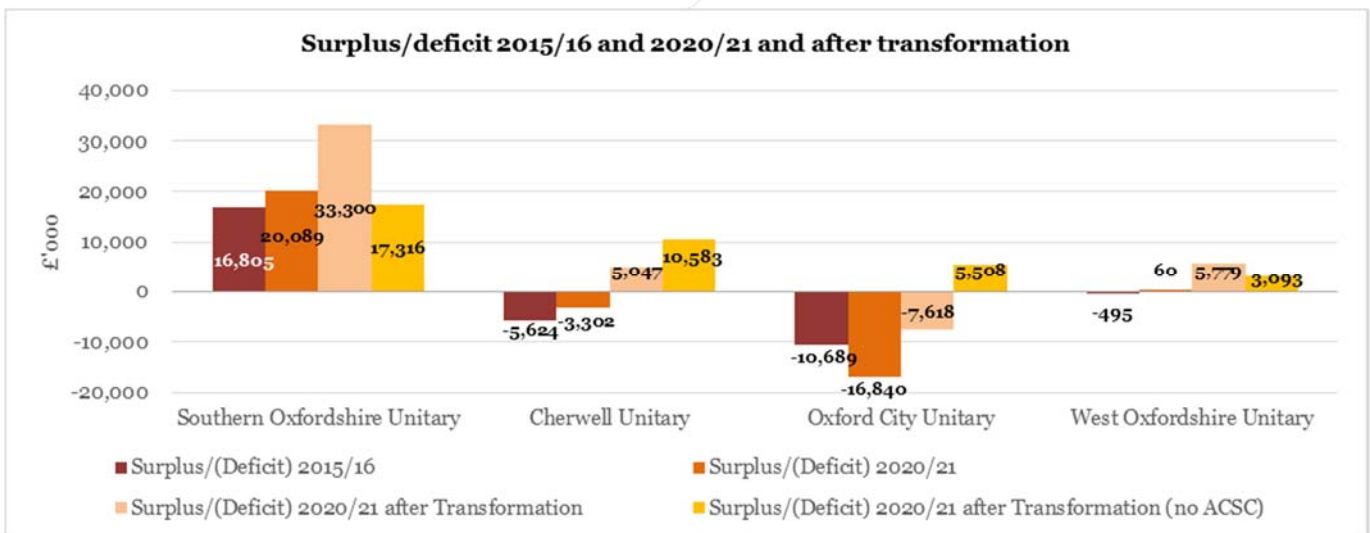
¹⁴ The level of council tax for Oxfordshire County Council were provided by the County. These showed council tax increases of 6% or more in the coming years. 2.5.1 outlines this and the potential impact of capping these.

- We have assumed no changes in local government finance systems but reflected the level of grants and business rates provided in the Medium Term Financial Plans. As announced in the Spending Review in November 2015, the Government’s intention is that under local government finance system reform, the Revenue Support Grant will be phased out with the possible introduction of full business rate retention (the actual plans are under development). Some authorities, such as Oxford City, generate significant levels of business rates, the majority of which are passed to Central Government.
- The Government’s calculation for the ‘needs’ and planned changes in Business Rates are thus expected to redress some of the current variations in deficits and surpluses between the different authorities that we have found in our analysis.

4.2 Four Unitary Authorities

Following apportionment of the service consumption, resources and potential savings to each of the four proposed unitary authorities, their respective financial position for 2020/21 are shown below. We have also shown the impact of providing Children and Adult Social Care (ACSC) services in a collective manner (i.e. they are provided as a combined service across Unitaries – this is discussed further in our study):

	Surplus/deficit 2015/16	Surplus/deficit 2020/21	Surplus/deficit 2020/21 after transformation ¹⁵	Surplus/(deficit) 2020/21 after transformation (No ACSC)
4 UAs Option				
Southern Oxfordshire Unitary	£16.8m	£20.1m	£33.3m	£17.3m
Cherwell Unitary	(£5.6m)	(£3.3m)	£5.0m	£10.6m
Oxford City Unitary	(£10.7m)	(£16.8m)	(£7.6m)	£5.5m
West Oxfordshire Unitary	(£0.5m)	£0.1m	£5.8m	£3.1m



As can be seen from the graph and table above, the proposed Oxford City Unitary is in deficit both pre and post transformation; although transformation savings reduce the 2020/21 deficit significantly from £16.8m to £7.6m. All other unitary authorities generate financial surplus in 2020/21 once the transformation is taken into account, although Southern Oxfordshire Unitary has by far the largest surplus at £33.3m.

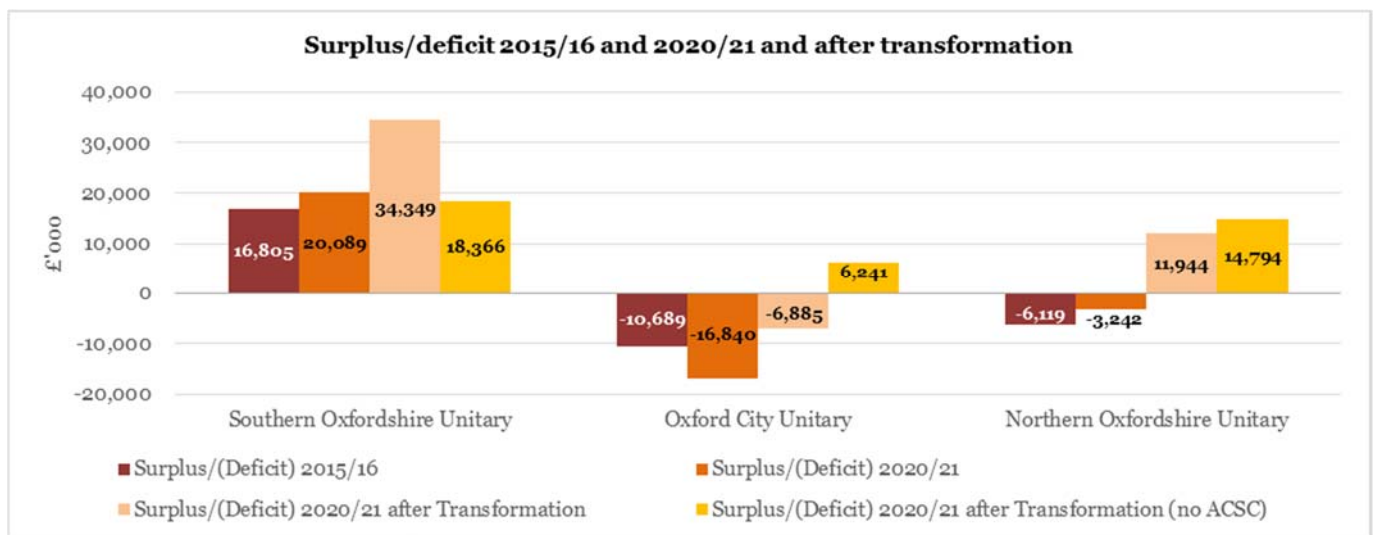
¹⁵ To note, the transformation savings per UA option are split proportionately to the unitaries within an option on the basis of unitary expenditure.

The impact of providing Children’s and Adult Social Care services at a combined authority level has a marked effect. Oxford City Unitary would see its post transformation deficit of £7.6m become a surplus of £5.5m and indeed all four unitary authorities would generate post transformation savings. Southern Oxfordshire would continue to generate the largest surplus despite it declining by 48% to £17.3m.

4.3 Three Unitary Authorities

The respective financial position of each unitary following the apportionment of the service consumption, revenues and transformation savings for 2020/21, together with the impact of providing Adult and Children’s Social Care in a combined manner are as follows:

	Surplus/deficit 2015/16	Surplus/deficit 2020/21	Surplus/deficit 2020/21 after transformation	Surplus/(deficit) 2020/21 after transformation (No ACSC)
3 UAs Option				
Southern Oxfordshire Unitary	£16.8m	£20.1m	£34.3m	£18.4m
Oxford City Unitary	(£10.7m)	(£16.8m)	(£6.9m)	£6.2m
Northern Oxfordshire Unitary	(£6.1m)	(£3.2m)	£11.9m	£14.8m



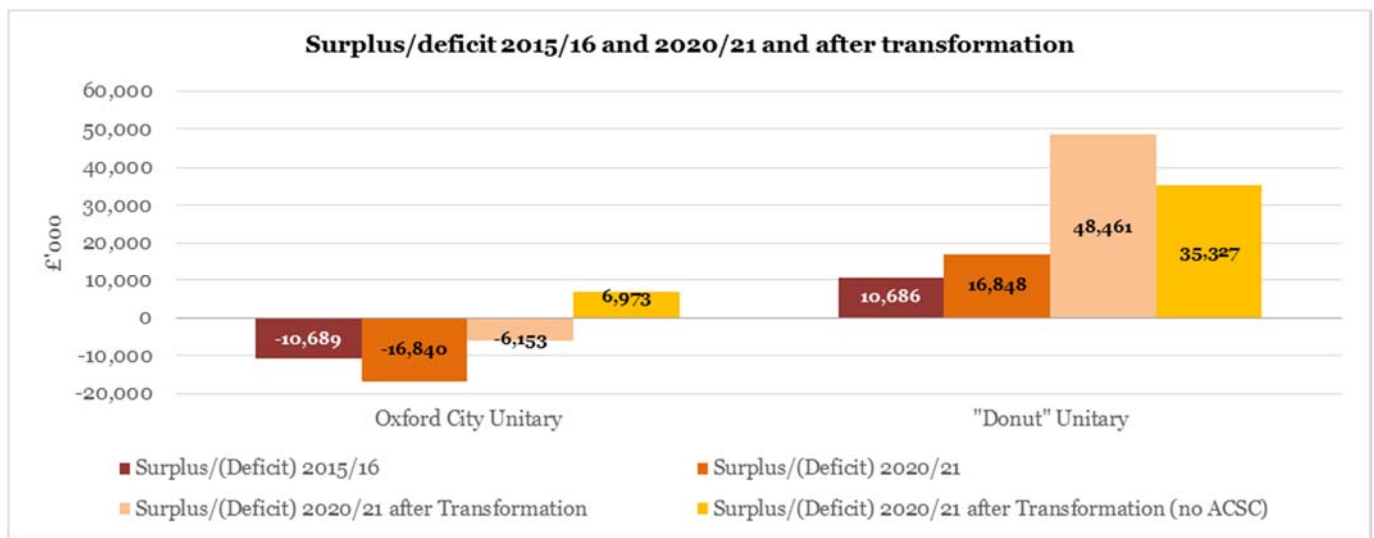
From the baseline analysis, both Oxford City Unitary and Northern Oxfordshire Unitary would be in deficit across the period to 2020/21. Whilst the effects of transformation would allow Northern Oxfordshire Unitary to move into a surplus (£11.9m), Oxford City Unitary would remain in deficit, albeit at reduced amount (£6.9m). Southern Oxfordshire Unitary would remain in surplus throughout, with a post transformation surplus of £34.3m in 2020/21.

Again, if Children’s and Adult Social Care services were to be provided at a combined authority level, all three unitary authorities would generate a financial surplus post transformation.

4.4 Two Unitary Authorities

The financial analysis results for two Unitary Authorities are as follows:

	Surplus/deficit 2015/16	Surplus/deficit 2020/21	Surplus/deficit 2020/21 after transformation	Surplus/(deficit) 2020/21 after transformation (No ACSC)
2 UAs Option				
Oxford City Unitary	(£10.7m)	(£16.8m)	(£6.2m)	£7.0m
Donut Unitary	£10.7m	£16.8m	£48.5m	£35.3m



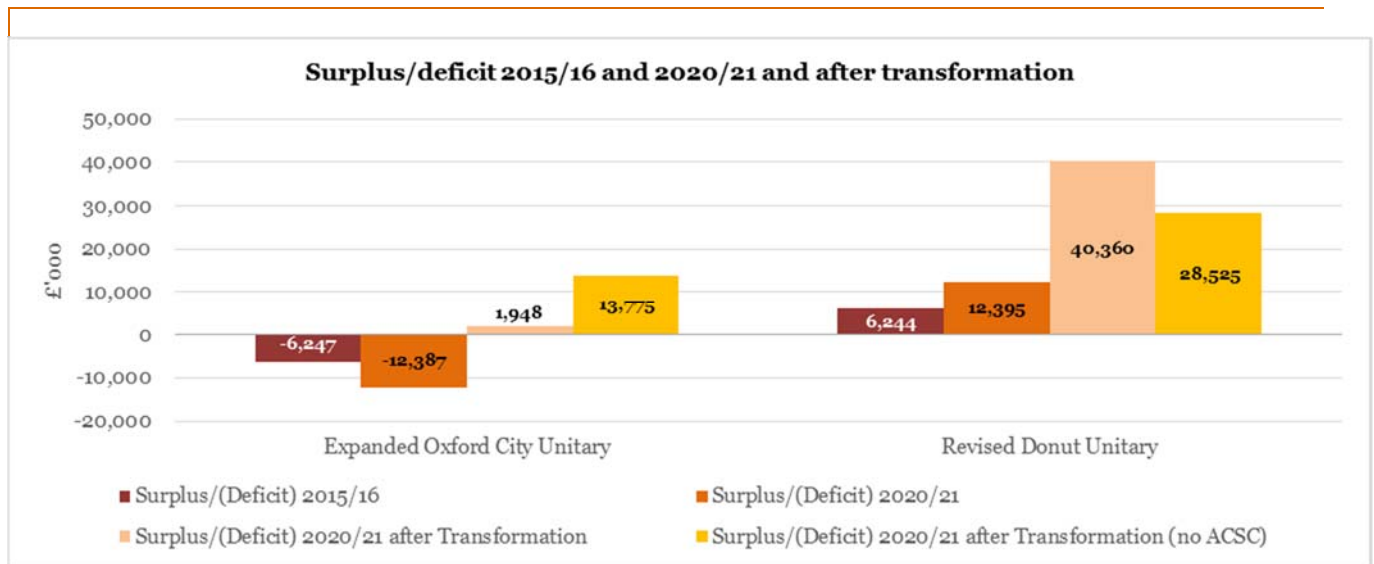
As shown, post transformation, Oxford City Unitary would remain in deficit (albeit to a smaller magnitude) whereas the Donut Unitary would remain in a surplus position throughout the period to 2020/21; a position which improves favourably post transformation to £48.5m.

Oxford City Unitary generates a post transformation financial surplus when the provision of Children's and Adult Social Care is removed from its control; seeing a deficit of £6.2m become a surplus of £7.0m.

4.5 Two Unitary Authorities – Expanded Oxford City

The financial analysis results for two Unitary Authorities with an expanded Oxford City are as follows:

	Surplus/deficit 2015/16	Surplus/deficit 2020/21	Surplus/deficit 2020/21 after transformation	Surplus/(deficit) 2020/21 after transformation (No ACSC)
2 UAs Option				
Expanded Oxford City Unitary	(£6.2m)	(£12.4m)	£1.9m	£13.8m
Revised Donut Unitary	£6.2m	£12.4m	£40.4m	£28.5m



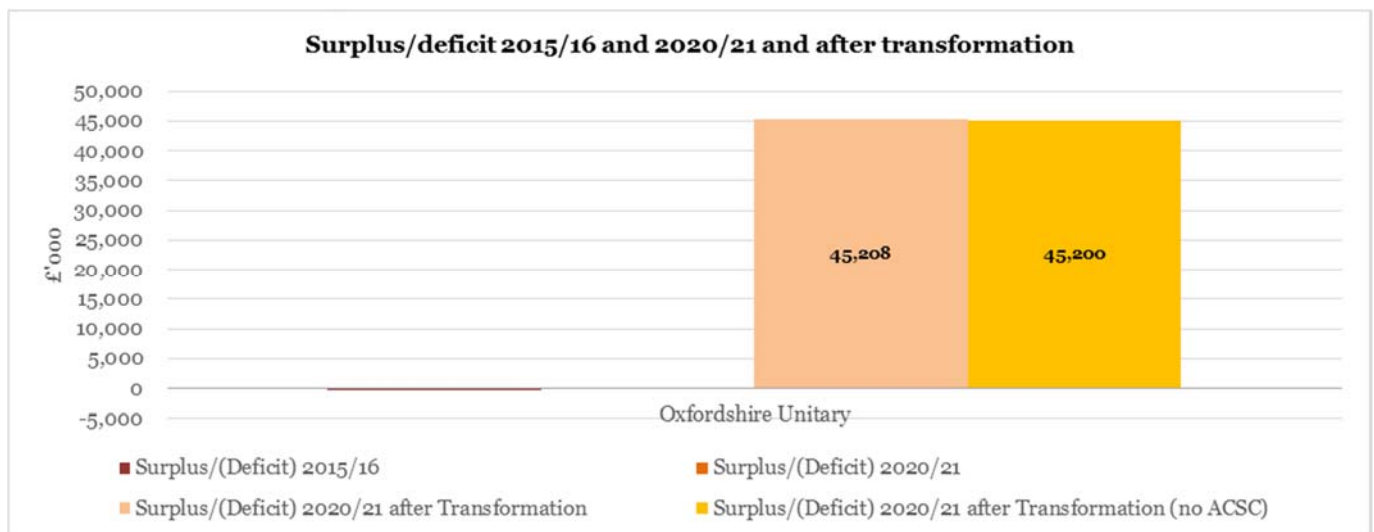
From the baseline analysis, Expanded Oxford City has a deficit of £12.4m in 2021 (reduced from £16.8m from the existing boundaries). Following transformation, Expanded Oxford City Unitary will generate a surplus, albeit marginal at £1.9m. The Revised Donut Unitary would generate a financial surplus throughout the period to 2020/21 both pre and post transformation.

The provision of Children’s and Adult Social Care services at a combined authority level would see an Expanded Oxford City Unitary generate a post transformation surplus of £13.8m; a marked increase compared to the same figure for the Oxford City Unitary (£7.0m). The Revised Donut Unitary would still generate a substantial financial surplus (£28.5m) albeit decreased by 29% from £40.4m.

4.6 One Unitary Authority

Given that the Oxfordshire unitary encompasses all five Districts and the County Council, the revenue neutral position in 2015/16 and 2020/21 is to be expected. The figure below shows the position after transformation, as the annual transition saving of £45.2m.

	Surplus/deficit 2015/16	Surplus/deficit 2020/21	Surplus/deficit 2020/21 after transformation	Surplus/(deficit) 2020/21 after transformation (No ACSC)
1 UA Option				
Oxfordshire Unitary	£0.0m	£0.0m	£45.2m	£45.2m



4.7 Transition savings and cost of UA options

4.7.1 Introduction

With any move to a new local government structure, there will be transition costs and savings to consider, alongside the financial impact on income and expenditure, in order to calculate the 'net' impacts. In the context of Oxfordshire, these will be the short to medium term costs and savings, between 3 and 5 years, of transitioning from current arrangements to any new Unitary Authority arrangement. Based on an evidence review of the transition costs of the unitary authority submissions in 2008/9 for Central Bedfordshire, Cornwall, Leicestershire, Suffolk and Wiltshire, we have estimated the type and range of the most material transition costs relevant to the Oxfordshire UA options. We have also analysed the transformative potential of any new UA arrangement, and conducted some independent analysis using evidence-based assumptions to assess the potential impact from transformation.

Our report focuses on the typically most material transition costs, and includes an additional estimate for 'other transition costs' which includes project/change management, business/systems management, ICT integration, closedown of authorities and signs/logos/rebranding'. Table 3 below outlines the methodology adopted per transition cost and whether the cost varies by UA option. In reality, the exact transition costs will depend on what service reform aspects are considered, and on the nature and scale of the proposed option. Therefore, further research into actual transition costs expected for Oxfordshire would be required in any future business case for local government reform to ensure that the potential costs and savings are analysed with greater specificity.

Our headline findings are contained below.

Table 3: Transition cost methodology

Type of transition cost / saving	Description	Rationale / Assumptions	Indicative annual value for 1UA option (and how varies by UA option)
Transformation savings	Savings from transformation based on current activity and FTE release. Varies slightly by UA option	The transformation savings are based on the activity data across Oxfordshire, treating the total effort and applying levers that would be typical in a modern transformation programme. Savings are based on consolidation, rationalisation and improvement of necessary activity, elimination and automation of transactional activity and service redesign around the customer to reduce hand offs between public authorities and to manage demand.	Average annualised saving of £24m p.a. for 1UA option (This is the five year total benefit split annually whereas in practice the benefits would increase during implementation to a total of £37.6m per annum) Saving reduces slightly as number of UAs increases to reflect reduced economy of scale, although this can be mitigated by the adoption of common principles, processes and platforms.

Employee severance costs	Severance costs associated with fewer FTEs Does not vary by UA option	Average public sector redundancy cost of £25k ¹⁶ Assumes 100% of FTE reductions receive severance costs But excludes pension costs	Cost of £7.9m p.a. Cost the same across all UA options and expected to be split over 3 years
Office space disaggregation & apportionment	Savings from fewer FTEs, and therefore reduced office space required Does not vary by UA option	Based on FTE to desk space ratio of 5:4 and recommended square footage per FTE of 100 (based on Industry best practice figures) Oxfordshire/Carter-Jonas 2015 market rental values per square foot of £18.75, based on a range of £12 to £25.5	Potential revenue (saving) of £1.4m p.a. Saving the same across all UA options
Senior management structures	Cost/saving implications from changes to senior management teams Varies by UA option	Current cost of the 71 senior management roles within the region is £7.2m, based on publically available data on senior officer salaries and FTE data provided by the clients Based on changes in senior management FTEs based on maintaining a span of control of 4	Saving of £5.1m p.a. (1UA) to a cost of £0.7m p.a. (4UA) Costs/savings expected to impact over 3 years but savings will continue over all years
Election / democratic	Reduction in number of Members (does not vary by UA option ¹⁷) Reduction in election/democratic costs due to fewer local elections (does not vary by UA option) Cost implications of additional Member allowances (varies by UA option)	Assumed 25% reduction in Members over a 4 year period due to fewer tiers of local government. Assumed 50% election savings over a 4 year period Assumed additional costs associated with Member responsibilities moving to new UA democratic system Election and Member savings expected to impact over 4 year election cycle period in the model	£1.0m p.a. saving £0.33m p.a. saving Range from £0.3m p.a. cost (1UA) to £0.9m p.a. cost (4UA)

¹⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-a-public-sector-exit-payment-cap/consultation-on-a-public-sector-exit-payment-cap>

¹⁷ Across all UA options members are assumed to reduce by 25% (from 282 to 211). Arguably this would still be a large number of members to have in any 1UA or 2UA model, and the number could potentially be half this (roughly following a County structure). Flexing the assumption to just 75 members would increase the saving by another 136 members and increase the savings by an extra £1.9m per annum, which does not significantly change the nature of the results but could be considered further in a full business case.

		but will continue as long as the arrangements are in place.	
Other transition costs	<p>Cost estimates associated with other material cost lines which would be expected in a move to UA status</p> <p>Varies by UA option in direct proportion to increased number of UAs.</p>	<p>Costs across five areas amalgamated into single bucket of 'other transition costs'. Costs evidenced from published business cases. Expected to fall over 3 years only.</p> <p>Includes: Project/change management, Business management/systems change, ICT integration, Closedown of authorities, Signs/logos/branding</p> <p>For modelling purposes costs have been assumed to increase in direct proportion to the number of UAs created, e.g. ICT and change costs assumed to double if 2UA (compared to 1UA), treble if 3UA etc.</p> <p>Further work is required to understand the likely cost of IT system integration / transition / adoption in particular. In all UA options, County level systems will need to be adopted or integrated with District systems. This is likely to be more complex and potentially costly depending on the number of existing systems to be adopted by each UA. For example, existing District systems that are already shared (e.g. between South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse) will cost less to transition than adopting multiple uncommon systems in a 3UA, 2UA or 1UA. Vice-versa, with more UAs, the cost of transitioning County systems to each UA will also have a cost. However, for the purposes of this options appraisal, we have assumed costs increase with the number of new UAs created, but this is an area that needs to be further explored in the business case.</p>	<p>Range from £3.3m p.a. cost (1UA) to £13.1m p.a. cost (4UA)</p>

Note: The following cost items have been excluded from the 'other transition cost' analysis (since this report is a high-level options analysis rather than a full business case) but should be explored and considered in any full

business case as they may have a significant bearing on the cost/savings assumptions made above, e.g. the unwinding of multiple District contracts in a 1UA option may impact on the quantum or speed of savings.

- Early retirement costs
- Travel costs (additional travel costs of travelling to new work locations due to changes to estate)
- Pension costs
- Relocation costs (costs related to the changes in estates)
- Recruitment costs
- Contingency
- Unwinding of contracts

4.7.2 Transformation savings

The transition to new structures within Oxfordshire can be a trigger for implementing a transformation programme that optimises the new structures and responsibilities across whole systems. Most authorities are already planning and embarking on a new wave of transformation programmes to redesign how they operate, but a unitary solution would allow for enhancement of these plans including development of a shared programme.

The current workforce, excluding teachers, across the local authorities in Oxfordshire is around 6050 full time equivalents (FTE) based on an amalgamation of each councils data returns. Over half of the total effort is within the County Council.

A high level analysis of the activity of these FTE according to standard processes is shown in the table below, indicating that around half of the effort is on contact, assessment and enabling functions.

	FTE	Total Oxfordshire	Local Authority Average*
Contact & Assessment	1,133	18.7%	15.4%
Service Delivery	3,101	51.2%	60.3%
Enabling Support	1,817	30.0%	24.5%
Total FTE	6,051		
Total £	£240.7m		

*The average refers to activity analysis in other authorities for illustration purposes

The average cost per FTE used in the above analysis is £39,800. This is the total staff spend divided by the total FTE.

As local authorities embark on the next generation of transformation programmes, utilising new and emerging technology to transform internal and customer processes they are identifying further opportunities to make efficiencies. In all Councils there is already work underway but the alignment and removal of boundaries between authorities further enables end to end process design and simplification. It is also recognised that development costs can be kept to a minimum if the Unitaries adopted a common process design and limitations on customisation. For the purposes of this review we have assumed a similar initiative would be adopted by any new unitary to

- Eliminate the need for activity;
- Automate the activity undertaken;
- Simplify the activity undertaken;

- Improve the activity undertaken; and
- Invest in new capabilities.

Contact and assessment can be further reduced through wider application of digital solutions to enable more self-service around transactional processes, greater automation of rules based assessment and adoption of intelligent solutions that reduce the need for human intervention. This is support by consolidation of existing effort and adoption of standard operating procedures and performance management. Service delivery effort can be reduced through enabling employees to be more self-sufficient, reconfiguring layers and spans and in adopting effective team management approaches to increasing productivity. Enabling support activity can be re-scoped by eliminating the need for activity, reducing the volume of activity and using business intelligence to inform decision making.

For the purpose of this assessment the mid-point from the following saving ranges have been applied to the Total Oxfordshire workforce as an indication of the transformation potential based on recent transformation business cases, and using the potential to savings described above:

- 18.75% reduction in contact and assessment effort equivalent to £8.4m;
- 7.5% reduction in service delivery effort saving £9.2m; and
- 27.5% reduction in enabling support saving £19.9m.

Applying savings achieved through other transformation programmes to the total Oxfordshire population could result a target saving of 569 to 1320 FTE, with a mid-point of 945 FTE.

This range is indicative and will depend on the choices made about the transformation programme. At current costs, assumed at £39.8k per FTE, this could result, once fully implemented, in annual recurring savings of between £22.6m and £52.5m per annum. A mid-point of £37.6m has been used in the analysis.

The costs of a transformation programme can be reduced by aligning to the transition to unitary, avoiding duplication within each area, and by adopting common design principles, increasing alignment between programmes and reuse products in each authority. An example would be agreement to adopt a common digital platform across all authorities reducing the design, development and integration costs.

4.7.3 Summary of transition costs

Total transition savings/costs for each unitary option are outlined in sections 4.7.3.1 to 4.7.3.4 below. As shown, the key driver of transition costs and savings is the transformation savings. The scale of savings achieved by each future UA, will depend heavily on the ambition of transformation and scale of transformation successfully delivered by each UAs

These dwarf any of the other impacts and therefore require some particular focus.

The table below outlines the estimated savings by option. Note this does not include the costs. These are further outlined in the sections below, along with the 'net' savings.

Option	Total savings over 5 year period
1UA	£148.3 million
2UA	£140.0 million
3UA	£131.8 million
4UA	£125.7 million

The analysis above includes savings and costs related to FTE reductions, transformation, severance, assets, senior management structures, election and democratic changes, and other transition costs. Some of these vary by UA option and some do not. The table below summarises this.

Cost or saving varies by UA option	Cost or saving does not vary by UA option
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transformation savings Senior management structures UA democratic system costs Other transition costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in members Election and democratic costs Employee severance costs Office space asset disaggregation

It is important to note that the presentation of the transition cost and savings alone only presents part of the story, as the transition costs and savings need to be overlaid on to the financial disaggregation analysis to gauge a true picture of the longer term 5 year financial viability of the options. The preceding sections 4.2 to 4.6 presented this analysis. The analysis below solely considers the transition elements of those costs. By year 5 most of the transition costs have been worked through – and offset by the large transformation savings – hence the net transition savings in year 5 look broadly similar across all UA options. But caution should be taken with interpreting these in isolation.

4.7.3.1 Four Unitary Authorities

If Oxfordshire were to reorganise itself to form four unitary authorities, total savings over the period to 2020/21 would be £56.4m. This is the lowest amount of savings across all UA options, and is mainly due to the significant 'other transition costs' (see section 4.7.1) of £39.2m associated with this option. They are four times larger than those in the 1UA option, and therefore represent a large deduction to the potential savings. Transformation savings are £112.0m for this option (the lowest of all the options). Member costs (in terms of new democratic structures) total £4.3m over the period to 2020/21, (the largest of the four options given the need to replicate structures four times over) but this still represents just over 5% of the total cost. Senior management structural changes also represent a cost in this option rather than a benefit or saving (as in the other options), at £2.2m over the whole time period.

4 UA						
	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Transition costs (£million)						
Employee severance costs	23.6	7.9	7.9	7.9		
Member costs	4.3	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9
Other transition costs	39.2	13.1	13.1	13.1		
Senior management structures	2.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.7	0.7
Total costs	69.3	22.0	22.0	22.0	1.6	1.6
Savings (£million)						
Member savings	-5.0	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0
Election savings	-1.6	-0.3	-0.3	-0.3	-0.3	-0.3
Office space disaggregation	-7.1	-1.4	-1.4	-1.4	-1.4	-1.4
Transformation savings	-112.0	-0.7	-8.8	-31.8	-35.3	-35.3
Total Savings	-125.7	-3.4	-11.6	-34.6	-38.1	-38.1
Net costs	-56.4	18.6	10.5	-12.5	-36.5	-36.5

Note: figures have been presented to one decimal place, hence rounding differences.

4.7.3.2 Three Unitary Authorities

Adopting a three unitary authority structure for Oxfordshire would generate potential net savings totalling £75.5m over the period to 2020/21. Again, the savings are largely driven by the transformation savings of £114.4m. This option also has fairly significant 'other transition costs' at £29.4m, but benefits from slightly lower member costs (at £3.3m). This option is beneficial compared to the 4UA option in terms of senior management structure; generating savings of £3.6m (which actually represent a cost in the 4UA option).

3 UA						
	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Transition costs (£million)						
Employee severance costs	23.6	7.9	7.9	7.9		
Member costs	3.3	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7
Other transition costs	29.4	9.8	9.8	9.8		
Total costs	56.3	18.3	18.3	18.3	0.7	0.7
Savings (£million)						
Member savings	-5.0	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0
Election savings	-1.6	-0.3	-0.3	-0.3	-0.3	-0.3
Senior management structures	-3.6	-0.4	-0.4	-0.4	-1.2	-1.2
Office space disaggregation	-7.1	-1.4	-1.4	-1.4	-1.4	-1.4
Transformation savings	-114.4	-0.7	-9.0	-32.5	-36.1	-36.1
Total Savings	-131.8	-3.9	-12.2	-35.6	-40.0	-40.0
Net costs	-75.5	14.5	6.2	-17.3	-39.4	-39.4

Note: figures have been presented to one decimal place, hence rounding differences.

4.7.3.3 Two Unitary Authorities

Reorganising to form two unitary authorities has the potential to generate total savings of £94.5m over the period to 2020/21. Again this is largely driven by the transformation savings, and 'other transition costs' (replicated just twice at £19.6m in total). This option also has even lower member costs (at just £2.3m) and senior management structure savings are also greater compared to 4UA and 3UA options at £9.5m.

2 UA						
	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Transition costs (£million)						
Employee severance costs	23.6	7.9	7.9	7.9		
Member costs	2.3	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Other transition costs	19.6	6.5	6.5	6.5		
Total costs	45.5	14.9	14.9	14.9	0.5	0.5
Savings (£million)						
Member savings	-5.0	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0
Election savings	-1.6	-0.3	-0.3	-0.3	-0.3	-0.3
Senior management structures	-9.5	-1.1	-1.1	-1.1	-3.2	-3.2
Office space disaggregation	-7.1	-1.4	-1.4	-1.4	-1.4	-1.4
Transformation savings	-116.8	-0.7	-9.2	-33.2	-36.8	-36.8
Total Savings	-140.0	-4.5	-13.0	-37.0	-42.8	-42.8
Net costs	-94.5	10.3	1.9	-22.1	-42.3	-42.3

Note: figures have been presented to one decimal place, hence rounding differences.

4.7.3.4 One Unitary Authority

Establishing a single unitary authority for Oxfordshire, has the potential to generate the largest amount of savings over the next five years with total savings amounting to £113.3m. This is due to fewer costs affecting the large transformative savings potential. The 'other transition costs' are at their lowest since they only need to be replicated once (for the 1UA set up). Senior management structures also generate the largest savings across all options at £15.4m, and the additional member costs are lowest at £1.6m.

1 UA						
	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Transition costs (£m)						
Employee severance costs	23.6	7.9	7.9	7.9		
Member costs	1.6	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Other transition costs	9.8	3.3	3.3	3.3		
Total costs	35.0	11.5	11.5	11.5	0.3	0.3
Savings (£m)						
Member savings	-5.0	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0
Election savings	-1.6	-0.3	-0.3	-0.3	-0.3	-0.3
Senior management structures	-15.4	-1.7	-1.7	-1.7	-5.1	-5.1
Office space disaggregation	-7.1	-1.4	-1.4	-1.4	-1.4	-1.4
Transformation savings	-119.2	-0.8	-9.4	-33.8	-37.6	-37.6
Total Savings	-148.3	-5.2	-13.9	-38.3	-45.5	-45.5
Net costs	-113.3	6.3	-2.4	-26.8	-45.2	-45.2

Note: figures have been presented to one decimal place, hence rounding differences.

4.8 Council tax harmonisation

Combining district authorities will require converging council tax rates within a unitary authority. Once transition costs and transformation savings have been considered we would expect no increase in council tax rates required for at least the next 5 years for the majority of unitary scenarios. Oxford City Unitary would be the only exception and would require a marginal annual increase in council tax rates to fund any budget deficit remaining post transition costs and transformation savings. However, Oxford City could change if Adult and Children Social Care are provided as a combined service over several authorities and also be the retention of business rates.

4.9 Payback period

The costs associated with reorganising to form a single unitary authority (1UA) will be recouped in year two, with potential net savings of £2.4m. The first year would incur a net cost of £6.3m.

The payback period associated with the 2UA option would be slightly longer at 3 years (where a net saving of £22.1m would be achieved). Years one and two would create net costs of £10.3m and £1.9m respectively. Option 4UA would also take 3 years to experience net savings, of £12.5m. Net costs of £18.6m and £10.5m would be experienced in years one and two respectively.

Option	Payback period
1UA	2 years
2UA	3 years
3UA	3 years
4UA	3 years

4.10 Conclusions on the financial analysis

Based on our analysis, we summarise our findings:

- The 2015/16 General Fund Revenue Account outturn data (“RA data”) for the five District Councils and Oxfordshire County Council has been used to disaggregate resources and expenditure using appropriately selected drivers. Further detail on the methodology is contained within Section 4, and the assumptions used in 4.1.3.
- Based on this methodology, the 4UA and 3UA options are in deficit with the exception of Southern Oxfordshire UA which is in a surplus of £20.1m (pre transformation). For the 4UA, 3UA, 2UA options, Oxford City has the largest pre-transformation deficit in both 2015/16 and 2020/21 (£10.7m and £16.8m respectively), though these amounts represent just 1% and 2% of total revenue expenditure across Oxfordshire. For the expanded 2UA option, Oxford City has lower deficits of £6.2m and £12.4m for 2015/15 and 2020/21 respectively. For the 1UA option, there is no surplus or deficit. This revenue neutral position is to be expected given that the 1UA option encompasses all five Districts and the County Council.
- After transformation savings and efficiency costs, (of between £113.3m and £56.4m over a 5 year period), all the UA options are in a surplus, with the exception of Oxford City.
- Based on the analysis we have undertaken and the assumptions we have used, an Oxford City UA would be in deficit post transformation, except with an expanded boundary. If the Oxford City UA is expanded, its deficit is replaced with a small surplus of £1.9m.
- This is due to a disparity between the funding and expenditure for children’s services, and a lesser extent adult’s services. All UAs are sensitive to this service, and in any of the UA models, there must be

a commitment to shared commissioning and delivery mechanisms and pooled grant to ensure that funds are allocated on a needs basis as opposed to a geographical basis. By sharing the commissioning and delivery of these services (and funding these through pooled resources), the financial disparity is significantly reduced between the different UAs, providing Oxford City with a surplus of £5.5m in 2021, increasing Cherwell's surplus to £10.6m, whilst reducing Southern Oxfordshire and West Oxfordshire surpluses to £17.3m and £3.1m respectively).

- On its existing boundary, Oxford City generates significant business rates and is a net contributor to the Treasury, which in a future local government finance system with the 100% retention of business rates, will improve the Oxford City financial position.
- The ability to deliver the planned growth up to 2031 will also have a material impact on the financial position of all UA options– it has the potential, if managed properly, to have a positive impact on the overall financial capacity and resilience of the Oxford City unitary. The extent of this will depend on the level of investment required both to facilitate the growth and the net growth in funding (i.e. the net of the increase in income receipts against increase in costs to deliver services).
- Based purely on our analysis, a single Unitary Authority has the potential to generate the most financial benefits due to the economies of scale (an estimated net saving of £113.3m over a 5 year period).
- A 2UA option (based on the existing city boundary) provides £94.5m net savings and has similar financial benefits as the Expanded Oxford City option. However, the mismatch and imbalance between the population size, resources and service levels between the two Unitary Authorities does need to be considered.
- A 3UA option provides net savings of £75.5m over 5 years, and based on our analysis, two of the authorities are financial stable. The Oxford City Unitary (for reasons outlined above) would be in deficit in revenue terms by £16.8m in 2020/21 (pre-transformation). This deficit would need to be remedied through a needs based spending settlement but it is not material in terms of the total spending across the local government system. This option reduces the mismatch between the population sizes of the UAs (157,997, 252,652 and 261,867).
- The 4UA option provides the least financial benefit (£56.4m net savings over 5 years), whilst also having significant differences in the financial position of the various UAs (South Oxfordshire in a surplus of £20.1m in 2020/21 (pre-transformation) and the remaining three UAs in a deficit).
- The savings estimates outlined in our analysis are modelled on a consistent basis across all the UA options and do not take into account past track record in the Districts and County Councils of managing a balanced budget and delivering transformation programmes. As an illustration, the Districts have balanced budgets for the next 4 years and have undertaken transformation and efficiency programmes, and the County Council has in recent years appropriated £39.6m from its reserves (as per the 2015/16 RA data). The scale of savings achieved by each future UA, will depend heavily on the level of ambition for transformation and the scale of transformation successfully delivered by each of the UAs.

However, it should be noted that:

- The analysis undertaken, including the savings and transitional costs are not a detailed but indicative at this stage based on a number of high level assumptions.
- The Revenue Support Grant is provided by the Government to local authorities using a 'needs' based formula. This is a complex formula which has not been replicated for the purposes of this report. It is expected that the RSG would alleviate some of the financial differences between the different authorities.
- Oxford City generates significantly more business rates than the other UAs, which in the future would improve Oxford City's financial position significantly if it was allowed to retain more of the rates.

The position can also change if the authorities have the ability accelerate growth within the authorities. For instance, the ability to deliver the planned housing and economic growth up to 2031 will have a material impact on the financial position of all UA options– it has the potential, if managed appropriately, to positively impact the overall financial capacity and resilience of the authorities including Oxford City unitary. The extent of this will depend on the level (and effectiveness) of investment made to facilitate the growth and the net growth in funding (i.e. the net of the increase in income receipts against increase in costs to deliver services).

- Finally, the financial analysis assumes the continuation of the County using £39.6m in reserves / 6% council tax increase to deal with the deficit arising from delivering services on the county wide area so the benefits in terms of savings are only realisable if there is a step change in the way county wide services are delivered.

5 Qualitative analysis

5.1 Ensure strong and accountable local leadership and governance

5.1.1 The ratio of democratic representation

Each Unitary Authority will need to create a democratic structure i.e. a Leader, cabinet and committees that will undertake the democratic functions, set the budget and make decisions for the electorate it serves. Generally speaking, the more UAs that are created, the closer the decision making is to the community that is served. However, other large UAs such as Wiltshire Council have created Area Boards which have a role in dealing with localised issues such as road repairs and traffic problems, but do not have a budget.¹⁸ Another option is to devolve more responsibility to Town and Parish Councils which is discussed in 5.1.2 below. Further consideration would need to be given to the suitability and additional cost associated with these options for Oxfordshire, recognising that Oxfordshire has a city of national and international economic importance and with city priorities which are distinct from the surrounding rural area.

Our analysis in section 4 made the assumption that each UA would be served by a Leader and Cabinet model with regulatory, planning and scrutiny committees.

5.1.2 Balancing the need for strategic and local decision making

Oxfordshire is a diverse county and stakeholders have expressed a view that with the creation of UAs, there is a need to balance Oxfordshire as a functional economic area and the need for strategic decision making on issues such as better strategic planning, housing, transport, and closer integration of health and social care, with local decision making that reflects the locality characteristics, such as those between rural and city areas. For example:

- There are stark differences between the percentage of the over 65 population in Oxford City (11%) with Southern Oxfordshire (20%)¹⁹.
- According to the 2015 Indices of Deprivation, within Oxfordshire, there are 2 areas in Oxford within the 10% most deprived in England and a further 13 areas in Oxford and Cherwell in the 20% most deprived in England²⁰.
- Median gross earnings differ from £32,506 in Vale of White Horse to £26,172 in West Oxfordshire²¹.
- West Oxfordshire has the lowest population density of the districts.

As discussed in 5.1.3, there are different models of achieving a balance, for example, in a 1 UA model by establishing Area Boards in smaller geographies which are responsible for representing the interests of their communities, although this will add additional democratic cost depending on the number of Boards created. In the 2, 3 and 4 UA options, there are opportunities to either continue with some of the existing strategic partnerships, or establish a Combined Authority. The right model will be for the local authorities to decide, but initial feedback from stakeholders is that there is a need to improve decision making structures on issues that impact on Oxfordshire's ability to deliver its economic growth ambition, and the devolution deal proposals, as well as clearer accountability for delivery of services. There is also a need to develop the delivery models that

¹⁸ Wiltshire.gov.uk

¹⁹ ONS Mid-year population estimates 2014

²⁰ DCLG IMD

²¹ ONS Survey of hours and earnings

integrate across public authorities, in particular with health where there are opportunities to further enhance efficiencies.

Within Oxfordshire there are a wide range of town and parish councils and parish meetings covering large areas of the region but there is not universal coverage. These organisations are another important form of local representation and democracy, and where communities want them can make a valuable contribution. In recent years there have been moves to make it easier to establish such bodies and to encourage a greater role for very local and neighbourhood bodies, for example by developing 'neighbourhood plans'. While local councils are an important dimension of local government within the region, it has to be recognised that not every area has such representation and it should be for local communities to determine whether they wish to set up such bodies if they don't already exist and what role they should play if they do. We have not proposed any option which is dependent on local councils but each option would enable these councils to take on more roles should they and their communities wish.

5.2 Delivering better public services

The District Councils' view is that only unitary authorities with a geography that matches the challenges of their communities can have the insight and focus needed to tackle the structural barriers they face, and deliver services locally in ways which are more cost effective and reflective of local priorities. A combined authority could provide the means for the Unitaries to work together and take decisions on strategic issues and services that need to be delivered across a wider area with the ability to connect these to services delivered locally.

Unitary proposals should not mean simply merging existing council functions along current county or district boundaries. That would be a missed opportunity. Unlike previous local government reorganisations the current opportunity is being driven by a devolution agenda not vice versa. That means the real opportunity is to design and create new structures that best reflect the level at which interests are best represented, and that decisions can be taken to deliver the best outcomes.

All parties have a unique opportunity to shape their future by clarifying what they need from Government to unlock economic growth potential, meet housing demand and establish an approach that keeps people healthier for longer and allows children to start well in life.

An operating model describes how an organisation uses its customer offering, business capabilities and corporate structure to deliver value in accordance with its strategy. The operating model is unique to each organisation and made up of key components such as the strategy, customer channels and business processes, systems and people and how they interact. These operating model components can be assessed, designed, constructed, implemented and operated.

For the proposed councils at this stage of their development a move to unitary government would enable the transformation of services taking a fresh look at how organisations are structured to deliver. We have assumed that the authorities, being created in parallel, would adopt common processes and approaches to minimise customisation. The benefits potential from transformation are based on programmes from elsewhere and pro-rata application to the Oxfordshire context.

5.2.1 The current operating model

There is limited scope to keep finding efficiencies while still working in the same way. All councils have been making efficiencies in what they do over the last decade but there is increasingly a need to rethink what councils do and how they deliver. Unitaries are an opportunity to build on previous transformation gains by further simplifying and joining up systems and responsibilities to enable end to end process and system redesign. Plus, the need now is to find efficiencies in the interactions between organisations with shared responsibilities for an overall outcome. Challenges from the current arrangement include:

- Creating a customer centric model when there are multiple organisations with responsibilities for the same geographies. People have to work harder to understand organisational responsibilities than they should and can key information can fall between the boundaries.

- Aligning service delivery activity to customer insights and intelligence when that understanding is dispersed between authorities. This can make it harder to design earlier interventions and anticipate and shape service demands.
- Reducing support costs by exploiting efficiencies from shared and standard ways of working.
- This has resulted in more interactions and alignments between authorities with similar responsibilities that between authorities within the same place. Unitary government would encourage and enable a greater focus on whole system reform within the geography of Oxfordshire.
- Based on the activity analysis of current staff effort, and practice and approaches elsewhere, there is significant potential for redesigning services around customers, achieving cost reductions while improving outcomes.
- By taking a process view across all authorities, using returns from the districts and assumptions about the County activity based on local authority averages, it is estimated that there are:
 - A total of over 6050 FTE effort, excluding teachers, agency staff and temporary staff working across councils in Oxfordshire, with a total staff cost of £241m;
 - 51% of this effort (3101 FTE) relates to actual service delivery and associated support activity such as management and supervision;
 - 19% of this effort (1133 FTE) is focused on supporting customer contact and assessment activities which enable service delivery including customer engagement, assessment and administration.
 - 31% of effort (1817 FTE) is related to back office processes and support services such as finance, procurement, HR, ICT etc.

This is a high level analysis and an indication of where effort is focused. Although further work, involving all partners would be needed to quantify the activity within these process areas to a greater level of detail, the results indicate there are opportunities for redesigning the operating model of local government across the region.

Achieving those savings will depend on the ability to consolidate, rationalise and improve current activities as part of a co-ordinated programme. This does not necessarily mean that a single authority would be better placed as the effectiveness of the programme will depend more on good management and governance in line with an agreed strategy and design. A programme can work across multiple partners allowing for the shared cost of developing solutions while retaining flexibility to tailor around local needs. Implementation could be achieved in around two years.

5.2.2 Customer contact and assessment

In customer contact and assessment the districts collectively have a comparable effort to the county resulting in over 1100 FTE focussed on customer contact and assessment. This is an area where even within councils there is a focus on addressing multiple entry points organised around functional areas to establishing a single point of access with a tailored customer experience with integrated processes and systems making life easier for customers. While councils have done much in the area in the past, particularly on channel shift to move transactions on line, there is considerable scope through emerging technologies and developments to help manage demand and simplify transactions. The aim is to create more intelligent information provision which:

- gives customers easy and quick access to information at first point of contact, removing the need for human intervention. Typically up to 40% of council contact centre traffic is handling information requests (this is a national figure). Simple solutions, such as enabling natural language search, targets the elimination of this cost.
- addresses both inbound information requests and places an emphasis on pre-empting customer need and pro-actively communicating throughout-bound intelligent information.
- is enabled by analytics providing the insight to target interventions to customers in the most effective way to provide support at the correct time.

By removing complexity the councils will be able to improve performance, enhance the customer experience and increase employee satisfaction as more of their time is spent on adding value to residents and others.



We have assumed a conservative ambition would be to reduce the required effort by 12.5% to 25% resulting in a potential saving of £5.6m to £11.3m per annum once fully implemented.

5.2.3 Service delivery

In service delivery and support activity there are over 3100 FTE involved, on top of which further effort is funded through commissioned services. Within the directly employed staff there are opportunities for councils to explore how to increase productivity and redesign service pathways as part of an integrated system. Much of the benefit from within service delivery will come from doing different things as the new Unitaries adopt a strategic focus on early intervention and prevention activities but also from effective management of existing resources.

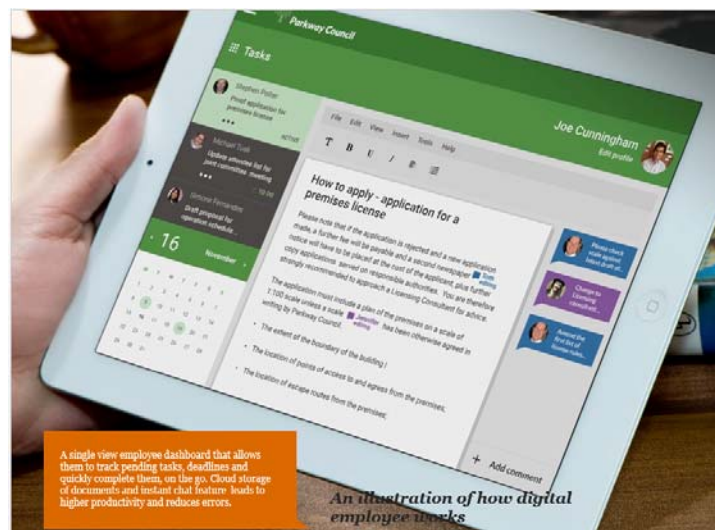
We have assumed that by adopting performance and productivity approaches effectively there could be scope to increase productivity by 5-10% of this effort resulting in a potential saving of £6.2m to £12.3m per annum.

5.2.4 Enabling activity

In enabling activity such as HR, IT and finance, the districts collectively again have a comparable effort to the county resulting in over 1800 FTE engaged in these processes. These are also areas where all of the authorities have been extending shared and collaboration outside of the region, but where there is potential for enhanced integration within the region. Organisations are focussing on more effective integration of the enabling functions to help deliver their strategic direction and ambition. Key trends include:

Enabling the digital employee within organisations means there is less need for 'business support' and greater self-reliance and management, and enhanced integration between systems and functions. This can help with

- Eliminating and automating transactional processes within the organisation;
- Developing functional centres of expertise in complex and specialist functions shared across organisational boundaries;
- Development and utilisation of advanced business intelligence and predictive analytics to inform strategic decision making about the future and management of current performance.



Building on these trends and current work to eliminate unnecessary activity, automate simple processes and release effort to focus on strategic insight and direction offers the potential for further savings. We would expect unitary government to create additional opportunities for removing duplication of roles and responsibilities between authorities and within authorities, releasing staff to focus on higher value strategic work, automating routine information practices and enabling self-serve and stopping unnecessary activities and steps in processes.

We have assumed that by adopting a corporate redesign of the enabling functions, and working to a common set of design principles, the councils across Oxfordshire could reduce current effort. A conservative ambition would be to reduce the required effort by 15% to 40% resulting in a potential saving of £10.8m to £28.9m per annum once fully implemented.

6 Summary of unitary authority options

The following factors, as outlined also in section 3 above, provide the basis from which to appraise the options. These factors are assessed in an evidence-based way, based on the above analysis and the stakeholder conversations we have had.

Financial analysis (feeds into ‘value for money’ and costs against efficiency savings)

- The financial viability of the UA including payback from transition;
- The scale of efficiency savings possible from the two-tier system and service transformation;
- Ability to build on innovative cost-saving management and service delivery models already adopted by the councils;

Ensure strong and accountable local leadership and governance

- The ratio of democratic representation;
- Balances the need for strategic and local decision making;
- Maintains effective span of control

Delivering better public services

- Ability to reflect local priorities and the interests of different communities, including those of the city, of market towns and rural communities – enabling a responsiveness to local needs;
- Enables development and growth across the area to meet its economic potential and sustainability, supporting the economic and housing growth planned;
- Helps to deal with the demographic pressures on adult social care and improve outcomes through integration with health services;
- Ensures a system for children’s services that delivers a robust approach to child protection and safeguarding based upon need and through transformation;
- Benefit from potential service synergies from unitary authorities having responsibility for planning and delivering services such as spatial planning, economic development, housing, transport infrastructure, social care and health.
- Supports the growth of the knowledge economy.

Financial analysis (feeds into ‘value for money’ and costs against efficiency savings)				
1UA	2UA	2UA+	3UA	4UA
<p>County wide unitary based on economies of scale.</p> <p>Generates large surplus post reorganisation (£45.2m in 2020/21).</p> <p>Generates greatest potential net savings (£113.3m) over the period to 2020/21.</p> <p>Driven by lowest “Other Transition Costs” (£9.8m) and highest potential transformation savings (£119.2m) of the proposed UA options.</p> <p>Quickest payback period at just 2 years.</p>	<p>Considerable mismatch between the two Unitaries in terms of financial position.</p> <p>Oxford City remains in deficit post transformation (£6.2m in 2020/21).</p> <p>Only when Adults and Children’s Social Care services are elevated to a CA level does Oxford City generate a surplus (£7.0m).</p> <p>Potential to generate comparable transformation savings with the 1UA option (£116.8m vs £119.2m) though “Other Transition Costs” double from £9.8m to £19.6m.</p> <p>Generate potential net savings of £94.5m over five years to 2020/21.</p> <p>Payback period of 3 years.</p>	<p>An Expanded Oxford City Council sees an improved financial position pre and post transformation with a surplus (£1.9m in 2020/21) generated following reorganisation.</p> <p>The elevation of Adults and Children’s Social Care to a CA level increases this surplus (£13.8m).</p> <p>Potential to generate comparable transformation savings with the 1UA option (£116.8m vs £119.2m) though “Other Transition Costs” double from £9.8m to £19.6m.</p> <p>Generate potential net savings of £94.5m over five years to 2020/21.</p> <p>Payback period of 3 years.</p>	<p>Southern and Northern Oxfordshire deliver financial surplus post transformation.</p> <p>Oxford City in deficit post transformation (£6.9m 2020/21)</p> <p>Oxford City’s deficit becomes a surplus (£6.2m) if Adults and Children’s Social Care services are removed from outside its control.</p> <p>Potential to generate comparable transformation savings with the 1UA option (£114.4m vs £119.2m) though “Other Transition Costs” treble from £9.8m to £29.4m.</p> <p>Generate potential net savings of £75.5m over five years to 2020/21.</p> <p>Payback period of 3 years.</p>	<p>Considerable financial mismatch between proposed unitary authorities.</p> <p>Southern Oxfordshire delivers strong surplus pre and post transformation.</p> <p>West Oxfordshire delivers marginal surplus pre-transformation (£0.1m) but more of a surplus post-transformation (£5.8m).</p> <p>Cherwell delivers a small deficit pre-transformation (£3.3m) and a small surplus post-transformation (£5.0m).</p> <p>Oxford City in deficit before and post reorganisation, though generates a surplus (£5.5m) should provision of Adults and Children’s Social Care services be elevated to a CA level.</p> <p>UA option that would generate lowest potential net savings (£56.4m) over the period to 2020/21</p> <p>Driven by highest “Other transition Costs” (£39.2m) and lowest transformation savings (£112.0m) of the proposed UA options.</p> <p>Payback period of 3 years.</p>
<p>Largely immaterial difference between all UA options if consider total net transition savings in context of total net annual expenditure in Oxfordshire 2015/2016 (£1,040,422,000). The figure is 0.83% looking at the year 5 picture, i.e. £8.7m divided by annual expenditure, or if you consider over 5 years the figure is 1.1%, i.e. £56.9m divided by five times annual expenditure. This does not account for the surplus/deficit position but solely looking at UA transition savings.</p>				

See supporting summary table for further details

Ensuring strong and accountable local leadership and governance

1UA	2UA	3UA	4UA
<p>A single UA could rise to loss of accountability with potentially lower levels of political representation at decision making committees than other UA models (i.e. a democratic deficit). This could be addressed through design of the UA with for example the creation of Area Boards (e.g. Wiltshire model). However, further consideration should be given to the characteristics of Oxfordshire and the replicability of the Wiltshire model. For example. Oxfordshire is larger and more diverse, with Oxford as a large urban centre where needs and priorities are distinct from the surrounding rural area.</p>	<p>Recognises the difference between urban and rural priorities.</p> <p>Improves democratic accountability compared with one UA option.</p> <p>However the scale of the residual ('donut') area of Oxfordshire dilutes democratic accountability in rural geography, with a population of 452,246 and a geographical area of 2,245km².</p>	<p>Improves level of accountability compared to 1UA and 2UAs.</p> <p>Recognises geographic differences between North and South of the County and the different demographic and socio economic characteristics.</p> <p>Provides a balance between addressing local needs in communities, increased accountability through three democratic structures within Oxfordshire, and it would reflect and recognise distinct City and rural issues that any new local government settlement needs to address.</p>	<p>Provides the maximum level of democratic accountability and connectivity to local communities.</p> <p>Greater costs of democratic system with increased UAs, although this depends on number of Area Boards/increase in Parish role.</p>

Delivering better public services			
1UA	2UA	3UA	4UA
<p>Economies of scale have potential to drive efficiency. Will become third largest UA in England.</p> <p>Complex process of integration but potential opportunity for single wholesale transformation is significant.</p> <p>Risk of a lack of responsiveness to the diversity and vast differences in local needs across the County geography. But the creation of Area Boards could help with this.</p> <p>A bureaucracy of this scale may be less flexible and agile to the changing nature of need and demand.</p>	<p>Economies of scale driving efficiency.</p> <p>Enables tailored approach to rural and urban geographies.</p> <p>Population and economics imbalance between City and 'Donut' which could be addressed to some extent by the 2UA+ option which extends the City boundary to some of the surrounding wards.</p>	<p>Alignment of UAs better reflects geographic and urban / rural settings and economy.</p> <p>More effective tailoring services to rural and urban geographies.</p> <p>Addresses imbalance of City and 'Donut' option.</p> <p>Builds on existing relationship in the South of the County.</p> <p>Provides a mechanism for innovation around County services through a CA.</p>	<p>Limited economies of scale / duplication.</p> <p>Unequal sizing of UAs.</p> <p>Partial change / ability to change.</p> <p>Tailored and responsive service provision to local needs is more possible.</p> <p>Capacity and capability to absorb large county services is enhanced.</p>

	Surplus/(deficit) 2015/16	Surplus/(deficit) 2020/21	Surplus/(deficit) 2020/21 after transformation	Surplus/(deficit) 2020/21 after transformation (No ACSC)
4 UAs Option				
Southern Oxfordshire Unitary	£16.8m	£20.1m	£33.3m	£17.3m
Cherwell Unitary	(£5.6m)	(£3.3m)	£5.0m	£10.6m
Oxford City Unitary	(£10.7m)	(£16.8m)	(£7.6m)	£5.5m
West Oxfordshire Unitary	(£0.5m)	£0.1m	£5.8m	£3.1m
3 UAs Option				
Southern Oxfordshire Unitary	£16.8m	£20.1m	£34.3m	£18.4m
Oxford City Unitary	(£10.7m)	(£16.8m)	(£6.9m)	£6.2m
Northern Oxfordshire Unitary	(£6.1m)	(£3.2m)	£11.9m	£14.8m
2UAs Option				
Oxford City Unitary	(£10.7m)	(£16.8m)	(£6.2m)	£7.0m
“Donut” Unitary	£10.7m	£16.8m	£48.5m	£35.3m
2UAs + Option				
Expanded Oxford City Unitary	(£6.2m)	(£12.4m)	£1.9m	£13.8m
Revised Donut Unitary	£6.2m	£12.4m	£40.4m	£28.5m
1UA Option				
Oxfordshire Unitary	£0.0m	£0.0m	£45.2m	£45.2m

	Year 1 (£m)	Year 2 (£m)	Year 3 (£m)	Year 4 (£m)	Year 5 (£m)	TOTAL (£m)
4 UAs Option						
Total costs	22.0	22.0	22.0	1.6	1.6	69.3
Total savings	3.4	11.6	34.6	38.1	38.1	125.7
Total net savings	18.6	10.5	12.5	36.5	36.5	56.4
3 UAs Option						
Total costs	18.3	18.3	18.3	0.7	0.7	56.3
Total savings	3.9	12.2	35.6	40.0	40.0	131.8
Total net savings	14.5	6.2	17.3	39.4	39.4	75.5
2UAs Option						
Total costs	14.9	14.9	14.9	0.5	0.5	45.5
Total savings	4.5	13.0	37.0	42.8	42.8	140.0
Total net savings	10.3	1.9	22.1	42.3	42.3	94.5
2UAs + Option						
Total costs	14.9	14.9	14.9	0.5	0.5	45.5
Total savings	4.5	13.0	37.0	42.8	42.8	140.0
Total net savings	10.3	1.9	22.1	42.3	42.3	94.5
1UA Option						
Total costs	11.5	11.5	11.5	0.3	0.3	35.0
Total savings	5.2	13.9	38.3	45.5	45.5	148.3
Total net savings	6.3	2.4	26.8	45.2	45.2	113.3

Note: figures have been presented to one decimal place, hence rounding differences.

7 *Combined Authority*

The effectiveness and sustainability of the UAs can be enhanced and value added by the creation of a Combined Authority (CA). The stakeholders we consulted agreed that in order to address the issue of housing affordability, congestion and lack of strategic planning, strong leadership is needed at a Combined Authority (and potentially through a Mayor):

- Which had a clear remit for housing, transport and strategic planning;
- Where there is collective decision making; and
- Where there is clear accountability for delivery.

It was suggested that whilst there are agreed strategies, such as the SEP, there is a current lack of clarity about how the strategies are executed and who is responsible for delivering the infrastructure required. In addition, views were expressed that:

- There is a need for a sustainable transport strategy (including cycling) aligned to a housing development plan – so that housing developments have sustainable transport links.
- There is a need for strategic planning across the region so that there is a coherent strategy to assist the sustainable growth of the City.
- A greater, coherent voice for Oxfordshire with Government and influence over national commissioners and agencies such as Network Rail is needed. This role is missing currently, but is increasingly important with the emergence of Combined Authorities in the Core Cities which have ongoing dialogue with Government.
- There is a real need to provide consistency of services to businesses, such as planning and regulatory services, to make investment easier for businesses.
- Adult social care integration with health should be a priority as it will result in clearer pathways of care and less fragmentation. Local government needs to think about services in terms of the end to end process to help stem demand flowing into acute settings and make the most of their skills

A Combined Authority (CA) is a public body with its own legal personality and can be established at the request of two or more local authorities by an Order issued by the Secretary of State and are increasingly the vehicle by which devolution from Central Government to Local Government is enabled. A Combined Authority will change the relationship with government and will provide a strong platform for ongoing dialogue with government to secure further investment and devolution.

Under the new Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016, a CA may have statutory functions transferred to it relating to any local government function, and no longer only economic development and transport. This could include the transfer of health service functions. The 2016 Act also allows the creation of Mayoral CA, with a directly elected mayor.

7.1 *Functions of the Oxfordshire Combined Authority*

To respond to the challenges set out above, to deliver Oxfordshire's devolution deal proposal and complement the UA model, it is suggested that a Combined Authority has the following functions:

- **Strategic planning** – one agreed spatial plan (an agreed strategy for growth and housing and employment sites, transport and connectivity plan; property and assets) i.e. planning on a whole-place basis.
- **Infrastructure strategy** – an agreed investment programme to deliver the infrastructure required to unlock growth.
- **Economic development** and business services i.e. a consistent approach to attracting investment and providing a consistent and streamlined service to businesses locating e.g. planning applications,

regulatory services, business and supply chain support.

- **Skills:** providing the skills for local people that local and future businesses need
- **Integrated commissioning of adult social care and health with the CCG**– the right governance and delivery arrangements should be used including an understanding of how to incentivise providers to improve the health and well-being of the population before they need acute care services.
- **Children’s services** – Jointly led and commissioned in partnership with the Police and NHS, and other public and community organisations, to build on strengths and create a system wide redesign with early intervention, resilience and synergy with community investment and housing services.

The integration of adult social care and health and children’s services are covered in sections 8 and 9 of the report.

7.2 Enablers of the Combined Authority

The benefits of a Combined Authority is that it will have additional enablers to the UAs to achieve the outcomes stated in the devolution deal. These enablers will have the potential to create greater resources for investment in Oxfordshire’s priorities:

Pooling of funding and investment prioritisation

- Pool funds to create investment pots and have greater borrowing power;
- Prioritise collectively where investment in Oxfordshire will make the biggest impact on growth or allow the allocation of funds based on need / demand (recognising that each UA will benefit at different times – but priority is to benefit Oxfordshire as a whole);

Income / funding generation:

- A Combined Authority can impose a levy on constituent authorities and borrow under the prudential borrowing scheme.
- A Mayoral Combined Authority may also place a precept to raise funds.
- A Mayoral Combined Authority may raise an additional 2p in the pound on business rates subject to agreement of the LEP.
- Successful devolution deals awarded to Combined Authorities have included a Single Pot c.£1bn over 30 years, but negotiations have required agreement to a directly elected mayor to be accountable for some (to be negotiated) devolved powers and funding;
- Facilitation of a strategic approach to public sector asset rationalisation.

The Combined Authority would provide accountability and enable collective decision-making on statutory functions but also collaboration and joint-commissioning of services under a single structure. However this model would also provide the UAs with the ability to maintain sovereignty for certain functions, and tailor services to their local area’s needs, utilising the different delivery models that the UAs establish. In addition, other services such as waste disposal could be jointly commissioned either by the CA or, following the London Tri-borough model, by whichever UA is best to lead.

7.3 Governance

An illustration of the governance structure for the Combined Authority is set out below. This will need to be developed through the development of a Scheme with DCLG, but a proposal is being developed for the Combined Authority to include voting membership for the UAs, CCG and the LEP.

Strategic Leadership and accountability



Strategy and policy development and joint commissioning



Assurance



The 2016 Act requires each Combined Authority to set up at least one overview and scrutiny committee. The committee must publish a plan indicating how it will exercise its powers, and it will have the power to suspend decisions of the combined authority whilst it reviews them. Because the Combined Authority will be an Accountable Body for public funds, there will need to be a committee with responsibility for audit, which will advise the CA on financial management, internal and external audit, the code of conduct and corporate governance matters.

7.4 Organisation

To support the democratic function and coordinate delivery, the CA will need a core office / secretariat to develop the required strategies and administer devolved funds. This will include appointing to three statutory roles of Head of Paid Service, Section 151 officer and Monitoring Officer.

To resource these activities, there will be options for the resource to be sat within a Combined Authority office or using the resources within the UAs (who may also have specific locality responsibilities). As an example the Sheffield City Region CA employees zero staff (employees are employed by Barnsley MBC or Sheffield City Council then recharged to the SCR), whereas the Greater Manchester CA employs 983 staff.

However the driving principle behind the developing Oxfordshire Combined Authority proposal is that it is a small core officer team, drawing on the resources of the UAs and partner organisations as opposed to creating an additional large employment organisation.

It is also assumed that the statutory Director of Public Health role would be a joint appointment between the Unitaries to cover the whole of the current region, or is a direct appointment by the Combined Authority under a devolution deal. Joint appointments are increasingly common as authorities seek to reduce cost, but also because public health issues are more effective across a large population to help identify trends and to utilise specialist analytical skills.

In relation to the statutory Director of Children's Services and Lead Member for Children's services the suggested approach is similar to the tri-Borough arrangement in London. Each authority would have a Lead Member for Children's Services. A Director of Children's Services would sit over all the authorities as a joint appointment and each authority would have an Assistant Director of Children's Services covering more operational delivery in their locality, plus some shared responsibilities across the region. This approach potentially strengthens the senior leadership for Children's Services across the region and builds in potential for succession planning and development of specific focus relevant to each area.

In relation to Adult Social Care, the creation of unitary authorities with social service responsibilities would require each to ensure that have sufficient staff to perform their statutory functions and act in line with statutory guidance, The strategic chief officer post of director of adult social services (DASS) should be directly accountable to the Chief Executive and comparable to the Director of Children's Services.

Statutory guidance on this role allows for local authorities to jointly appoint a single Director of Adult Social Services to cover their local authority areas and also to enable joint funding of posts between a local authority and an NHS body. Where such a joint appointment occurs the DASS must remain an employee of the local authority for the full range of social services responsibilities. In addition, local authorities may extend the DASS's responsibilities to cover other local authority services and responsibilities (such as leisure, housing, transport and adult education).

A comparable arrangement for adult social care and children's services would therefore be possible to utilise expertise across the region and to build a resilient team operating across adult social care, health and wider determinants of health.

7.5 Conclusion

A Combined Authority for Oxfordshire would complement the UA model by providing a vehicle for strategic decision making, and accountability through a Mayor for the strategic issues that need to be addressed to enable Oxfordshire to reach its economic potential. The ability to pool funds and budgets and prioritise to maximise growth or address need. At the same time, the CA model allows a degree of local UA flexibility and efficient delivery through UAs and partners.

8 Children's services

8.1 Context

Oxfordshire is not alone in facing challenges raised by either children and young people experiencing abuse and neglect and the increasing volumes of those in need, nor in terms of variance in educational achievement. Vulnerable children and young people generally have poorer outcomes than their peers, across measures such as health status, educational attainment, social inclusion and employment and skills. Traditionally councils have tried to address these deficits by focusing on the needs of vulnerable children and young people, an approach which is encouraged by statutory duties, requirements and inspection. Oxfordshire does this well.

Good foundations

The good foundations in Children's services across Oxfordshire needs to be seen as a platform for further improvement and enhancement. The overall good position is recognised both locally by stakeholders and nationally in inspection reports and stakeholder discussions. Following the crisis revealed by the Bullfinch case which identified issues with joint working and joined up front line there has been a particular focus in recent years on child sexual exploitation leading to the development and piloting of nationally recognised leading practices. This was recognised by the Joint Targeted Area Inspection of the multi-agency response to abuse and neglect in Oxfordshire which said '*the specialist, multi-agency child sexual exploitation team, Kingfisher, is pivotal to the operational responses of the local authority, police and health services, and this ensures that there is a high standard of inter-agency working with sexually exploited children*²².

The report also found that this strong practice was not consistent across all services offered to other children and families when they are first referred to the children's services. Children and families first contact sometimes experienced poor processes and practices at the front door. There are plans in place to address this but progress was criticised for being slow and partners have highlighted the need to respond to demand to non-acute cases.

Ofsted's most recent inspection outcomes rated children's services in Oxfordshire as good overall across all judgement areas, which while not outstanding compares favourably with the other 87 local authorities inspected in the South East.

Ofsted Judgements on South East Local Authorities Childrens Services

Judgements	Outstanding	Good (Oxfordshire)	Requires improvement	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness	2%	24%	49%	24%
Children who need help and protection	0%	23%	56%	21%
Children looked after and achieving permanence	2%	32%	55%	10%
Adoption performance	8%	46%	39%	7%
Experiences and progress of care leavers	2%	34%	49%	14%
Leadership, management and governance	8%	23%	48%	21%

Stakeholders generally agree that operationally teams are working well together but that commissioning in some areas can be fragmented and uncoordinated. The overriding priority is to maintain the focus on protecting

²²

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/521906/Joint_inspections_of_child_sexual_exploitation_and_missing_children_Oxfordshire.pdf

vulnerable children, building on the good foundations but recognising the potential improvement areas and need to recognise the challenges ahead.

Challenges ahead

The Children, Education and Families Directorate at Oxfordshire County Council, and other partners, face a number of challenges, irrespective of any change in the structure of local government. The budget position within the council means that significant savings are required as the current approach is unsustainable. There is also increasing pressure on services as a result of rising demand and changing requirements. Given services will already be going through a period of change and transformation, the question is whether the transformation which County Council is currently taking forward could be enhanced and strengthened by a devolution deal and unitary solution.

The challenges facing children's services are significant:

- Financial – local government has many of the ultimate accountabilities for outcomes for children but is facing a financial challenge to reduce expenditure and improve outcomes. In the Oxfordshire context the specific resources on children's services are being redesigned to reduce spend by 40% while creating a wholly new £12m service.
- Demand – the number of children requiring care and support is volatile but has been steadily increasing nationally and locally. In Oxfordshire the number of children on child protection plans rose 50% between March 2011 and March 2014, compared to 9% nationally, and has continued to rise since. This above average national increase is common in areas that have experienced high profile Child Sexual Exploitation cases, although most children on child protection plans in Oxfordshire are subject to a plan because of neglect. Other contributory trends include the rapid increase in Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC).
- Operating environment – the operating environment for children's services, and the role and accountabilities of local government, are complex and subject to rapid change. Across the UK, there were 98 separate Acts of Parliament affecting children passed between 1987 and 2008, with over 400 different initiatives, strategies, funding streams, legislation or guidance and organisational changes to services affecting children and young people²³. The pace of change has not slowed down since.
- In addition, changes to society mean that new challenges and demands are being placed on children's services, for example where technology has transformed childhood and the average 11 year old boy has viewed pornography and 1 in 12 children deliberately harm themselves.
- People challenges – social work is hard with challenging personal and professional responsibilities. Many social workers choose to leave the active profession after a few years for a variety of reasons, including increasing referral rates, increasing caseloads, diminishing support and lack of control of career development. As experienced staff leave it puts extra pressure on less-experienced staff and increases the reliance on agency staff. In Oxfordshire programmes are being introduced to attract more staff but the challenge is compounded by the high cost of living and affordability of housing.
- Leadership challenges – there is a recognised shortage of leadership excellence within children's services nationally and a desire to bring the best people into the profession. Due to the challenging nature of the work there is a potential concern that finding numerous strong local leaders and teams could be a risk. Essex is a good example of an authority where strong leadership has helped develop a pipeline of talent and nurturing of practice excellence. The leadership of these services is important in changing culture and practice and empowering all practice staff to spend more time with families and children.

County approach

In response to these challenges the County Council consulted last year and is in the process of implementing plans to withdraw from universal service provision and redesign early intervention work to focus the service

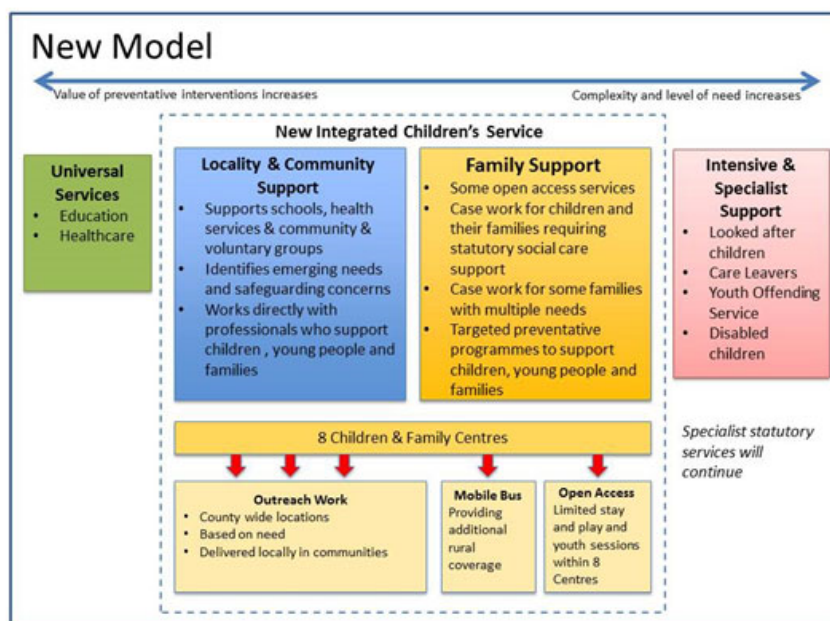
²³ Action for Children, 2008, As long as it takes: A new politics for children

more on the statutory duties and requirements on local government as it seeks to find savings of £8m across children’s services. This would include closing the majority of the 44 children’s centres across the region.

The transformation aims to create a wholly redesigned £12m service consisting of a Locality and Community Support Service, Family Support Service and eight designated Children and Family Centres delivering a range of primarily targeted, with additional open access, sessions supported by an administrative service.

It is intended that the new service will have strong working relationships with other social care teams within the Youth Offending Service including specialist services provided by partner organisations and universal services.

The diagram below provides an illustration of the new service, with the parts inside the dotted line showing the new service proposed by the County. This direction of travel is at odds with that being followed by partners notably Thames Valley Police and NHS who prefer early effective intervention as a means of providing better protection to children now and preventing more acute cases in the future. The Department for Education suggest that there is a need to consider innovative responses to children at the edge of care to prevent an escalation of intervention requirements, although they are less convinced of the evidence around universal services without effective targeting.



Ambition for children

The ambition of the districts is that, alongside the protective duties of local government, a unitary and combined authority model could allow the whole system to be redesigned to nurture the assets within children and young people, their families and their communities so as to build resilience and aspiration. Universal services are seen as a gateway to the specialist health and social care support that children with more moderate and severe levels of need require. Access to quality provision is vital.

Achieving resilient families is a shared responsibility, requiring a commitment across local government, the NHS and the wider public sector, as well as the voluntary and community sectors and the engagement and commitment of children and young people, their families and their communities. It requires system wide reform which a devolution deal could help to trigger by stimulating ever closer integrated working between authorities, other partners and with communities.

8.2 Devolution proposals

The current devolution proposals relevant to children focus on health and well-being, rather than just at risk, where the aim is to bring together a single approach for health and social care in Oxfordshire, bringing together organisations and budgets to create a system that will deliver care and better value for money. These proposals are based on three phases of work:

- Firstly, to build on existing arrangements and powers to integrate local commissioning teams, increase the current pooled commissioning budget and to strengthen the Health and Wellbeing Board;
- Secondly, to devolve national budgets and powers and evolve the Health and Wellbeing Board into a body, responsible for commissioning of all health and social care and public health services for Oxfordshire’s residents.
- Thirdly to consider how health and social care governance arrangements interlocks with and complements those of any new Combined Authority structure.

The intention was that this arrangement should cover both children’s and adult social care services. From the current proposals there is a risk that the specific needs of children’s services will be dominated by a focus on integration of health and adult social care, which is a national concern of the Association of Directors of Adult Social Care. This could perpetuate the perceived position locally where the business of the Health and Well-Being Board is dominated by adult health and social care, leaving the issues of commissioning services for children fragmented and missing opportunities to integrate with other front line services such as housing, schools and community safety. A specific focus on children’s services would help to avoid this risk and recognise that in relation to children services local government, health and the police are critical. Specific proposals on using a devolution deal for improving outcomes for children would be valuable.

Nationally, there are few devolution deals that have had a focus on children’s services. The two areas that are most explicit are in further devolution deals to both the Liverpool City Region and Greater Manchester, where in both areas there is a commitment to undertaking a fundamental review of the way that all children’s services are delivered making the best use of existing resources.

Liverpool City Region <i>Further devolution to the city region combined authority and to the directly elected mayor</i>	Greater Manchester <i>Further devolution to the combined authority and to the directly elected mayor</i>
<p>The government will support Liverpool City Region to undertake a fundamental review of the way that children’s services are delivered. The review will explore how integrated and more efficient ways of delivering services can be achieved by making best use of existing resources. The proposals will be developed from April 2016 within a framework of locally accountable leadership, delivery and commissioning arrangements, and specific proposals will be subject to Department for Education, HM Treasury and individual local authority approval.</p>	<p>The Government and Local Authorities will undertake a fundamental review of the way that all children’s services are delivered, including services by Local Authorities and other public service providers. The review will explore how integrated and more efficient ways of delivery of all services can be achieved by and for Greater Manchester Local Authorities, making best use of existing resources and linking service transformation to the scaling up of Early Years new delivery models and to the education and criminal justice systems. The proposals will be developed within a framework of locally accountable leadership, delivery and commissioning arrangements and specific proposals will be subject to Department for Education, HM Treasury and individual Local Authority approval.</p>

In addition to these two areas, there are other sub-regional proposals being developed within Local Safeguarding Children Boards including:

- Birmingham’s Safeguarding Children Board Transforming Programme, changing the function of the Board to concentrate on scrutiny, assurance and evaluation, whereas the OSCB is seen as having to step in and support commissioning; and
- West Midlands LSCB Chairs System Change Project, which aims to reassign a number of functions from individual Boards to be carried out in a regional model.

There is support for greater consideration of children’s services within devolution proposals. The Wood Review, which was established to review the role and function of Local Children’s Safeguarding Boards, and reported earlier this year made, a specific call for devolution proposals to be incentivised and encouraged by Government.

The applicants for devolution deals who have a deal in place or are in negotiations should be invited, if they have not already done so, to include proposals for transforming multi-agency arrangements for child protection and safeguarding services more widely in their bids. »

Wood Review

The similarity in both current devolution deals suggests that devolution on children's services will be more likely with a combined authority and directly elected mayor, where there is a commitment to key components including:

- A fundamental review of the way in which children's services are delivered
- Integration and more efficient ways of delivering services
- Making the best use of existing resources
- A framework of locally accountable leadership, delivery and commissioning relationships
- Specific proposals being subject to Department for Education, HM Treasury and individual local authority approval

8.3 Future ambition

Approach

This section outlines a possible approach for Oxfordshire which aligns to these key components of existing devolution deals and the ambition of local partners.

Strategic ambition

A strategic ambition for a devolution deal around children's services could focus on creating:

A proactive integrated approach to investing in children and families capacity and capability across Oxfordshire so that they take every opportunity to fulfil their positive potential.

The purpose of which would be to ensure safeguarding of children and young people, meaning that they are not only protected from harm but their welfare is promoted through:

- Investing in the strengths and assets of children, families and communities
- Integrating actions within a shared and collaborative way of working
- Putting children and young people at the heart of what we do
- Enhancing life chances

The aim would be to ensure better outcomes for Oxfordshire in terms of: lower levels of vulnerable children and families; enhanced aspirations of families for their children and improved educational attainment and achievement; and a reduction in the impact of parental risk factors that contribute most to abuse and neglect of children. Within five years the goal could be to have shifted resources into positive activities without increasing the risk to vulnerable children, making the case for upfront investment to change the projected profile of demand. The objective would be to have secured agreement locally by the end of the year and devolution deal by the end of financial year to enable this shift.

A fundamental review of the way in which children's services are delivered

Stakeholders are concerned that the good performance of current arrangements will be at risk during transition to any new arrangements, particularly as the County is already undertaking a transformation programme. While the focus of the County's work is to meet its statutory and protective duties there is a concern that reducing the focus on universal services will weaken the early intervention and prevention activity. For the County this is necessary to release the resources and capacity to manage increasing caseloads where children are judged to be vulnerable and at risk.

Reducing universal services is a national concern of the UK Children's Commissioners who in their most recent report to the UN stated:

« There has also been a significant reduction in funding to statutory authorities across the UK. It is feared that reduced access to local universal services for children will put further pressure on services for those most in need; the Commissioners are very concerned that, due to budget cuts, statutory services are only focussing

on delivery of their statutory duties. In practice, this means that funding is being withdrawn from many critical preventative and early intervention services that play an important role in the lives of vulnerable children. »

5th period report of the UK Childrens Commisioners

The Wood Review has explored the role of Local Children’s Safeguarding Boards and identified a need for a new model that will ensure collective accountability across the system, with local authorities, health and the police playing the lead roles in a more flexible and focussed arrangement. A key recommendation is for greater separation of strategic focus within the boards from operational and business planning, with greater alignment and co-terminosity between key partners. The perception of the City, where issues are mostly concentrated, and of partners is that the safeguarding board in Oxfordshire performs well but at times has to step into areas of commissioning outside of its intended remit where there is no robust commissioning and scrutiny structure in place.

In its response, the Government has stated that it wants strong and effective arrangements for local agencies to work together to improve outcomes for children and their families and share information effectively and will bring forward legislation to make it happen. The Government’s goal is to support and enable local agencies to work together in a system where:

- Excellent practice is the norm;
- Partner agencies hold one other to account effectively;
- There is early identification of ‘new’ safeguarding issues;
- Learning is promoted and embedded;
- Information is shared effectively;
- The public can feel confident that children are protected from harm.

In seeking to establish unitary government there is an opportunity for Oxfordshire to frame its ambition, alongside the protective duties, as creating and establishing a whole system that nurtures the assets within children and young people, their families and their communities so as to build resilience and aspiration. A commitment to a fundamental review, working with Government and acting as a pathfinder for new arrangements, could build on previous agreements and reflect the districts ambition.

It is suggested that the unitary solution adopted should through a devolution proposal seek local and national agreement for ‘The government to support Oxfordshire Region to undertake a fundamental review of the way that children’s services are delivered *and demand can be reduced*. The review will explore how integrated and more efficient ways of delivering services can be achieved by making best use of existing resources. *It will also explore how early intervention and prevention at the edge of care can reduce the demand for statutory protective services.*’

Integration and more efficient ways of delivering services

This review was not intended to include a detailed design of a more integrated and efficient way of delivery services, which would require significant additional resource. Plus the County have already consulted on and are in the process of implementing an approach to drive efficiencies from the protective duties that they are responsible for. That consultation identified 14 key messages for the County that while recognising the funding pressures generally rejecting the proposals put forward and seeking to protect universal services with concern reduced prevention will have damaging knock on effects.

However, those proposals could be reconsidered in relation to the wider benefits of a unitary government model and additional simplification of organisational responsibilities. All stakeholders have agreed that a unitary model would allow further consideration of greater integration and more efficient ways of delivering services, relevant to each locality. Specific opportunity areas identified included:

- Integration with housing services – the role of housing in supporting early intervention and in identifying needs could be more visible and integral, particularly in the city. Homes and the communities that families live in are a vital part of their lives, and housing providers can be well placed to be among the first to spot signs of difficulties with debt, anti-social behaviour, and challenges like domestic violence that can all impact on children’s welfare. They can be an important partner in sharing information and data about families who are experiencing difficulties, coordinating assessments, and delivering ‘family first’ responses.

- Integration with leisure and recreational services – these services can be important in providing children and young people with opportunities for social inclusion and to enhance self-esteem, enjoyment and achievement. Evidence suggests that where leisure time activities are sustained throughout teenage years they can have a significant impact on young people’s resilience and on their outcomes in later life.
- Integration at a community level – developing the integration of community responses, including in high risk areas, would build on the framework of community partnerships and enhance the role and responsibility of schools and other community organisations, particularly where early signs could be picked up and interventions can be effective in tackling those children at the edge of care.

A unitary model would allow for more seamless integration of these functions to enhance and develop these opportunities, in particular to focus on how universal services, early intervention and prevention can help reduce the number and seriousness of vulnerable children needing care and protection.

Building resilient families and communities can only be achieved by building effective and connective services and support that builds capacity and releases capability, with the aim of reducing children and young people coming into care and building the pathways to independent lives. Any change in children’s services needs to ensure it maintains and enhances outcomes for children and young people, and has the full support of all partners.

The development of the unitary and combined authority model for children’s services would be a new innovation and can be design to use evidence about what works in children’s services, and should align to the ambition of the Governments innovation fund which recognises that there is a need for *‘the future shape of children’s social care to be defined not by Whitehall, but by the very best professionals and leaders using the very best evidence’*²⁴.

With world class local Universities and an interest in evidencing ‘what works’ through research plus the development of teaching and training, Oxfordshire is well placed to be at the forefront of innovation in children’s social care and development of a pipeline of excellent leaders. The particular focus in Oxfordshire would be on demonstrating how early intervention and prevention services at the edge of care could commence a move to lower future public spending and better outcomes.

Tri-Borough (Westminster, Kensington and Chelsea, Hammersmith and Fulham local authorities) received £4m through the DfE’s Innovation Fund to implement their ambitious new model called Focus on Practice to achieve more purposeful practice and effective interventions with children, young people and their families. The Tri-Borough are investing in training their children’s social care workforce, just over 700 staff in total, from top leadership through to frontline practitioners across the three local authorities. Focus on Practice includes; training in evidenced based methodologies including systemic practice, motivational interviewing, parenting theory and skills and Signs of Safety, new approaches to supervision and embedding clinical psychologists and family therapists in teams. This is enabling frontline staff to engage more positively and proactively with families with the long term aim of reducing re-referrals and entries into care. Early evidence suggests these new approaches are having a positive impact on staff and the families they engage with.

Making the best use of existing resources

Excluding schools, there are currently 1175 FTE (plus 98 FTE temporary staff) at the County, with a staff budget of £42.7m and non-staff spend of £90.9m (and a net expenditure of £51.7m), means the scale of this function alone is larger than the four non-city districts. But the County resources are only part of the effort that is needed to improve outcomes for children and young people, and increasingly is focussed on the areas where intervention is required.

²⁴ Department for Education, 2016, Children’s Social Care Innovation Programme

The belief is that early intervention would offer the potential to make better use of existing resources over time, recognising that it may initially cost more before programmes start to reduce demand. Research on the financial impact of early years interventions in Scotland suggested that if a package of interventions can reduce future public cost associated with not having the best start in life by 100%, and that impacts persist through life, then the package would result in an increase in public spending for approximately 2 years across the moderate and severe groups. After this period, as the effectiveness of the package, and the number of cohorts affected, offsets the cost of the intervention package we estimate future public spending on these groups would fall. Analysis shows that should the package of interventions prove to be successful in reducing future public cost by just 10%, then public spending would still only increase for a 2 year period, but future public spending would reduce at a slower rate.

Evidence from the Early Intervention Foundation suggests that there are three key enablers that drive success in delivering early intervention locally and should be the underpinning strategic aspects of local planning and delivery. The three key enablers are:

- The breadth and depth of the local partnership
- Having a clear strategic approach, which includes use of the best evidence based programmes
- Rich use of data to assess how well things are working locally

Developing a unitary and combined authority model in Oxfordshire, as part of a devolution deal, should provide an opportunity to strengthen all of these enablers. It could create the foundations for a new partnership model with a strategic framework established at combined authority level and practice based delivery through integrated teams within individual localities based on unitary authorities, health clusters and local policing areas. The County is already developing locality based working, structured around three areas so this would align to current plans.

There is recognition of the need for agreeing the strategic approach to utilise the best evidence available and make rich use of data to assess how well things are working locally. This is an opportunity for greater alignment with the university sector to develop a strong understanding of ‘what works’ to maintain a strict focus on ensuring every pound spent is value for money. Investment will be prioritised on evidence based policy, with an invitation to utilise knowledge partners locally to help put evidence at the heart of delivery plans.

A framework of locally accountable leadership, delivery and commissioning relationships

The current framework for accountable leadership, delivery and commissioning means that the County Council has a lead but not sole role – there is a shared responsibility for outcomes involving many more partners. For those partners any change is also an opportunity to revisit the overlap between existing committees including the LSCB, Health and Wellbeing Board, Community Safety Partnerships, Local Family Justice Boards, Safeguarding Adults Board and Children’s Trust.

It is also an opportunity to create a more streamlined accountable monitoring system that allows greater freedom for innovation and collaboration between local partners. As the Government looks to update requirements on local governance for child protection it is likely to require local government, health and police partners to work together to establish governance arrangements and decide a range of issues, including the following:

- The area or region which should be covered under the joint arrangements;
- How they will involve and work with other agencies who have a key role in protecting children;
- A plan setting out details of the arrangements, which they will publish;
- Resourcing for the arrangements;
- How they will ensure a strong degree of independent scrutiny of the arrangements.

In relation to children’s services, proposals that are being developed by groups of local authorities, health and police services to improve services and reduce overlap from which Oxfordshire could benefit. The factors being taken into account are the scale of the area, geography and different organisational boundaries.

In education, the progressive removal of local authority involvement and emergence of multi-academy trusts suggests that there is a need for a strategic framework for overseeing the relationship with schools (for example on school place admissions) and a local delivery relationship with individual schools (for example on their role in preventative and early intervention work around child protection).

Our discussions with the County, local districts, the Department for Education and PwC's advisors, many of whom are former practitioners, suggest that consensus could be reached on a model which provides:

- Strategic leadership operating at the Oxfordshire level – this is necessary to provide the framework within which services are commissioned and reviewed but also to maximise the input from senior officers and partners, where a sub-division into more local areas would increase the time spent in liaison and reduce the time and resources focussed on delivery. This could be addressed through a combined authority led strategic arrangement for strategic issues on safeguarding, schools and service planning.
- Strategic commissioning for specialist support – it is also a preference for strategic commissioning to operate at this level to make efficient use of resources and to recognise that smaller authorities can be severely impacted by the need for high cost provision in care services or lack access to the specialist provision required.
- Operational delivery around localities – An integrated delivery / practice led model based around localities which are coterminous wherever possible is also the shared ambition of all parties. The current basic building blocks for this in three key partners – local government, health and policing – are all modelled on three localities (Northern Oxfordshire, Oxford and Southern Oxfordshire) within which more local delivery arrangements with individual children, families and schools would operate.
- Flexibility on the delivery models – there is recognition that the focus and requirements across Oxfordshire vary considerably. Much of the child protection focus is located in Oxford itself, alongside Banbury and Didcot. However educational attainment and achievement are a common issue across the county. There are also different delivery preferences and priorities within each area which the proposals will need to respect.

Another enabler of effective innovation identified by the Government's evaluation of its innovation programme is to ensure that the voices of children, young people and families are listened to as part of the process of developing new services to support them. This can be more difficult if decisions are too far removed from those that they affect.

The unitary authorities would need to cover the role of the Director of Children's Services and Lead Member, while recognising that there is a national need for strengthening the pipeline of leadership excellence. While a current County lead reduced the need for multiple leaders it depends on the quality of that leadership and has limited in built resilience and natural succession. The model adopted in the Tri-Borough arrangement has some parallels for a combined authority and unitary solution in Oxfordshire. In that model there is a single Executive Director for Children's Services, acting as the statutory DCS for all authorities, but who is supported by Directors of Children's Services within each authority who have operational delivery responsibilities but who also take a lead across all authorities on specific services, such as adoption and fostering. Each authority retains a lead member for Children's Services. This model could work well in Oxfordshire, reflecting the variety of pressures within the region, while allowing for the development of strong leadership team working across traditional boundaries. There would also be potential, as part of the combined authority and mayoral model, for a 'deputy mayor' for children's services. Current statutory guidance on the requirements for a Director of Children's Services and Lead Member is likely to be reviewed and this is an opportunity to test a proposal that is most likely to drive collaboration and co-ordination between all parties, not just the local authorities, and support the pipeline of leadership excellence which the Government is seeking.

Specific proposals being subject to Department for Education, HM Treasury and individual local authority approval

The development of specific proposals needs to be taken forward in agreement between all parties before Government approval is sought. That process will take some time but can be based on some agreed principles for the design of a fundamental review and service model.

8.4 Principals within a unitary model

Any change in current arrangements must not put children and young people at risk, either during transition or as a result of transition. The result of any change should be a robust model for safeguarding children and young people, particularly at the edge of care, while also raising ambition and aspiration.

Proposals for children's services within a unitary government model in Oxfordshire need shared understanding agreement and development. At this point the focus has been on developing strategic guiding principles that can be used as the basis for working toward a consensus and inform decision making about how change could enhance current arrangements. They are not hard-and-fast rules but seek to describe the preferences for what a unitary and combined authority model would seek to achieve and the behaviours it would facilitate.

The proposed guiding principles are any move to unitary government will be a stimulus for developing a model of safeguarding children and young people which establishes:

- A new relationship between local government, health and policing to provide integrated strategic leadership and commissioning that enables shared decision making, genuine co-production and joint delivery of services placing outcomes for children and families at the heart of everything;
- The first priority for children's services must be to keep children safe from abuse and neglect which will be done by meeting statutory duties as efficiently and effectively as possible at a combined authority level,
- A commitment to building resilience and aspiration by acting before children are vulnerable by recognising and building on the strengths of individual children, relationships within families and within communities to change behaviour and reduce demand for statutory services;
- This shift requires:
 - A focus on prevention and early intervention and the provision of specialist interventions and improving outcomes for citizens where providers in each locality are incentivized achieve early interventions through managing total budgets.
 - Evidence of what works to inform both an understanding of what is happening and to shape strategic commissioning, which should include the involvement of children and families through meaningful consultation and engagement.
 - A workforce has the training, skills, information and tools that it needs to work effectively.
 - An ability to share data and insight about past performance in close to real time and predictive analytics to inform both operational and strategic planning
 - An outcomes focus where the commitment is to increasingly shift resources into universal and preventative services
 - Integrated local provision focused on what is needed in each locality levels from the family to the school to the region.

It is recommended that as part of any Oxfordshire devolution settlement a similar approach is taken to undertaken a detailed and fundamental review of the way children's services are delivered involving all those with a shared responsibility.

9 Adults services

9.1 Context

Adult social care is a system under strain nationally and locally. It is perhaps the single biggest pressure on local authority finances with a clear recognition of the challenges this represents. The Spending Review 2015 announced new powers to raise Council Tax by up to 2 per cent to spend on social care, providing flexibility for local authorities alongside additional money for social care provided through the Better Care Fund from 2017/18. Despite this the social care funding gap has been estimated at between £2bn and £2.7bn nationally and within Oxfordshire there is a need to find savings of £176m by 2020/21 across health and social care.

“I do not believe that it would be prudent for us to assume any additional NHS funding over the next several years, not least because I think there is a strong argument that were extra funding to be available, frankly we should be arguing that it should be going to social care. That is one of the arguments that I have been making publicly, and I think social care has a very strong case for that.”

Simon Stevens, Chief Executive of NHS England speech to the NHS Confederation 20 June 2016

There is universal recognition that better co-ordination of health and social care designed around the person is needed to provide both improved service outcomes and to reduce costs. The aim is to shift care into the community, closer to home, making care more personalised and supporting people to live more independently for longer.

Integrated care means different things to different people. While most recognise the benefits of integrated care, others are uncertain about means or threatened by possible consequences, such as implied organisational changes. Increasingly, integrated care is about the ability to work across organisational boundaries under single management control and director rather than organisational integration to deliver the benefits of integrated care. No single ‘best practice’ model of integrated care exists. What matters most is clinical and service-level integration that focuses on how care can be better provided around the needs of individuals, especially where this care is being given by a number of different professionals and organisations.

In the recent Spending Review the Government committed to integration of health and social care by 2020 in all places. The challenge for Oxfordshire is to understand how best to create a system that maximises the benefits of integration and creates the right incentives for the system to focus on health and well-being. This is a challenge that goes beyond local government and requires collaboration between the Clinical Commissioning Group, wider health sector and providers. The current Oxfordshire Transformation Board recognises that there needs to be fundamental reform of the health and social care system to adopt new models of care.

Good foundations

Health in Oxfordshire is good overall and has been improving, with comparatively low levels of disability although 90,000 people report being limited in their daily activities. People are living longer across Oxfordshire – a woman is now likely to live to 87 – and the over 65 population is forecast to rise 18% by 2025 while the over 85 population increases by 30%. Overall disability free life expectancy in Oxfordshire is significantly above the national average.

Within the overall figures there are variances between different places reflecting the diversity of the region. For example, the more rural districts have a higher proportion of over 85s with growth highest in West Oxfordshire. Older people and population change is one of the primary health challenges in the region, resulting in changing health needs and requirements.

The Health and Well-being Board assumed statutory responsibilities in 2013 and is considered strong and established by the County Council, although some stakeholders feel it is too dominated by local government. As Oxfordshire seeks to find savings and is already relatively efficient the Oxfordshire Transformation Board recognises it will require fundamental changes to the way services are delivered.

The current consultation identifies three health and well-being gaps which will be important to address as the work develops both on the reform to health system but also consideration of the future of local government in the region. The three gaps are:

- a lifestyle and motivation gap through making it easier for people to help themselves using apps and the web
- a service gap through which all professionals prevent ill health by helping to improve unhealthy lifestyles
- a community gap and development of healthier community design and, as the county's largest employer, work harder to improve NHS workforce's health

The Districts believe that a unitary solution for local government, with a combined authority, would be well suited to delivering the emerging plans and offer the potential to create greater synergies and commitment to collaborative working at the right localities for the delivery of care closer to the home.

Challenges

- **Ageing population** – This aging population is impacting on health and local authority services across Oxfordshire, whether through demand on GPs, delayed transfers of care or pressures on social services. This pressure is not uniform. By 2023 the most likely scenario is that there will be a further 6300 over 85s in the region, but the projected proportional change between 2012 and 2037 is almost double the level of the city in West Oxfordshire. Different localities will experience different pressures, but all characterised by increasing complexity of long term conditions and frailty.
- **Wider determinants of health** – Health and wellbeing are impacted by more than just health and social care services. The built environment, housing, local environmental quality, economic growth and prosperity are all important determinants of supporting a healthy population. In a two tier system there is a disconnect between the functions planning and delivering services which have wider determinants on health from those focused on health and social care. Just as integration between health and social care is important so is integration with functions with a significant impact on health, such as transport, housing and social isolation. These issues, and their relative importance vary significantly between the District authorities, where the needs of the city are quite different to those in rural West Oxfordshire.

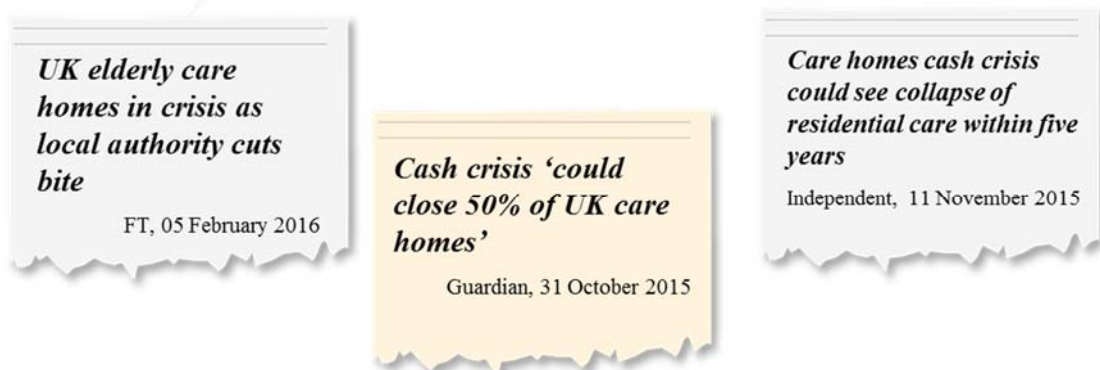
The current systems to make all this happen are complex and confusing to say the least: a mixture of District and County Councils, developers, appeals, inspectors, businesses and the views of Town and Parish Councils and the views of many local people. New developments are rarely welcomed by locals, and the whole system is fraught with difficulties until an uneasy compromise is reached.
Oxfordshire Director of Public Health Annual Report 2014-15

- **Moving forward on integration of health and social care** – The Oxfordshire health and social care system has long-standing problems in being able to transfer patients to the next stage of their care from both Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (OUHFT) and Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust (OHFT). Delays in transferring to home with domiciliary support, or to a residential or nursing home setting or from community hospitals impacts on both the patient experience but also the flow of patients the Trust can support and introduces additional expense.
- **Cost pressures** – Within the Oxfordshire health system there is a need to find savings of around £176m by 2020/21 across health and social care – equivalent to 100% of CCG current spend on mental health, learning disability, community and primary care. A joint transformation approach, and the integration proposed through the devolution agenda, is essential in enabling all parties to develop a whole system redesign to achieve these savings.
- **Perversity of the pressure** – Councils believe that they were running out of scope for 'efficiencies' while the ADASS Budget Survey showed that adult social care spending on prevention has decreased despite being seen by Directors as the most important way of realising savings and being the core focus

of national and local policy. Additional cost pressures include implementation of the National Living Wage.

As budgets reduce it becomes harder for councils to manage the tension between prioritising statutory duties towards those with the greatest needs and investing in services that will prevent and reduce future needs.
ADASS Budget Survey 2016

- **Workforce gaps**– The vast majority of social worker jobs are in local government but these make up a minority of the roles within the overall adult social care sector according to Skills for Care. The workforce continues to grow with a shift away from local authority staff (down 50,000 and 27% since 2009) to independent sector jobs (up 225,000 jobs and 23%), and forecasts that demand for care staff will be at double the rate of population growth. Many of these roles are comparatively low paid where the high cost of accommodation in Oxfordshire, as well as issues with transportation and competition between local employers, will make recruitment and retention of staff even more challenging and is already an issue for both health and social care. Furthermore, 30% of Oxfordshire GP respondents reported that they plan to retire within five years, while some practices report it takes 6-12 months to recruit a GP.
- **Eligibility** – As councils have responded to declining budgets, eligibility and access to services has been tightened. There are an estimated 400,000 fewer people receiving social care since 2009-10 with those still supported receiving less care. However, in Oxfordshire there has been a 53% increase in the commissioning of home care since 2011, with an average wait of 12 days between a client being ready and receiving long term care
- **Overloaded services impacting on quality** – The pressures on commissioners and funding for providers is starting to impact on quality. 29% of patients reported the length of wait to see their GP was unacceptable, and 20% of people choose A&E rather than a GP resulting in A&E attendance rising by 1-3% annually and only 31% said they received good care managing their long term condition. Demand for hospital services is forecast to rise by 15% over the next 5 years. The CQC 2015 data for Oxfordshire shows that 8.7% of adult social care providers inspected were rated as inadequate and a further 31.9% were ‘requiring improvement’.
- **Provider capacity** – Within the provider landscape, funding pressures and under-occupancy are driving a decrease in fee rates, and suppliers of care homes are exiting the independent care homes market increasing pressure on local authority provision and making care at home increasingly important.



Both the integration of health and social care and devolution proposals are fundamental to enabling reform of the system to allow for care closer to home. The pressures on the system mean that there is a need to operate at pace to move from the case for change into new models of care as soon as possible. While a joint challenge, this

is fundamentally a health driven agenda to identify the best possible use of £1.2bn annual resources to meet the population’s health needs.

9.2 Devolution proposals

The current devolution proposals relevant to health and well-being aims is to bring together a single approach for health and social care in Oxfordshire, bringing together organisations and budgets to create a system that will deliver care and better value for money.

The aim is to build on existing arrangements and powers to integrate local commissioning teams, increase the current pooled commissioning budget and to strengthen / reconstitute the Health and Wellbeing Board to enable it to hold contracts. This is then intended to be the recipient of devolved national budgets and powers so that the Health and Wellbeing Board becomes responsible for commissioning of all health and social care and public health services for Oxfordshire’s residents. A move to unitary government would allow for consideration on how health and social care governance arrangements interlock with and complement any new Combined Authority structure.

The devolution deal with Greater Manchester, and the wider ambitions of the NHS Five Year Forward View, has stimulated the development of new thinking on both the integration of commissioning but also the models of delivery for health care.

Area	Deal text relating to social care
Cornwall	<p>Cornwall faces demographic challenges that are likely to put pressure on resources in future years. For example, the population of Cornwall contains more residents over the age of 75 than the average for England. This group is expected to continue to grow significantly.</p> <p>Greater integration of health and social care can help Cornwall plan for such demographic changes and maximise the efficient use of public resources. This will help enable local services to work better together, addressing issues of demand and financial pressure.</p> <p>Integrating such complex services will require re-shaping the whole system which can only be achieved through careful planning. This will require co-operation between: local partners; arm’s length bodies including NHS England; and Government. This Devolution Deal for Cornwall signals a commitment to take forward the goal of improving local services and building resilience for future generations.</p> <p>Once Cornwall partners have put into effect their plans for going further and faster towards integrated care any devolution of health powers would be subject to careful consideration by Government and NHS England, taking into account the needs of people in Cornwall and elsewhere.</p> <p>In order to take forward their ambitions for health and social care integration Cornwall Council, the Council of the Isles of Scilly, NHS Kernow and other local partners will work together and with Government, NHS England and other national partners to co-design a business plan to move progressively towards integration of health and social care across Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, bringing together available local health and social care resources to improve outcomes for the people of Cornwall and including a plan to reduce pressure on Accident and Emergency and avoidable hospital admissions. NHS England and local organisations will remain accountable for meeting the full range of their statutory duties.</p>
Greater Manchester	<p>Health and social care leaders from across Greater Manchester are now coming together as part of the transition to control of their £6bn health and social care budget.</p>

	<p>Together they are making progress on work to extend seven day access to primary care, radically upgrade prevention and public health, help those with mental ill health into work and make Greater Manchester’s Academic Health Science System a national leader.</p> <p>By the end of this year they will have a Strategic Transformation Plan in place to show how they will deliver a clinically and financially sustainable set of health and social care services for the people of Greater Manchester. The production of the Strategic Sustainability Plan will be aligned with the Spending Review process that applies to NHS, Public Health and Local Authority social care funding.</p>
North East	<p>The North East Combined Authority and the NHS will jointly establish a Commission for Health and Social Care Integration, chaired by a senior national figure, to establish the scope and basis for integration, deeper collaboration and devolution across the Combined Authority’s area, in order to improve outcomes and reduce health inequalities. It will report by Summer 2016. Terms of reference, agreed between the Combined Authority and NHS England, are attached.</p> <p>The Commission will look across the whole system, including acute care, primary care, community services, mental health services, social care and public health. It will strengthen the NHS in the North East Combined Authority area, and continue to uphold its values, standards and constitution. The commission will build on best practice, including pioneer status, and the experience of integration in Northumberland.</p>

Additional deals have been agreed in the West Midlands focussed on integrating mental health services, in Liverpool City region on further discussions on health and care devolution and in London on piloting prevention, integration and estates.

Although included in devolution deals in most areas proposals are at the early stages of development, and generally there is a commitment to explore further integration of health and social care. There is, in all areas, a need to undertake significant engagement on developing proposals into firm plans for change along the lines currently being undertaken in Oxfordshire.

Greater Manchester is the most advanced area in terms of devolution of health and social responsibilities. In their plans, health is fundamental to achieving the economic objectives of growth and prosperity to the region, with over 250,000 out of work, two thirds of whom have mental health problems, and the average healthy life expectations of parts of Greater Manchester being 57 years. While the context is different there are elements of the approach which are useful for Oxfordshire to understand including:

- The **strategic plan** builds on the ten locality plans with five priorities for system transformation based on prevention and population health, transforming community based care and support, standardising acute hospital care, standardising clinical support and back office services, enabling better care and investing in transformation.
- A **governance framework** that recognises it is still subject to the NHS Constitution or Mandate and the national regulatory framework. The Partnership Board brings together the whole system, including councils, CCGs, providers, Healthwatch and the community and voluntary sector as system-wide commitment and ownership is crucial. In addition the Provider Federation brings together all NHS providers to pool responsibilities and share services across multiple sites. The Joint Commissioning Board is co-chaired by council and CCG chief executives will commission pan- Greater Manchester specialist services but also develop common evidence-based frameworks for community and public health services if appropriate and there is a clear commitment to subsidiarity, with commissioning decisions taken at the most appropriate level.
- A **financial strategy** that recognises the most essential change needed is to reduce demand and established a £450 million Transformation Fund to invest in new models to drive prevention to change demand for services through integrated pathways for mental and physical health services, proactive strategies to reduce disease, investment in primary care and community health services, with £750 million in efficiencies to be realised in standardising acute hospital care to reduce variation and a shared back office. It is now recognised that it is difficult to shift the pattern of investment in services without wider reform of the payment system in the NHS because the tariff continues to reward activity

in the acute sector rather than prevention and that substantial capital investment was needed to shift models of provision and support.

Devolution has helped stimulate new thinking across Greater Manchester and establish governance arrangements that underpin and reinforce a place based approach that includes all partners, with increasing emphasis on the relationship with the public and the role of public services aiming to create an asset based model that enables people to avoid the need for support. Challenges, which are relevant to the Oxfordshire context include:

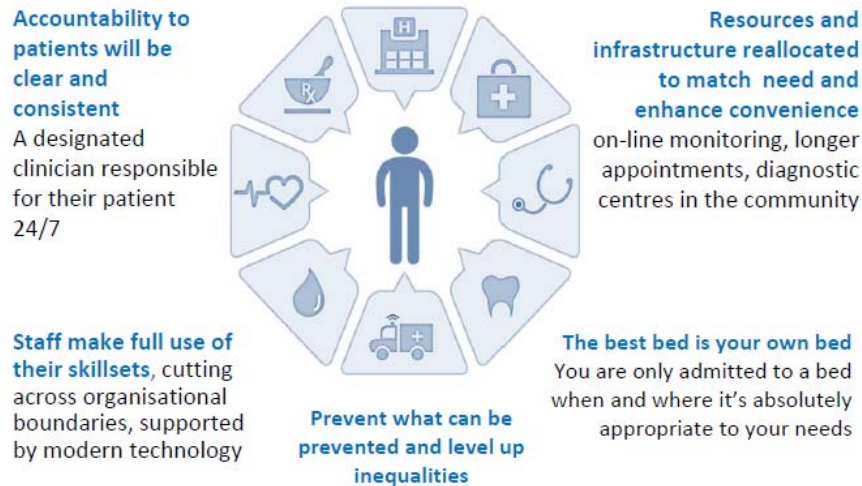
- **Operating at the right spatial level**, balancing the need of localities with the benefits of scale across a wider region. There is need for clarity on what is the most appropriate local level for decision making;
- **Making the case for prevention** to demonstrate the links between health and early intervention outcomes where the evidence base needs strengthening to convince sceptics, particularly where benefits lag the investment required. As a knowledge intensive region this is an area of potential engagement where Oxfordshire is well placed to develop robust evidence that would benefit other places.
- **Exciting the public and the workforce** about devolution to show that there are tangible benefits for those receiving and delivering care. This means being able to respond to concerns about the current system and plans and show how they will deliver more appropriate care and reflect the diverse needs of the region. It also means being able to create a system that attracts and retains the workforce required.
- **Shifting the provider landscape** to encourage and incentivise providers to work on a system wide basis which will result in winners and losers, and where a shift to community based prevention will reduce income for those focussed on traditional models of treatment.

9.3 Future ambition

Approach

The Oxfordshire vision for a future integrated health and social care system is based on aiming to move care being closer to the home, the key elements of which being to introduce a system which has the following characteristics and operates across six health settings:

- increases people's confidence to manage their own care
- General Practice acts as 'the gate keeper'
- delivers more integrated GP, community, hospital & social care
- manages the population's health to improve outcomes
- increases the capacity of community workforce
- organisations work together across Oxfordshire
- services focus on quality, experience and outcomes



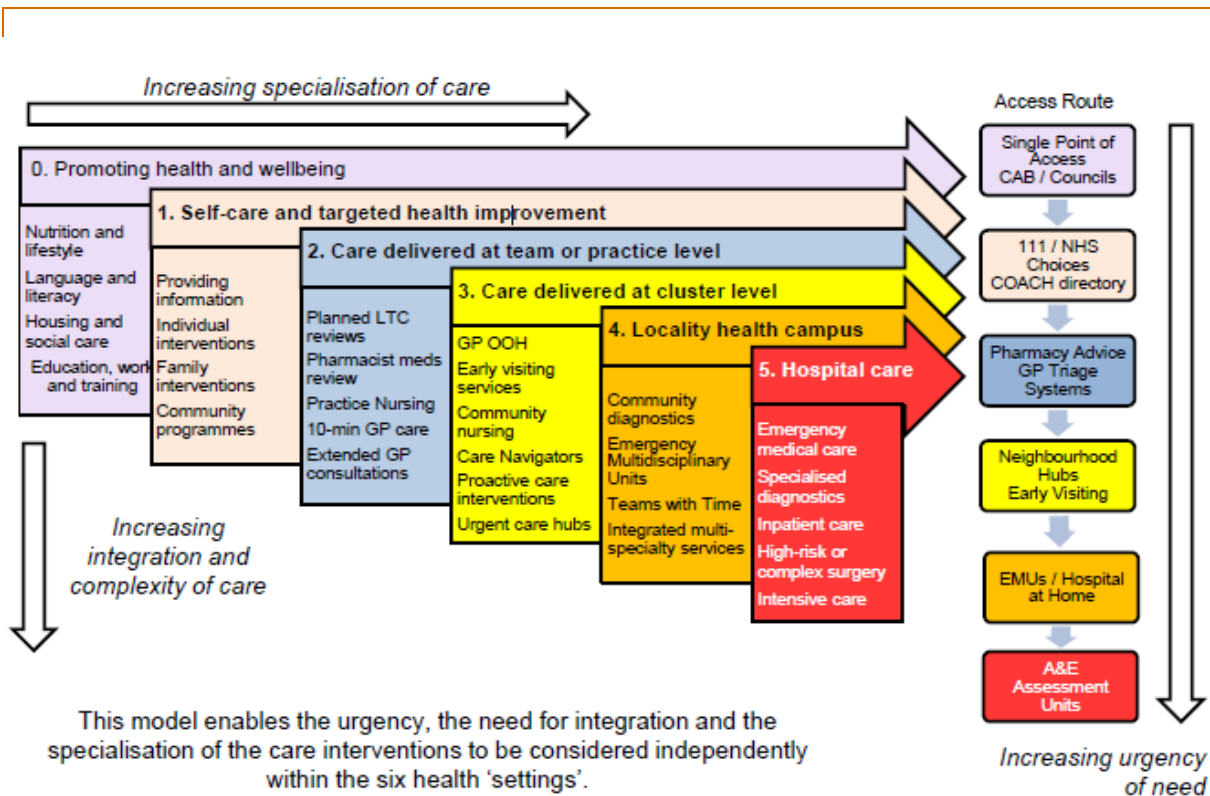
Strategic ambition

The Oxfordshire Transformation Board's current approach and ambition is to move care closer to the home where this is the best possible use of resources to meet the forecast rise in demand, and wherever possible, reduce that demand by improving the population health. This overall strategic ambition is agreed locally and forms the basis of the devolution proposals.

The purpose would be to ensure:

- Individuals take a role in managing their own care and choosing healthier lifestyles
- Integrated actions within different health settings
- Reducing the flow of those needing specialized care
- Reducing the urgency and cost of care
- Recognition of the diverse range of needs and tailoring solutions to localities and communities

The ambition is articulated around a model that envisages six health settings within which urgency, integration and specialisation of care can be considered independently:

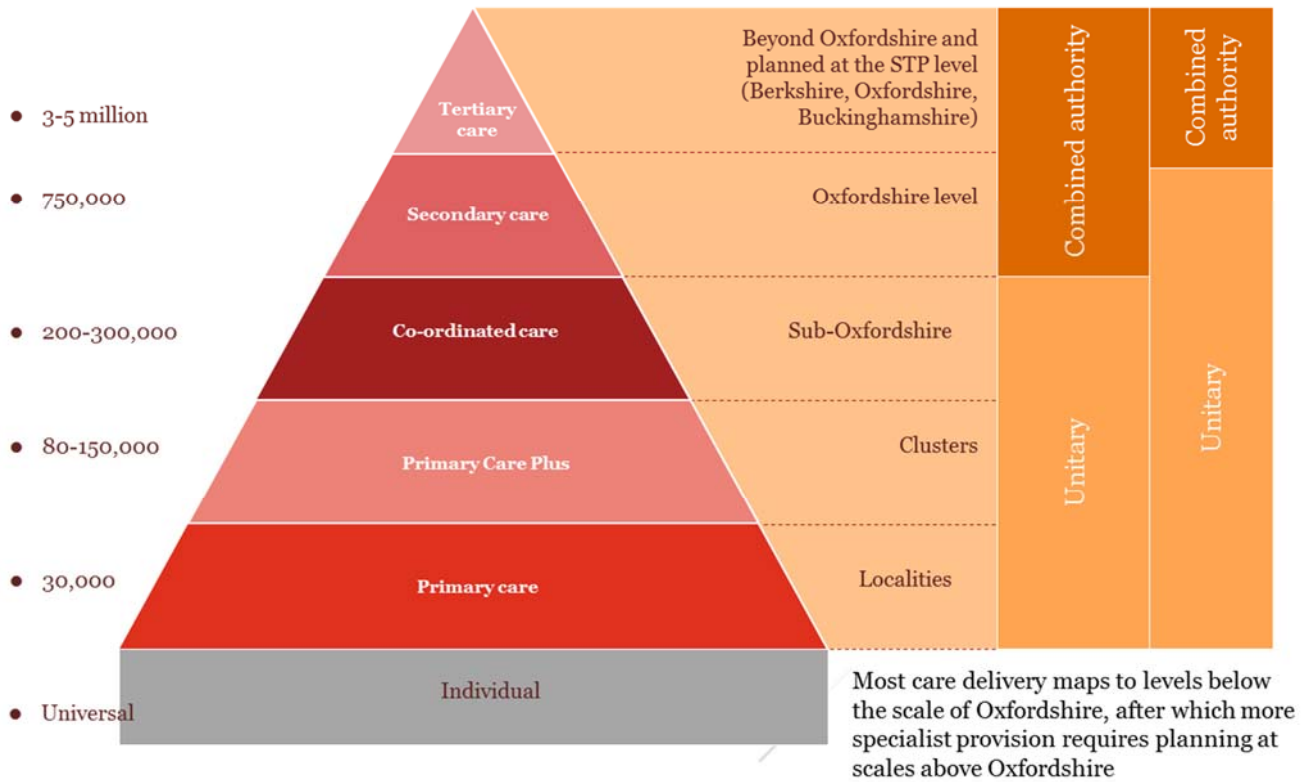


In this model health and care is organised around promoting health and wellbeing to the individual, targeted self-care and then organised the GP practices, grouped into clusters, which are grouped into six localities across the region (West, North, North East, City, South East and South West).

The majority of care in this model would be delivered at localities with populations well below the current population of the County. For elements such as tertiary care (specialised consultative care, usually on referral from primary or secondary medical care personnel, by specialists working in a centre that has personnel and facilities for special investigation and treatment) planning for health services operates above the scale of Oxfordshire.

The primary difference between options for unitary government in Oxfordshire is whether secondary care, which the CCG is mainly responsible for commissioning, would be co-terminus with a single authority or would be aligned within a combined authority geography. In either option the approach would commission services at a lower locality scale.

Care pyramid



In the developing model unitary local government would be well placed to support this model achieving maximum benefits and to work with local care organisations to co-ordinate care and related services.

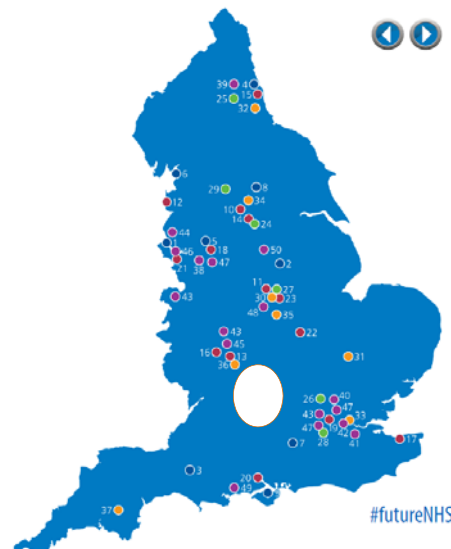
Local care organisations

The NHS Five Year Forward View signalled a commitment to dissolve traditional boundaries between primary care, community services and hospitals which are increasingly a barrier to the personalised and co-ordinated care that people need. It made long term conditions a central task of the NHS, where caring for these needs ‘requires a partnership with patients over the long term’. Oxfordshire has not been at the forefront of developing new care models with the Vanguards that are developing a blueprint for the future of the NHS and care services surrounding the region.

New care models - the vanguards

- Integrated primary and acute care systems - joining up GP, hospital, community and mental health services
 - Wirral Partners
 - Mid Nottinghamshire Better Together
 - South Somerset Symphony Programme
 - Northumberland Accountable Care Organisation
 - Salford Together
 - Better Care Together (Morecambe Bay Health Community)
 - North East Hampshire and Farnham
 - Harrogate and Rural District Clinical Commissioning Group
 - My Life a Full Life (Isle of Wight)
- Multiplicity community providers - moving specialist care out of hospitals into the community
 - Calderdale Health and Social Care Economy
 - Wellbeing Erewash
 - Fylde Coast Local Health Economy
 - Modality Birmingham and Sandwell
 - West Wakefield Health and Wellbeing Ltd
 - All Together Better Sunderland
 - Dudley Multiproject Community Provider
 - Escompass (Whitstable, Faversham and Canterbury)
 - Stockport Together
 - Tower Hamlets Integrated Provider Partnership
 - Better Local Care (Southern Hampshire)
 - West Cheshire Way
 - Lakeside Healthcare (Northamptonshire)
 - Principia Partners in Health (Southern Nottinghamshire)
- Enhanced health in care homes - offering older people better, joined up health, care and rehabilitation services
 - Connecting Care - Wakefield District
 - Galeshead Care Home Project
 - East and North Hertfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group
 - Nottingham City Clinical Commissioning Group
 - Sutton Homes of Care
 - Airedale & Partners
- Urgent and emergency care - new approaches to improve the coordination of services and reduce pressure on A&E departments
 - Greater Nottingham System Resilience Group
 - Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group
 - North East Urgent Care Network
 - Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge System Resilience Group
 - West Yorkshire Urgent and Emergency Care Network
 - Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland System Resilience Group
 - Solihull Together for Better Lives
 - South Devon and Torbay System Resilience Group
- Acute care collaborations - linking hospitals together to improve their clinical and financial viability
 - Salford and Wigan Foundation Chain
 - Northumbria Foundation Group
 - Royal Free London
 - Foundation Healthcare Group (Dartford and Gravesham)
 - Moorfields
 - National Orthopaedic Alliance
 - The Neure Network (The Walton Centre, Liverpool)
 - MERT (The Mental Health Alliance for Excellence, Resilience, Innovation and Training) (West Midlands)
 - Cheshire and Merseyside Women's and Children's Services
 - Accountable Clinical Network for Cancer (ACNC)
 - EMRAD - East Midlands Radiology Consortium
 - Developing One NHS in Dorset
 - Working Together Partnership (South Yorkshire, Mid Yorkshire, North Derbyshire)

#futureNHS



The first 29 Vanguard focussed on integrated primary and acute care systems to join up GP, hospital, community and mental health services, multispecialty community providers to move specialist care out of hospitals into the community and enhanced health in care homes to offer older people better, joined up health, care and rehabilitation services. Additional Vanguards have been established to look at urgent and emergency care and acute care collaborations to link hospitals together to improve their clinical and financial viability, reducing variation on care and efficiency. The learning from these Vanguards and other emerging practice is shaping the development of local care organisations which form the basis of the future for integrated care.

Oxfordshire is larger than almost all the first 29 Vanguards, which serve an average population of 264,000. The integration of primary and acute care systems Vanguards have an average population of 261,000, the Multispecialty Community Providers 209,000 and the enhanced health in care homes 400,000.

Torbay

Torbay was an early example of integrated teams of health and social care staff delivering care for older people in Torbay and Southern Devon. It was first established on a pilot basis in 2004 and served a locality of between 25,000 and 40,000 people and aligned with the general practices in the locality. Budgets were pooled and used flexibly by teams who are able to arrange and fund services to meet the specific needs of older people. A major priority was to increase spending on intermediate care services that enable older people to be supported at home and help avoid inappropriate hospital admissions. Initial results included a reduction in the daily average number of occupied beds from 750 in 1998/9 to 502 in 2009/10, emergency bed day use in the population aged 65 and over that is the lowest in the region, and negligible delayed transfers of care.

In October 2015 Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust was created, merging South Devon Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, which ran Torbay Hospital with Torbay and Southern Devon Health and Care NHS Trust, the Trust that provided community health and social care services.

The new organisational vision reflects what local people have told the Trust they want:

Our vision is a community where we are all supported and empowered to be as well and as independent as possible, able to manage our own health and wellbeing, in our own homes. When we need care we have choice about how our needs are met, only having to tell our story once

The changes reflect that fact that many people find the health and care system complicated and they can feel overwhelmed at the range of information available, not knowing where to go for support. As a result of becoming one single organisation the benefits emphasised are:

- one budget covering all services, money can now be spent where it is needed most.
- an ability to find new ways to meet the growing needs of the population without more money.
- working more effectively and efficiently to improve and secure safe, high quality local health and social care services.
- working with commissioners to engage and consult local people to inform and plan changes to services.

Care will be centred around communities and people, and focused on wellbeing, self-care and prevention of ill-health. Voluntary services will play a fundamental role in supporting people to maintain an active and fulfilling life, retaining their independence for as long as possible. More specialised services will be provided to people at home and in their local communities. People will only go to hospital when they need treatment or care that cannot be provided in their own community.



Manchester City

In development work across Greater Manchester, different models within the overall framework are emerging to reflect the priorities of each localities. In Manchester City locality the seven principles of change are:

1. People and place will have priority above organisational interests
2. Commissioners and providers will work together on reform and strategic change
3. Costs will be reduced by better co-ordinated proactive care which keeps people well enough not to need acute or long term care
4. Waste will be reduced, duplication avoided and activities stopped which will have limited or no value
5. Strong working relationships will be developed within the system with clear aims and a shared vision for the future
6. There will be partnership with the people of Manchester, the workforce, voluntary and community organisations
7. The partnership will work to safeguard children, young people and adults

The three key pillars which together will drive the radical transformation of health and care services are:

- **A single commissioning system** ensuring the efficient commissioning of health and care services on a city wide basis with a single line of accountability for the delivery of services. This approach will integrate spending across health and social care on high cost/high risk cohort, reducing duplication of service delivery and fragmentation of care;
- **One team delivering integrated and accessible out of hospital services** through community based health, primary and social care services within neighbourhoods. Through the combining of resources residents will get integrated services, resulting in improved outcomes (holistic needs addressed) at reduced cost;
- **A 'Single Manchester Hospital Service'** delivering cost efficiencies and strengthened clinical services, with consistent and complementary arrangements for the delivery of acute services achieving a fully aligned hospital model for the region.

In seeking to turn this strategy into deliverable plans the locality is now working on the design of a local care organisation with a programme to clarify all aspects of the strategy and organisational design. Key questions in the work relevant to Manchester, but which also need to be addressed in Oxfordshire, include:

Dimension	Key questions
Strategy and outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What work has already been done to agree the outcomes? • What are you unsure about at this stage?
Operating model design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What needs to happen to bring your ‘One Team’ system-wide and LCO models to life? • Out of the following, where have you made the most progress so far: care pathway design, workforce, processes, performance and technology? • What are the key enablers? • What are the key barriers you face to delivering your model of care?
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your existing governance structure? • What will the leadership and governance arrangements look like? • Are all stakeholders engaged in making this happen? • Are the targeted outcomes and KPIs shared and agreed with all impacted stakeholders?
Financial and commercial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you identified and quantified your financial benefits (and costs)? • Have you identified and quantified the non-financial benefits (and costs) for each intervention? • Are commissioning budgets to be pooled or aligned in the LCO?
Contracting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which ICO model (prime provider/alliance agreement/special purpose vehicle) best fits your priorities? • How will the LCO be regulated?
Capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have the capability and capacity required by a population health risk bearing organisation? • If you have “gaps”, do you have a plan to fill these? • Have you drafted job descriptions for leadership roles? • What is your understanding of, and appetite for, risk?

In addition to the emerging practice around local care organisations in the UK, there are examples of models and approaches internationally which have relevance to the Oxfordshire scenario. Three examples from different countries illustrate the range of approaches:

Alzira , Spain – Since 2003, the Alzira care model has used both capitation and outcomes based mechanisms for the delivery of integrated care covering the acute, community, mental health and primary care services. A single provider – UTE-Ribera – is responsible for all care for the population and receives a fixed capitated budget every year to provide universal access to approximately 245,000 people. They are measured against outcomes and able to retain profits of up to 7.5%, with additional savings returned to the commissioner.

The model aligns incentives across providers so that they are treated in the most appropriate setting and has seen a 30% drop in emergency admissions, 90% patient satisfaction, 75% increase in hospital productivity and 25% reduction in net cost per head.

Canterbury, New Zealand, transformed their health and social care by integrating their primary, community, hospital and social care services using an alliance-type model and adopting a 'One system, one budget' mantra. This helped the system flip from being in deficit to one making a surplus, with low rates of acute medical admissions compared to others, low lengths of stay and acute readmission and reduced waiting times. GPs now have access to more diagnostic tests and are treating a range of conditions that were previously only done in hospital. In addition fewer patients are entering care homes as more people are supported in the community, slowing the rise in demand.

ChenMed, United States, created a capitated system for elderly patients with complex chronic conditions with its individual clinicians. The capitated budgets for individuals are determined by Medicare based on a stepwise regression of diagnosed conditions to vary budgets according to anticipated needs and likely costs. ChenMed uses these aggregated individual budgets to invest in an intensive primary care service that includes monthly 30 minute appointments with the same GP, ambulatory care hubs with access to diagnostics and specialist support and MDT case conferences three times a week.

ChenMed also developed individual clinician performance incentives and risk share. In the first phase, ChenMed physicians were paid a fee for service but with performance management to track their outcomes. In the second phase, physicians were moved onto a salary plus a share of upside risk so they could share in any savings from improved care quality and lower resource use. In the third phase, physicians began to share full risk but could receive greater share of savings.

This approach has helped reduce hospitalisation rates by 18-30%, readmission by 17-43% and achieved a 92% net promoter score and 20% decrease in costs across the system.

All these examples, from the UK and internationally, illustrate there are potential benefits from greater integration between health and social care. To benefit from the current transformation funding and to shape the development of the care models that will increasingly govern the health and care system Oxfordshire needs to continue developing its model and thinking on health and social care.

For the unitary options, it is the desire of the districts to work with the CCG and wider healthcare partners to reduce overall costs while improving outcomes and support a move to care being closer to home through a focus on prevention with aligned incentives to achieve it.

9.4 Principles within a unitary model

Any change in current arrangements of local government is not intended to change the fundamental direction of travel with greater integration between health and social care enabling a move to care being closer to home. What this direction means is that the current arrangements need to fundamentally change, irrespective of what happens to local government.

As social care moves toward a more integrated model, there needs to remain a robust model for safeguarding and strategic planning of specialist services, but also the development of wider community services and responses that support reduced demand for care.

The ambition is that by 2021 residents of Oxfordshire will:

- Benefit from a transformed, integrated health and social care system, in which they receive health and care interventions which are joined up, of high quality, and are affordable;
- Be supported and encouraged to do what they can to remain healthy;
- Live in a region which encourages and support them to make the right choices;

- Ensure that when they need access to more specialist support they receive it in the right place at the right time appropriate to their needs and wishes.

Proposals for adult services within a unitary government model in Oxfordshire need to be developed in light of the ambition for integrated health and social care by 2020, and not seen as a transfer of existing responsibilities. The current model of delivery needs to change.

10 Key findings

10.1 Current local government arrangements

The current two-tier local government structure in Oxfordshire is under scrutiny and challenge for several key reasons:

1. **Rising demand and declining budgets means that traditional approaches are not sustainable.** Oxfordshire County Council's use of reserves to balance the budget for each of the last four years is not sustainable in the long run and it needs a fundamental transformation.
2. **A sustainable solution requires integration across the whole system and a wholesale commitment by all parties to truly integrated outcomes to start shifting activity up stream to reduce long run demand.** This is particularly the case in adult social care, and to a lesser extent children's services, where the level of demand, costs involved and importance of protecting the vulnerable demands a robust, ambitious and innovative response that recognises no single organisation can do it alone. Some stakeholders are not convinced the County recognises that it needs new skills and capabilities to effectively work in different ways without being in direct control.
3. **Long standing frustrations with planning, transport and housing delivery are now having a material impact on operational performance and will increasingly hold back the potential of the region.** The split of governance, decision making, strategic development and service provision across the two-tier system has not provided a whole-place approach to these issues. Therefore the current rate of economic growth will be increasingly constrained by the lack of capacity of the transport network, unmet demand for affordable housing and commercial space, and a lack of clear strategic planning vision. Stakeholders are already citing practical examples where they are struggling to fill posts due to the consequences of these issues. A unitary model could help achieve this.

10.1.1 Unitary Authority Options

Five unitary authority options have been explored in this study:

Option	Geography
1UA	A single Unitary authority covering all of the current Oxfordshire region
2UA	Two Unitaries based around the current City Council and a separate authority for the wider region
2UA+	As above but with an expanded boundary of the City Council
3UA	Three Unitaries based around the current city, combining the two districts in the north of the region and likewise in the south of the region

1) Oxford City, Vale of White Horse, South Oxfordshire, Cherwell and West Oxfordshire

1) Oxford City
2) Vale of White Horse, South Oxfordshire, Cherwell and West Oxfordshire

1) Oxford City (expanded boundary)
2) Vale of White Horse, South Oxfordshire, Cherwell and West Oxfordshire
An expanded boundary for the city has been developed which includes new strategic-scale urban extensions around the edge of Oxford that have a close functional link.

1) Oxford City
2) Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire
3) Cherwell and West Oxfordshire

4UA	As above but with districts in the north remaining separate.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Oxford City 2) Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire 3) West Oxfordshire 4) Cherwell
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10.2 Population size

- A single UA option for Oxfordshire would make it the third largest UA in England, third to Birmingham and Leeds. Oxfordshire's population could reach 883,637 by 2031 if the 100,000 housing need was met. Whilst there are other single tier authorities of this size, the others are either City UAs or County UAs that do not have a large city within them.
- The four UA option creates three of what would be the smallest UAs in population terms in England and would be unequal proportion to South Oxfordshire.
- The three UA option creates a more equal distribution of population between the Northern and the Southern UAs, with the city having a lower population in general, but a higher proportion of working age population. This option also recognises and reflects the distinct socio-economic conditions of the City.
- The two UA option creates the 9th largest single tier authority in England, but also one of the 18th smallest. This creates a potential imbalance that could be addressed by expanding the city boundary.

10.3 Financial analysis

- The 2015/16 General Fund Revenue Account outturn data ("RA data") for the five District Councils and Oxfordshire County Council has been used to disaggregate resources and expenditure using appropriately selected drivers. Further detail on the methodology is contained within Section 4, and the assumptions used in 4.1.3.
- Based on this methodology, the 4UA and 3UA options are in deficit with the exception of Southern Oxfordshire UA which is in a surplus of £20.1m (pre transformation). For the 4UA, 3UA, 2UA options, Oxford City has the largest pre-transformation deficit in both 2015/16 and 2020/21 (£10.7m and £16.8m respectively), though these amounts represent just 1% and 2% of total revenue expenditure across Oxfordshire. For the expanded 2UA option, Oxford City has lower deficits of £6.2m and £12.4m for 2015/15 and 2020/21 respectively. For the 1UA option, there is no surplus or deficit. This revenue neutral position is to be expected given that the 1UA option encompasses all five Districts and the County Council.
- After transformation savings and efficiency costs, (of between £113.3m and £56.4m over a 5 year period), all the UA options are in a surplus, with the exception of Oxford City.
- Based on the analysis we have undertaken and the assumptions we have used, an Oxford City UA would be in deficit post transformation, except with an expanded boundary. If the Oxford City UA is expanded, its deficit is replaced with a small surplus of £1.9m.
- This is due to a disparity between the funding and expenditure for children's services, and a lesser extent adult's services. All UAs are sensitive to this service, and in any of the UA models, there must be a commitment to shared commissioning and delivery mechanisms and pooled grant to ensure that funds are allocated on a needs basis as opposed to a geographical basis. By sharing the commissioning and delivery of these services (and funding these through pooled resources), the financial disparity is significantly reduced between the different UAs, providing Oxford City with a surplus of £5.5m in 2021, increasing Cherwell's surplus to £10.6m, whilst reducing Southern Oxfordshire and West Oxfordshire

surpluses to £17.3m and £3.1m respectively).

- On its existing boundary, Oxford City generates significantly more business rates than the other UA options, which in a future local government finance system with the 100% retention of business rates, will improve the Oxford City financial position.
- The ability to deliver the planned growth up to 2031 will also have a material impact on the financial position of all UA options– it has the potential, if managed properly, to have a positive impact on the overall financial capacity and resilience of the Oxford City unitary. The extent of this will depend on the level of investment required both to facilitate the growth and the net growth in funding (i.e. the net of the increase in income receipts against increase in costs to deliver services).
- Based purely on the financial analysis, a single Unitary Authority has the potential to generate the most financial benefits due to the economies of scale (an estimated net saving of £113.3m over a 5 year period).
- The current trajectory of the County Council finances (explained further in section 2.5.1) means that the modelled financial savings need to be viewed – and interpreted – through a lens of practicability at the local level.
- A 2UA option (based on the existing city boundary) has similar financial benefits as the Expanded Oxford City option. However, the mismatch and imbalance between the size, resources and service levels between the two Unitary Authorities does need to be considered.
- A 3UA option reduces the mismatch between the overall size of the Councils (157,997, 252,652 and 261,867) and based on our analysis, two of the authorities are financial stable. The Oxford City Unitary (for reasons outlined above) would be in deficit in revenue terms by £16.8m in 2020/21 (pre-transformation). This deficit would need to be remedied through a needs based spending settlement but it is not material in terms of the total spending across the local government system.
- The 4UA option provides the least financial benefit (£56.4m net savings over 5 years), whilst also having significant differences in the financial position of the various UAs (South Oxfordshire in a surplus of £20.1m in 2020/21 (pre-transformation) and the remaining three UAs in a deficit).
- The 3UA option provides net savings of £75.5m over 5 years, whilst the 2UA options provides £94.5m net savings and the 1UA option provides £113.3m net savings. The difference in transition savings between the 1UA and 4UA option is £56.9m (i.e. £113.3m less £56.4m). This means that the 1UA option achieves the most savings, although it must be borne in mind that these are theoretical savings, based on financial modelling, and in reality the level of savings will depend heavily on the scale and ambition of transformation.

10.4 Strong and accountable local leadership

- The 4 UA model provides the maximum level of democratic accountability and connectivity to local communities.
- The 3 UA model would provide a balance between addressing local needs in communities, increased accountability through three democratic structures within Oxfordshire, and it would reflect and recognise distinct urban and rural issues, and different socio-economic characteristics that any new local government settlement needs to address.
- The 2 UA option recognises the difference between urban and rural priorities and the different demographic and socio economic characteristics. It improves democratic accountability compared with one UA option. However the scale of the expanded area of Oxfordshire dilutes democratic accountability in rural geography, with a population of 452,246 and a geographical area of 2,245km².

- A single UA will be viewed as similar to the current County arrangement which risks a remoteness of services and gives rise to loss of accountability with potentially lower levels of political representation at decision making committees than other models. This would need to be addressed through the creation of sub-structures and committees which could result in reduction of benefits from economies of scale, albeit greater representation. Routes of accountability would need to be made clear in this option.

10.5 Delivering better services

- All councils across Oxfordshire need to further transform service delivery as part of the move to a self-financing model for local government. This is an opportunity to further redesign services around users and communities with the ability to reflect local priorities and plans for growth.
- A single UA will generate economies of scale but this needs to be balanced with the fact that it will become the third largest single tier authority in England that will need to provide District level services to a City and rural areas. This option carries a risk of a lack of responsiveness to the diversity and vast differences in local needs across the County geography. A bureaucracy of this scale may be less flexible and agile to the changing nature of need and demand, so mechanisms would need to be created to enhance responsiveness of the 1UA option. A combined authority could help with this.
- A 2 UA option enables a tailored approach to rural and urban geographies, but is imbalanced between City and 'donut' (population size, demography and economics).
- A 3 UA options provides better alignment to geographic and urban / rural settings and economy and tailoring services to rural and urban geographies. This option addresses the imbalances of City and 'donut' option and builds on existing relationship in the South of the County.
- Whilst providing the opportunity for the most extensive tailoring of services to local needs, a 4 UA option would provide limited opportunities to achieve economies of scale.

10.6 Combined Authority

- A Combined Authority for Oxfordshire would provide a collaborative vehicle for Oxfordshire wide decision making and accountability for delivery of the issues that are restraining economic growth - in particular strategic planning, housing, transport and infrastructure. The Combined Authority provides a mechanism for pooling funds, resources and raising income to maximise growth or address need/ service demand. At the same time, the CA model allows a degree of local UA flexibility and efficient delivery through UAs and partners, and provides a strong platform for ongoing dialogue with government to secure further investment and devolution. It would also provide a means to give business, health, police and other key partners a seat at the table and a voice in collective decision making, providing overall leadership and coordination of the public sector in a single decision making body.

10.7 Children's services

- Children's services in Oxfordshire are generally good, but faced with rising demand and declining budgets there are concerns that capability and capacity will become stretched and result in a retrenchment into statutory protective responsibilities. Protecting vulnerable children must remain the overriding priority, but alongside those that need intensive support is a need to focus on those on the edge of care to help prevent more children from requiring intensive support through early identification and action.
- The ambition is to progressively reduce the number of children needing intensive support through earlier identification and action, while improving the outcomes for any children that do come into care. The goal is to enable local government, health and police authorities work ever closely together to provide leadership on a shared ambition for children across the region.

- Helping prevent children needing external support and helping families help themselves is a shared responsibility, requiring a commitment across local government, the NHS, the police, the wider public sector, as well as the voluntary and community sectors and the engagement and commitment of children and young people, their families and their communities. It requires system wide reform which the combined authority would be committed to leading.
- Alongside the protective duties of local government, a unitary and combined authority model as part of a devolution deal would complement a fundamental review of the whole system so that it focusses on building on the strengths of the current system while also designing in early and preventative work with children and young people, their families and their communities.

10.8 Adults services

- Adult social care is a system under strain nationally and locally. There is universal recognition that better co-ordination of health and social care designed around the person is needed to both improve service outcomes and to reduce costs. Shifting care into the community, closer to home, making care more personalised and supporting people to live independently for longer is the overall aim.
- The challenge in Oxfordshire is making this shift happen. There is overall agreement on the need for integration of commissioning but the execution of those plans are still at a formative stage and linked to specific services. In addition there is a need for one team delivery of out of hospital services, which a unitary solution for local government would help create. Greater alignment and collaborative working could be designed in with synergies across community services such as housing, recreation and leisure that help to keep people out of hospital and enable them to live independently for longer.
- The overall state of health in Oxfordshire is good, and has improved, but it is recognised that to continue improving a more comprehensive approach to tackling health challenges is needed. Integration of health and social care was a key element of the devolution proposals which all parties in Oxfordshire agreed. That remains the case, but there is an increasing ambition to move forward at pace and truly integrate the resources, responsibilities and roles in a shared approach across health and local government. A joined up approach to service delivery and effective demand management is the aim of pooling budgets and jointly commissioning services through a Combined Authority with CCG membership and full participation.
- Integrating commissioning is one pillar but further work will be needed to align all stakeholders behind a clear set out outcomes and a clear set of interventions identified that will deliver change in both community services and in hospital health settings. That work needs the comprehensive approach and agreed principles for developing for the right solution in Oxfordshire, including the development of the appropriate Local Care Organisation.

10.9 Conclusion

Oxfordshire now has to make a choice.

If it maintains the status quo, Political and Chief Officer effort will increasingly be focused on the incessant challenge of managing and delivering core service provision across a diverse geography against the backdrop of budget reductions and rising demand. In doing so, Local Government will not be fulfilling its wider duty - the duty to ensure Oxfordshire retains and leverages its competitive advantage for the benefit of the people and places it serves and the Universities and Businesses that are located in and have chosen to invest in Oxford and Oxfordshire.

There is now an opportunity to look at a new Local Government settlement for Oxfordshire - one that is sustainable and equitable and aligns innovation in service delivery with a new structure that is powered through and empowered by a Unitary and Combined Authority solution that delivers; resilience, growth, and a devolution deal.

Our conclusion is that, based on the work undertaken and the analysis carried out, now is the time for a decision to be made on a new settlement for the structure and form of Government and Governance in

Oxfordshire. A new settlement that will create new structures for the administration and delivery of key public services across; Health and social care and Children's and Adults services and also have responsibility for both economic and housing growth.

There is now a need for politicians in Westminster and across Oxfordshire to; assess the evidence, evaluate the options and to engage with stakeholders. If this is done in the right way, we are hopeful that agreement will be reached on the design of a new structure of governance and accountability that will deliver better public services, drive economic growth and be a better fit for the future.

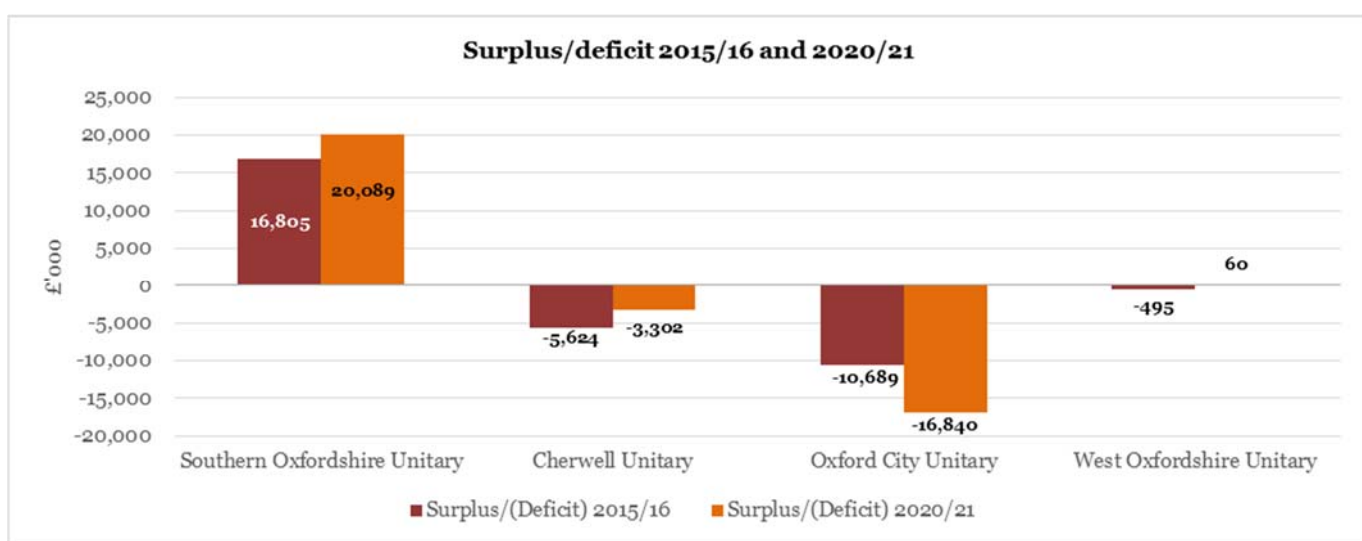
Appendix B – Baseline Analysis

Four Unitary Authorities

Current service consumption and revenues

Under our analysis, the Southern Oxfordshire Unitary is in surplus. It is in receipt of £16.8m of revenues over and above that which it needs to provide services; a position which improves by 20% to £20.1m by 2020/21.

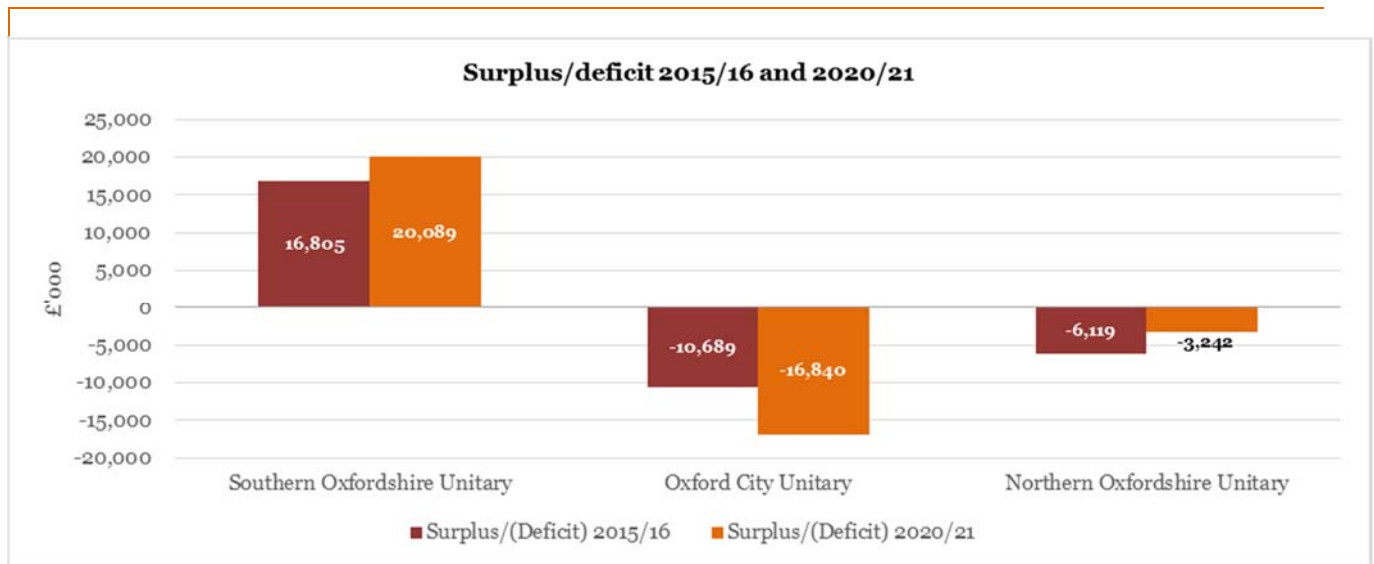
By contrast, Oxford City and Cherwell are in deficit, as under our analysis the cost of providing services is greater than the revenues they receive. Whilst Cherwell’s position improves during the period to 2020/21 at which point the shortfall has narrowed to £3.3m, Oxford City’s financial position actually worsens during the same period with its shortfall increasing by 57% from £10.7m to £16.8m at 2020/21.



Three Unitary Authorities

Current service consumption and revenues

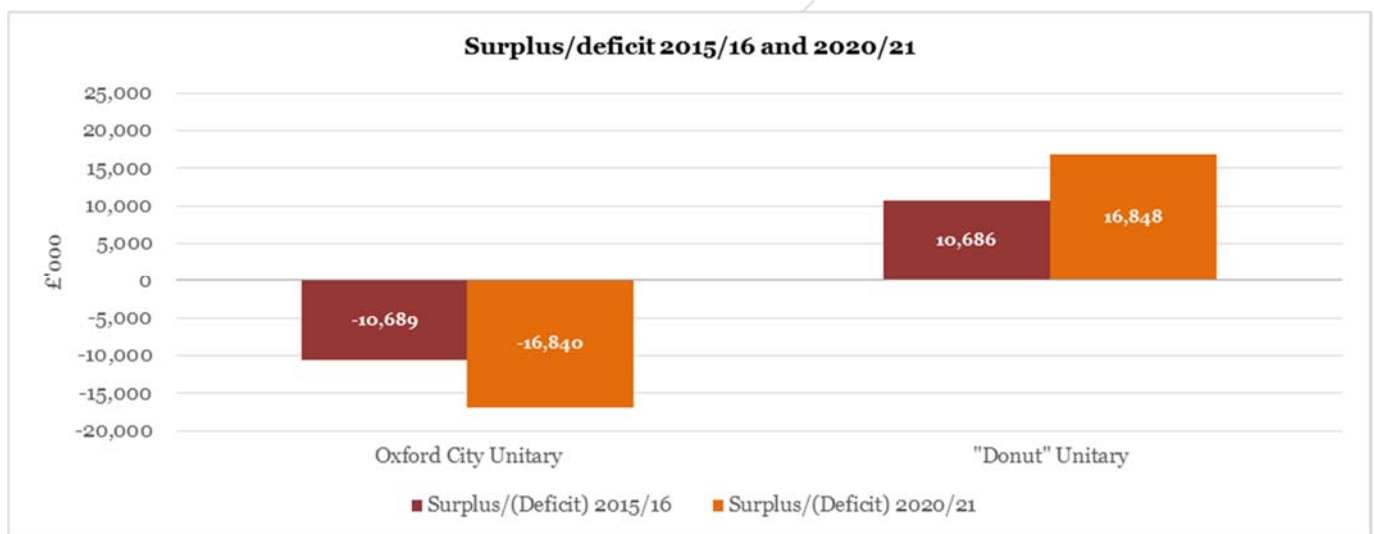
Southern Oxfordshire UA is the only authority that generates surpluses - of £16.8m in 2015/16 and £20.1m in 2020/21. Both Oxford City and Northern Oxfordshire UA run at a deficit during the period to 2020/21, and whilst the deficit reduces in the period for Northern Oxfordshire (from £6.1m to £3.2m) it increases with respect to Oxford City UA (from £10.7m to £16.8m).



Two Unitary Authorities

Current service consumption and revenues

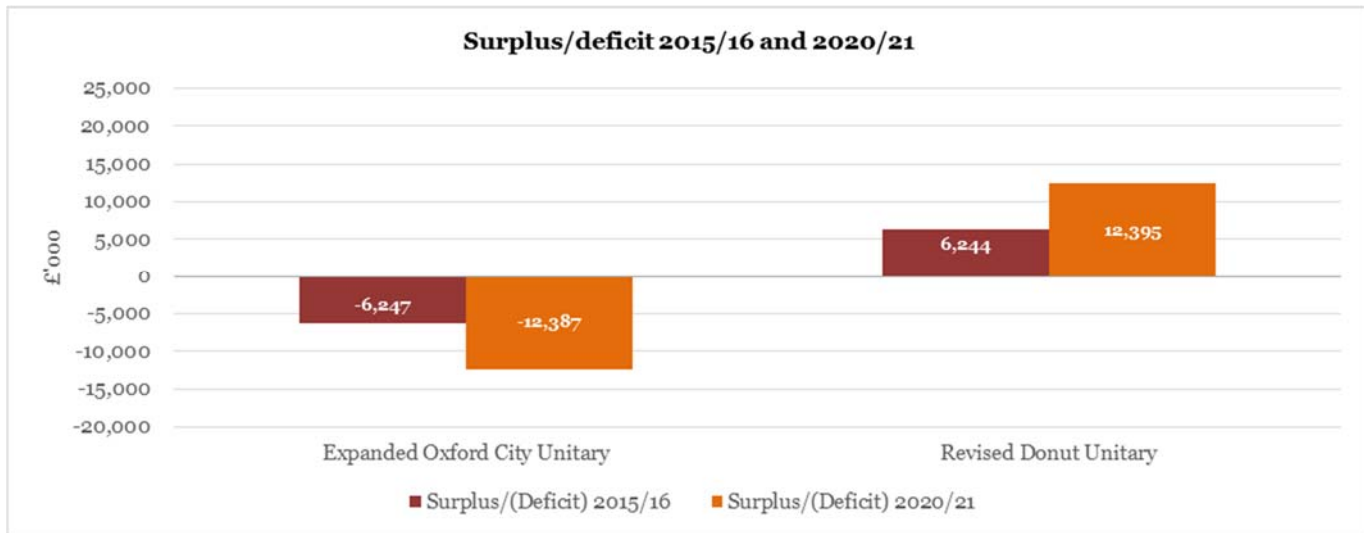
As outlined earlier, Oxford City unitary would return a deficit in 2015/16 through to 2020/21. Conversely, the Donut option would return a surplus in 2015/16 and its position would in fact markedly improve in the period to 2020/21 wherein it would achieve a financial surplus of £16.8m (an increase of 57%).



Two Unitary Authorities – Expanded Oxford City

Current service consumption and revenues

Based on current expenditure and income forecasts, Expanded Oxford City reduces the deficit significantly, albeit still with one (£6.3m and £12.4m in 2015/16 and 2020/21 respectively compared to £10.7m and then £16.8m under the Oxford City unitary option). As is to be expected therefore, the surplus generated by the Revised Boundary unitary is reduced when compared to the Donut option by corresponding amounts.



One Unitary Authority

Current service consumption and revenues

As detailed earlier, our analysis is driven by the 2015/16 RA data. Given then that the Oxfordshire unitary encompasses all five Districts and the County Council it is to be expected that it will be financially neutral, which as the graph below confirms.

It should be noted that Oxfordshire County Council ran deficits of £39.5m in 2015/16 (which for comparison purposes has been netted off in the analysis above). In future years, Oxfordshire County Council expects to have council tax rise by circa 6% per annum to avoid further depleting its reserves.



Drivers of the surplus/deficit

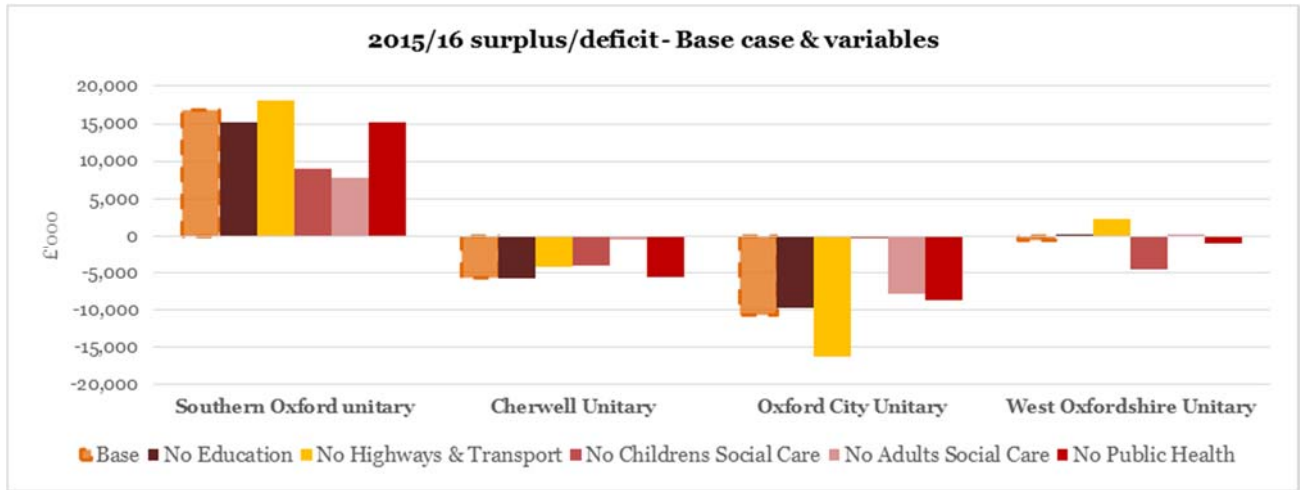
To better understand the drivers behind the surplus / deficit position of each unitary option, we have examined the impact, on the 2015/16 baseline, of removing certain services that are currently provided by the County Council, from the control of the new unitary authorities. We outline this for the 2015/16 position in the four Unitary Authority option given that the four unitary option is the closest to the current district set up.

As the graph below demonstrates, the removal of Childrens and Adult’s Social Care has a noticeable impact upon the financial position for each of the four unitaries.

In particular, the removal of Childrens Social Care reduces Oxford City Unitary’s deficit by 97%, from £10.7m to £0.3m whilst the removal of Adult’s Social Care reduces its deficit to £7.7m; a 28% reduction from the base case.

Conversely, Southern Oxfordshire’s surplus of £16.8m is reduced by 47% to £8.9m when Childrens Social Care is removed and by 53% to £7.9m when Adult’s Social Care is ‘switched off’, indicating that as a unitary, the funding it receives for these services exceeds the expenditure it incurs providing them.

In the case of the West Oxfordshire Unitary, the deficit increases (from £0.5m to £4.6m) when Childrens Social Care is removed whilst it switches to a surplus of £0.3m when Adults Social Care is.



Appendix C – Transition costs

Employee severance costs

Applying transformation savings achieved in existing unitary local authorities to the total Oxfordshire population could result a target saving of 569 to 1320 FTE. This range is indicative and will depend on the choices made about the transformation programme. For the purpose of analysis a mid-point of 945 FTE reduction has been assumed which, when combined with an average public sector redundancy cost of £25,000²⁵, creates a total cost of redundancy of £23.6m. When split over a three year period, this equates to an annual cost of £7.9m.

This is considered a conservative assumption because:

- Redundancy costs can be mitigated by workforce planning arising from natural churn in staff roles with costs from compulsory redundancy likely to fall at the end of a programme;
- Reductions in the use of temporary and agency staff will reduce the impact;
- Although 100% of reduced FTEs are assumed to be made redundant (and therefore receive 'exit compensation') the numbers do not include pension costs which would be expected to increase the average exit payment. This effect is assumed to net-out, but should be explored further in any full business case.

New management structures

In the current arrangement, from data we analysed from the client, Oxfordshire has 71 roles within the top three layers of each organisation, including the Chief Executives. These are the role which attract much attention because they have the greatest accountability and responsibility, as well as remuneration. These roles cost approximately £7.1m per annum based on publicly available information on senior officer salaries. The FTE numbers are based on the client data we received and therefore include any existing joint management arrangements, but do not take into account of any planned future joint management arrangements. As part of future planning joint management arrangements between UAs and other districts will be considered, building on the existing shared management arrangements.

In all future options it is assumed that these roles would be replaced with new structures designed with unitary government and devolved responsibilities in mind. For every Unitary, there will be an optimal pattern of hierarchical relationships. It won't be the same for every council and will reflect their organisational design and strategy, but it should support the capabilities relevant to that organisation.

Unitary authority leadership roles tend to be higher paid than District Councils and lower than County Councils. For the purpose of this analysis we have used median salaries based on data from the recent Local Government Chief Officers Remuneration report for the DCLG Select Committee²⁶. Actual costings would depend on the future role design and evaluation.

²⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-a-public-sector-exit-payment-cap/consultation-on-a-public-sector-exit-payment-cap>

²⁶ Local Government Chief Officers Remuneration, 2014.

www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmselect/cmcomloc/191/191.pdf.

Median costs have been updated in line with official UK national inflation figures since 2013.

Table 4: Assumed Chief Officer Remuneration

Layers	Unitary Median salary	County	District
1	£167,000	£194,000	£121,000
2	£119,000	£156,000	£94,000
3	£82,00	£114,000	£73,000

The data in Table 5 is designed to show the impact of different unitary options on future leadership roles and shows two scenarios (a) the quantum of roles that could be afforded within the current cost envelope on the basis of these role costs and (b) the number of roles requires if a consistent span of control (1:4) was applied across these layers.

Table 5

	Now	4 UA		3 UA		2 UA		1 UA	
	#	C	S	C	S	C	S	C	S
Layer 1	5	4		3		2		1	
<i>Span of control</i>		4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Layer 2	25	16	16	12	12	8	8	4	4
<i>Span of control</i>		3.4	4	5.3	4	7.75	4	19.75	4
Layer 3	41	55	64	64	48	62	32	79	16
Total roles	71	75	105	78	63	72	42	84	21
Total cost (£m)	7.16	7.08	7.82	7.09	5.86	7.10	3.91	7.12	1.95
Saving (£m)		0.08	-0.74	0.06	1.21	0.05	3.17	0.04	5.13

This suggests that there is a balance to be considered in seeking to assess the senior management savings potential across the authorities. Key points include:

- The maximum overall savings are little more than £5m per annum, based on a single unitary but which risks lacking the capacity and capability to deliver all services;
- A four unitary option could increase costs of median salaries and overall roles increase meaning it costs more than the current arrangement;
- A two unitary option is at the upper end of spans of control if costs are maintained and lower end of the capacity if costs are reduced.

While all options could be designed to work within a financial envelope and span of control this suggests that from a senior management lens a two or three unitary structure would offer the ability to reduce costs and retain leadership capacity and capability. Total savings could range from £1.2m (3UA) to £5.1m (1UA).

The other dimension is considering the layers of the future structures. A lower number of layers helps to improve information flows and create greater accountabilities at each level. However, the trade-off is that leaders would need to have a greater span of control. Where work is routine and heavily automated, such as in call centres, a single manager might have 15-20 people reporting to them. Increasing the number of layers frees up management time, which can be desirable where leaders are running complex projects and direct only a few people each, but if there are too many layers it is harder to get clear messages from the bottom to the top.

This dimension of the analysis will be affected in all options by choices around how much supervision is required, the role of technology and collaboration, but it can also be impacted by geography and the physical separation of managers and their teams. Table 6 below illustrates the potential span of control required if there is a maximum of five layers built into the future design.

This indicates that from a span of control lens, with a maximum of five layers, a 3 or 4 unitary model would be preferable as a single or 2 unitary model requires high spans of control.

Table 6

		4 UA		3 UA		2 UA		1 UA	
		6000	5000	6000	5000	6000	5000	6000	5000
		10	9	11	10	14	12	19	18
Layer 1	Roles	4		3		2		1	
	Target Span	4		4		4		4	
Layer 2	Roles	16		12		8		4	
	Target Span	4		4		4		4	
Layer 3	Roles	64		48		32		16	
Layer 4	Roles	640	576	528	480	448	384	304	288
Layer 5	Roles	6400	5184	5808	4800	6272	4608	5776	5184
Total	Maximum Roles	7124	5844	6399	5343	6762	5034	6101	5493

Election and democratic savings

There are three components to any election and democratic savings that might be expected in a move to a UA option in Oxfordshire:

- 1) Savings expected from a reduction in the number of council members
- 2) Savings expected from a reduction in election costs
- 3) Costs related to new UA democratic systems

Savings expected from a reduction in the number of council members

Through removing a tier of local government, it is assumed that this will also require fewer council members. Currently in Oxfordshire there are 63 County Council members, with an average annual member allowance of £14,061. There are also 219 District Council members with a lower average annual member allowance of £6,834²⁷. This equates to a current total of 282 council members across Oxfordshire.

²⁷ From publicly available council data

Member allowances above relate to a basic allowance, special responsibilities and travel and subsistence.

Council members in any UA option would be expected to have greater responsibilities than a District Council member, and be more in line with a County Council member. We have therefore assumed that any UA members would have member allowances more similar to a County Council member than a District member, i.e. a member allowance of around £14,000. The total amount of savings expected from having fewer members will depend on the total number of fewer members, as outlined below. The savings would be expected to be the same across all UA options, assuming the member reductions are the same.

Table 7: Assumptions regarding council members in new UA arrangements

Number of fewer members	Rationale	Savings
71	Assumed saving of 25% of current members	Approximate total saving of £1 million per annum

Savings expected from a reduction in election costs

Currently there is no single year in Oxfordshire when all local elections run at once, as demonstrated in Table 8: **Current election cycles in Oxfordshire** (www.gov.uk) below. Data from the Electoral Commission and from Democratic Audit estimates a cost per vote in the region varying from £2.82 to £5.99, depending on the election year and the constituency. Based on calculations explained further within Appendix C this provides an annual cost of elections of approximately £650k (based on a 5 year average).

Table 8: Current election cycles in Oxfordshire (www.gov.uk)

Council	Election cycle	Year
Oxfordshire County Council	Whole county	2017 then 2021
Oxford City Council	Shire district biennially	2018, 2020, 2022
West Oxfordshire District Council	Shire district by thirds	2018, 2019, 2020, 2022
Cherwell District Council	Shire district by thirds	2018, 2019, 2020, 2022
South Oxfordshire District Council	Shire district whole council	2019, 2023
Vale of White Horse District Council	Shire district whole council	2019, 2023

Moving to a UA governance structure should create the opportunity for fewer elections and therefore is likely to create cost savings. If we assume that by moving to a UA organisational structure, elections can be reduced by 50%, this would create cost savings of £1.6 million over a 5 year period. The saving would be the same across all UA options, assuming the council members would be the same across all options.

There may be additional election costs in year one, related to additional elections costs to determine the memberships of the new UAs, but this has not been modelled within this analysis.

Costs related to new UA democratic systems

As well as savings, some costs will also be created via the move to a new democratic UA system. These costs will relate to the additional allowances required by Leaders, Deputy Leaders, Cabinet Members, Regulatory Committee Chairs, Planning Committee Chairs and Scrutiny Committee Chairs.

Under the assumptions below, regarding additional allowances and numbers of Members needed per role, the total costs will be as follows:

- Total of £1.6m in 1UA option
- Total of £2.3m in 2UA option
- Total of £3.3m in 3UA option
- Total of £4.3m in 4UA option

Assumed additional allowance costs for the following functions. The source for the figures is Oxfordshire County Council annual 2015/16 member allowances. We have outlined our UA assumptions also in the table below.

Role	Allowance/Cost
Leader	£29,290
Deputy Leader	£20,200
Cabinet Member (assume 6 per UA)	£16,160
Regulatory Committee Chair (assume 5 per UA)	£6,060
Planning Committee Chair (assume 5)	£6,060
Scrutiny Committee Chair (assume 5 per UA)	£6,060

Office space disaggregation and apportionment

A revised organisational structure with a reduction in FTE would result in a surplus of office assets. This would allow unitary authorities to embark on an office rationalisation programme unlocking potential value. In the absence of detailed estates portfolios for each authority our analysis has focused on a reduction in core office assets only.

Assuming each district authority is currently using industry best practices of c. 100 sq. ft. per FTE and a ratio of 4 desks to 5 FTE a reduction of 945 FTE would result in 75,560 sq.ft. surplus office space.

Carter Jonas (a local commercial property agent) attaches an average rental value to office space in Oxfordshire of £18.75²⁸ per sq. ft. This translates to a total potential revenue source of £1.4m per annum irrespective of UA option. This has been modelled as a saving benefit in the transition cost analysis but it is important to highlight that this is not a guaranteed benefit as it will depend on commercial conditions.

Our analysis does not include potential capital receipts from disposal of assets, and does not recognise that some assets may attract higher values depending on their locality within Oxfordshire.

With a more complete dataset on all property in the County and District property portfolio, how efficiently each authority uses office space could be compared to industry standards and produce a more accurate amount of surplus office space. Surplus assets could then be assumed to be disposed of at local market rates to provide a capital receipt.

Other transition costs

In addition to the four types of costs outlined above there are other transition costs which we can provide a broad estimate of by referring to existing evidence from the unitary authority submissions in 2008/9 for Central Bedfordshire, Cornwall, Leicestershire, Suffolk and Wiltshire. The additional costs included are:

- Project/change management

²⁸ Carter Jonas, Commercial Edge, Oxfordshire, Spring 2015. £18.75 mid-point between £25.50 for primary asset space and £12.00 for secondary office space

- Business management programmes / systems change
- ICT integration
- Closedown of authorities
- Signs/logos/rebranding

Using existing evidence, a summary of which is contained within Transition cost evidence, the average total is £9.8m per UA, which gives a broad order of magnitude for these cost lines. This accounts for cost inflation since the majority of these studies were conducted. Without the cost inflation the total would be £8.09m.

In reality however, estimates for other transition costs in Oxfordshire will vary according to a number of factors, including, the number of UAs created, the number of District Councils contained in any option (reflecting the possible diversity in existing schemes, IT arrangements, ways of working etc.).

To note, supplier contract disaggregation costs have been assumed to be zero, as it seems wise to let contracts run their course rather than spend potentially significant resources on contract terminations, unless through negotiation there are additional benefits from realigning at a disaggregated level. This would need to be considered in detailed design and also reflect the District Council shared service arrangements out of county. Our analysis therefore has omitted any costs associated with running down legacy County Council contracts. A category management approach across the councils would look at opportunities to renegotiate and or recommitment these contracts but access is needed to County Council contracts data to do this coherently.

The following cost items have been excluded from the 'other transition cost' analysis but could usefully be considered in any future Business Case:

- Early retirement costs
- Travel costs (additional travel costs of travelling to new work locations due to changes to estate)
- Pension costs
- Relocation costs (costs related to the changes in estates))
- Recruitment costs
- Contingency
- Unwinding of contracts

Transition cost evidence

Local authority election costs – evidence

	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
Est cost (source: Democratic audit)			£34,200,000	£41,100,000	£74,600,000	£39,500,000	£32,600,000
Est cost per vote	£4.70	£4.70	£5.99	£5.65	£4.34	£2.82	£4.70
County (source: Electoral commission)	NA	NA	Yes	NA	NA	NA	Yes
Cherwell	48313	26603	30,531	20765	29687	43199	38312
Oxford	NA	40961	29,076	32670	NA	67596	37404
South Oxfordshire	66953	NA	31,042	NA	47541	NA	40076
Vale of White Horse	63253	NA	30,391	NA	45275	NA	33204
West Oxfordshire	19982	25,984	19318	26401	36862	33085	
Total	220132	87546	147024	72753	148904	147657	182081
Est cost Oxfordshire	£1,034,620	£411,466	£880,676	£411,054	£646,243	£416,393	£855,781
	2011-2015		2009-2013				
5 year average cost	£676,812 pa		£642,029 pa				

Other transition costs – evidence

Line item	Central Bedfordshire	Cornwall	Leicestershire	Suffolk	Wiltshire	Average estimate
ICT Integration	£8 million	£3.8 million	£2 million	£4 million	£2.5 million	£4 million
Project / change management	£2.5 million	£500 k	£500 k	-	£1.6 million	£1.3 million
Business Management Programme (systems)	-	-	£1 million	-	£1.5 million	£1.25 million
Closedown of authorities	£340 k	£1.3 million	-	-	£500 k	£710 k
Signs / logos / rebranding	£305 k	-	£200 k	-	£300 k	£270 k

Source:	Creating Central Bedfordshire Progress Report 17 Feb 2009	Our proposal for a single Council for Cornwall, Appendix 4, Finance & Value for Money, 2009	Leicestershire County Council, Strategic Financial Case for a Unitary Council, Feb 2014	Suffolk Unitary Submission, Page 16, 2008	One Council for Wiltshire, Costs and Savings update for the Implementation Executive 13 Feb 2008, Appendix A	Total = <u>£7.5 million</u> <u>Low estimate</u> = <u>£4 million</u> <u>High estimate</u> = <u>£13.6 million</u>
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Appendix D – Assumptions log

Wards in expanded Oxford City Unitary

Ward	Current District
Kidlington North	Cherwell
Kidlington South	Cherwell
Yarton Gosford and Water Eaton	Cherwell
Forest Hill and Halton	South Oxfordshire
Garsington	South Oxfordshire
Sandford	South Oxfordshire
Wheatley	South Oxfordshire
Appleton and Cumnor	Vale of White Horse
Kennington and South Hinksey	Vale of White Horse
North Hinksey and Wythym	Vale of White Horse
Radley	Vale of White Horse
Sunningwell and Wotton	Vale of White Horse
Eynsham and Cassington	West Oxfordshire

Disaggregators

Metric	Source	Units	Granularity
Population	ONS, 2014	Persons	Ward
Population 0-4	ONS, 2014	Persons	Ward
Population 0-18	ONS, 2014	Persons	Ward
Population 16-18	ONS, 2014	Persons	Ward
Population 18+	ONS, 2014	Persons	Ward
Population 18-64	ONS, 2014	Persons	Ward
Population 65+	ONS, 2014	Persons	Ward
Population 5-19	ONS, 2014	Persons	Ward
Population 0-5	ONS, 2014	Persons	Ward
Population of Primary school age (5 - 11)	ONS, 2014	Persons	Ward
Population of Secondary school age (11 - 18)	ONS, 2014	Persons	Ward
Population (4-5 and 10-11)	ONS, 2014	Persons	Ward
Population 10 - 17	ONS, 2014	Persons	Ward
Population 5-18	ONS, 2014	Persons	Ward
Population 5-7	ONS, 2014	Persons	Ward
Population 6+	ONS, 2014	Persons	Ward
Standard Area Measurement	ONS, 2014	km2	Ward
# Recorded Deaths	ONS, 2014	Persons	Ward
Population (2031)	Oxfordshire Insights 2015	Persons	Ward
# All new STI diagnoses	Public Health England, 2014	Persons	District
# Excess weight adults	Public Health England, 2012	Persons	District
# Alcohol-specific hospital admissions	Public Health England, 2013/14	Persons	District
# Smokers	Public Health England, 2014	Persons	District
# Housing Benefit Claimants	District Data	Persons	Ward
# Total business entities local units	ONS, 2015	Businesses	District
# Total households	District Data	Households	Ward
# Offences	LG Inform, Y/E 2015	Offences	District
# Households in receipt of housing benefits (000's)	DWP (via LG Inform) Nov 2015	Households	District

# HRA dwellings	Oxford City Council statement of accounts, 2015	Households	District
# Traveller caravans	DCLG, July 2015	Caravans	District
# of persons aged 18-64 claiming JSA or out of work Universal Credit	NOMIS vis Oxfordshire Insight, March 2016	Persons	District
Physical support - Adults (18-64)	Oxfordshire County Council, 2016	Persons	District
Physical support - Older people (65+)	Oxfordshire County Council, 2016	Persons	District
# new builds	Financial Statements	Houses	District
# PFI programmes	Financial Statements	Programmes	District
# homeless individuals	District Data	Persons	Ward
# council employees	Districts	Persons	District
# Pupils with SEN Support	DfE, Jan 2015	Persons	District
Total road length (km)	DfT, 2014	km	District
# of concessionary travel passes	DfT, 2014/15	Travel Passes	County
# pupils eligible for free school meals	DfE, 2015	Persons	County
# Obese Year 6 students	Public Health England, 2014/15	Persons	County
Net amount receivable from rate payers	NNDR3 14/15	Value	District
Learning disability support - Adults (18-64)	Oxfordshire County Council, 2016	Persons	District
Mental health support - Adults (18-64)	Oxfordshire County Council, 2016	Persons	District
Information and early intervention	Oxfordshire County Council, 2016	Persons	District
Assistive equipment and technology	Oxfordshire County Council, 2016	Persons	District
Learning disability support (65+)	Oxfordshire County Council, 2016	Persons	District
Mental health support - Adults (65+)	Oxfordshire County Council, 2016	Persons	District
Sensory support - older people (65+)	Oxfordshire County Council, 2016	Persons	District
Support with memory and cognition - older people (65+)	Oxfordshire County Council, 2016	Persons	District
Looked after Children	Oxfordshire County Council, 2016	Persons	District
Children in need of a plan	Oxfordshire County Council, 2016	Persons	District
Visits by Trading Standards	Oxfordshire County Council, 2016	Visits	District
Parking Spaces	District Data	Spaces	Ward
Food Premises	District Data	Premises	Ward
Number of Businesses	District Data	Businesses	Ward
Service Use	RA Data 15/16	Spend	Ward

Disaggregators selected

Income/Expenditure Line	Disaggregator Selected
110 Early years	Population 0-4
120 Primary schools	Population of Primary school age (5 - 11)
130 Secondary schools	Population of Secondary school age (11 - 18)
140 Special schools and alternative provision	# Pupils with SEN Support
145 Post-16 provision	Population 16-18
165 Other education and community budget	Population 18+
TOTAL EDUCATION SERVICES (total of lines 110 to 165)	
210 Transport planning, policy and strategy	Population
230 Structural maintenance	Total road length (km)
247 Environmental, safety and routine maintenance	Total road length (km)
248 Winter service	Total road length (km)
249 Street lighting (including energy costs)	Total road length (km)
252 Traffic management and road safety: traffic management - bus lane enforcement	Total road length (km)

258 Traffic management and road safety: other	Total road length (km)
260 Parking services	Parking Spaces
271 Public transport: statutory concessionary fares	# of concessionary travel passes
272 Public transport: discretionary concessionary fares	# of concessionary travel passes
275 Public transport: support to operators	Population
276 Public transport: co-ordination	Population
TOTAL HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SERVICES (total of lines 210 to 280)	
310 Children's social care: Sure start children's centres/flying start and early years	Population 0-18
313 Children's social care: Children looked after	Looked after Children
315 Children's social care: Other children and family services	Population 0-18
322 Children's social care: Family support services	Population 0-18
323 Children's social care: Youth justice	Population 0-18
325 Children's social care: Safeguarding children and young people's services	Children in need of a plan
326 Children's social care: Asylum seekers	Population 0-18
327 Children's social care: Services for young people	Population 0-18
TOTAL CHILDRENS SOCIAL CARE (total of lines 310 to 327)	
332 Physical support - adults (18–64)	Physical support - Adults (18-64)
333 Physical support - older people (65+)	Physical support - Older people (65+)
334 Sensory support - Fs (18–64)	Population 18-64
335 Sensory support - older people (65+)	Sensory support - older people (65+)
336 Support with memory and cognition - adults (18–64)	Population 18-64
337 Support with memory and cognition - older people (65+)	Support with memory and cognition - older people (65+)
340 Learning disability support - adults (18–64)	Learning disability support - Adults (18-64)
341 Learning disability support - older people (65+)	Learning disability support (65+)
344 Mental health support - adults (18–64)	Mental health support - Adults (18-64)
345 Mental health support - older people (65+)	Mental health support - Adults (65+)
348 Social support: Substance misuse support	Population 18+
349 Social support: Asylum seeker support	Population 18+
350 Social support: Support for carer	Population 18+
351 Social support: Social Isolation	Population 18+
353 Assistive equipment and technology	Assistive equipment and technology
354 Social care activities	Population 18+
355 Information and early intervention	Information and early intervention
356 Commissioning and service delivery	Population 18+
TOTAL ADULT SOCIAL CARE (total of lines 332 to 356)	
361 Sexual health services - STI testing and treatment (prescribed functions)	# All new STI diagnoses
362 Sexual health services - Contraception (prescribed functions)	Population 18-64
363 Sexual health services - Advice, prevention and promotion (non-prescribed functions)	Population 18-64
365 NHS health check programme (prescribed functions)	Population
366 Health protection - Local authority role in health protection (prescribed functions)	Population
368 National child measurement programme (prescribed functions)	Population (4-5 and 10-11)
370 Public health advice (prescribed functions)	Population
371 Obesity - adults	# Excess weight adults
372 Obesity - children	# Obese Year 6 students

373 Physical activity - adults	Population 18-64
374 Physical activity - children	Population 0-18
376 Substance misuse - Drug misuse - adults	Population 18+
377 Substance misuse - Alcohol misuse - adults	# Alcohol-specific hospital admissions
378 Substance misuse - (drugs and alcohol) - youth services	Population 0-18
380 Smoking and tobacco - Stop smoking services and interventions	# Smokers
381 Smoking and tobacco - Wider tobacco control	# Smokers
383 Children 5–19 public health programmes	Population 5-19
384 Misc public health services - Childrens 0-5 services (prescribed functions)	Population 0-5
385 Misc public health services - Childrens 0-5 services - Other (non-prescribed functions)	Population 0-5
386 Miscellaneous public health services - other	Population
TOTAL PUBLIC HEALTH (total of lines 361 to 385)	
409 Housing strategy, advice, advances, enabling, renewals and licensing	Population
440 Homelessness	# homeless individuals
456 Housing benefits: rent allowances and rent rebates - discretionary payments	# Housing Benefit Claimants
457 Housing benefits administration	# Housing Benefit Claimants
460 Other council property - travellers' sites and non-HRA council property	# Traveller caravans
475 Housing welfare: Supporting People	Population
478 Other welfare services	# of persons aged 18-64 claiming JSA or out of work Universal Credit
TOTAL HOUSING SERVICES (GFRA only) (total of lines 409 to 478)	
500 Archives	Population
501 Culture and heritage (excluding Archives)	Population
502 Recreation and sport	Population
503 Open spaces	Population
504 Tourism	Population
505 Library service	Population
TOTAL CULTURAL AND RELATED SERVICES (total of lines 500 to 505)	
510 Cemetery, cremation and mortuary services	# Recorded Deaths
519 Regulatory services: Trading standards	Visits by Trading Standards
520 Regulatory services: Water safety	Population
521 Regulatory services: Food safety	Population
522 Regulatory services: Environmental protection; noise and nuisance	Food premises
523 Regulatory services: Housing standards	# Total households
524 Regulatory services: Health and safety	Population
526 Regulatory services: Port health levies	Population
527 Regulatory services: Pest control	Population
528 Regulatory services: Public conveniences	Population
529 Regulatory services: Animal and public health; infectious disease	Population
530 Regulatory services: Licensing - Alcohol and entertainment licensing; taxi licensing	Food premises
531 Community safety (Crime reduction)	# Offences
532 Community safety (Safety services)	# Offences
533 Community safety (CCTV)	# Offences

541 Defences against flooding	Population
543 Land drainage and related work (excluding levy / Special levies)	Population
550 Agriculture and fisheries services	Population
570 Street cleansing (not chargeable to Highways)	Total road length (km)
581 Waste collection	# Total households
582 Waste disposal	# Total households
583 Trade waste	Number of businesses
584 Recycling	# Total households
585 Waste minimisation	# Total households
586 Climate change costs	Population
TOTAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND REGULATORY SERVICES (total of lines 510 to 586)	
591 Building control	Population
592 Development control	Population
593 Planning policy	Population
594 Environmental initiatives	Population
595 Economic development	Population
596 Community development	Population
597 Economic research	Population
598 Business Support	Population
TOTAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES (total of lines 591 to 598)	
602 TOTAL FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES	Population
604 Coroners' court services	# Recorded Deaths
Other court services	
610 Corporate and democratic core	Population
625 Local tax collection: council tax support administration	# Total households
628 Local tax collection: other	# Total households
650 Emergency planning	Population
675 Central services to the public: other	Population
681 Non-distributed costs - retirement benefits	Population
TOTAL CENTRAL SERVICES (total of lines 604 to 684)	
698 TOTAL OTHER SERVICES	Population
811 Housing benefits: rent allowances - mandatory payments	# Households in receipt of housing benefits (000's)
812 Housing benefits: non-HRA rent rebates - mandatory payments	# Households in receipt of housing benefits (000's)
813 Housing benefits: rent rebates to HRA tenants - mandatory payments	# Households in receipt of housing benefits (000's)
821 Parish Precepts	Population
831 External Trading Accounts net surplus(-)/ deficit(+)	Population
832 Internal Trading Accounts net surplus(-)/ deficit(+)	Population
842 Capital items accounted for in Internal Trading Accounts	Population
848 Adjustments to net current expenditure	Population
NET CURRENT EXPENDITURE (total of lines 799 to 848)	
859 Levy: Environment Agency flood defence	Population

865 Capital expenditure charged to the GF Revenue Account (CERA) (exclude Public Health)	Population
871 Provision for bad debts (+/-)	Population
873 Provision for repayment of principal	Population
881 Interest: external payments	Population
883 Interest: HRA item 8 payments and receipts	Population
SUB-TOTAL (total of lines 849 to 883)	
886 Interest and investment income (-): external receipts and dividends	Population
888 Private Finance Initiative (PFI) schemes - difference from service charge	Population
891 Specific and special grants outside AEF [SG line 799 as income]	Population
REVENUE EXPENDITURE (total of lines 885 to 896)	
903 Local Services Support Grant (LSSG)	Population
904 Specific and special grants inside AEF [SG line 699 as income]	Population
NET REVENUE EXPENDITURE (total of lines 900 to 904)	
906 Inter-authority transfers in respect of reorganisation	Population
911 Appropriations to(+)/ from(-) schools' reserves	Population
914 Appropriations to(+)/ from(-) public health financial reserves	Population
915 Appropriations to(+)/ from(-) other earmarked financial reserves	Population
916 Appropriations to(+)/ from(-) unallocated financial reserves	Population
951 Revenue Support Grant	Population
956 Police grant	Population
970 Retained income from Rate Retention Scheme	Net amount receivable from rate payers
980 Other items	Population
COUNCIL TAX REQUIREMENT (total of lines 905 to 980)	
Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)	Population 5-18
Pupil Premium Grant	# pupils eligible for free school meals
Education Services Grant	Population 5-18
Universal Infants Free School Meals	Population 5-7
GLA Transport Grant	
Public Health Grant [Excludes Children 0-5 funding allocation]	Population 6+
Public Health Grant - Children 0-5 funding allocation [October 2015]	Population 0-5
Adult Social Care Implementation 2015-16	Population 65+
Housing Benefit Subsidy Admin Grant	# Households in receipt of housing benefits (000's)
New Homes Bonus	# new builds
The Private Finance Initiative (PFI)	# PFI programmes
Other grants within AEF	Population
TOTAL REVENUE GRANTS WITHIN AEF (total of lines 102 to 698)	
Adult and Community Learning from Skills Funding Agency	Population 18+
Sixth Form Funding from the Education Funding Agency (EFA)	Population 16-18
Mandatory Rent Allowances: subsidy	# Households in receipt of housing benefits (000's)
Mandatory Rent Rebates outside HRA: subsidy	# Households in receipt of housing benefits (000's)

Rent Rebates Granted to HRA Tenants: subsidy	# Households in receipt of housing benefits (000's)
Other grants outside AEF	Population

Growth assumptions

Cherwell	2017 Growth	2018 Growth	2019 Growth	2020 Growth	2021 Growth
EXPENDITURE					
Highways and Transport Services	-1280%	1%	1%	4%	2%
Housing Services (GFRA)	6%	1%	1%	4%	2%
Cultural and Related	-9%	1%	0%	4%	2%
Environmental and Regulatory	13%	1%	0%	4%	1%
Planning and Development	35%	1%	0%	4%	2%
Central Services	95%	1%	0%	4%	2%
Other Services	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Housing Benefits	9%	1%	0%	4%	2%
Precepts & Levies	18%	1%	0%	4%	2%
Misc. Items.	-249%	20%	11%	7%	5%
Specific and special grants outside AEF (as income)	9%	1%	0%	4%	2%
Specific and special grants inside AEF (as income)	34%	1%	0%	4%	2%
FUNDING					
Revenue Support Grant	-32%	-40%	-42%	-82%	-100%
Other Government Grants	0%	5%	-27%	0%	-23%
Business Rate Retention Scheme	58%	6%	10%	10%	10%
Reserves	-100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Council Tax	-38%	0%	2%	2%	2%
Other Items	-173%	47%	0%	0%	0%

Oxford	2017 Growth	2018 Growth	2019 Growth	2020 Growth	2021 Growth
EXPENDITURE					
Highways and Transport Services	12%	5%	-1%	2%	
Housing Services (GFRA)	-3%	5%	-1%	2%	
Cultural and Related	-2%	5%	-1%	2%	
Environmental and Regulatory	-4%	5%	-1%	2%	
Planning and Development	4%	5%	-1%	2%	
Central Services	0%	5%	-1%	2%	
Other Services	7%	5%	-1%	2%	
Housing Benefits	-4%	5%	-1%	2%	
Precepts & Levies	0%	5%	-1%	2%	
Misc. Items.	-54%	5%	-1%	2%	
Specific and special grants outside AEF (as income)	-4%	5%	-1%	2%	
Specific and special grants inside AEF (as income)	21%	5%	-1%	2%	
FUNDING					
Revenue Support Grant	-37%	-48%	-57%	-100%	
Other Government Grants	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Business Rate Retention Scheme	-4%	7%	5%	10%	
Reserves	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Council Tax	4%	2%	3%	3%	
Other Items	-706%	-91%	0%	0%	

Note - no projections were provided for 2020/21. Nil growth assumed in year 2020/21.

South Oxfordshire	2017 Growth	2018 Growth	2019 Growth	2020 Growth	2021 Growth
EXPENDITURE					
Highways and Transport Services	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Housing Services (GFRA)	10%	-20%	-16%	0%	0%
Cultural and Related	0%	-3%	-4%	0%	0%
Environmental and Regulatory	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%
Planning and Development	6%	-4%	-14%	-2%	0%
Central Services	-8%	0%	-1%	1%	-1%
Other Services	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Housing Benefits	-103%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Precepts & Levies	-100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Misc. Items.	3%	-11%	-7%	-16%	-35%
Specific and special grants outside AEF (as income)	-100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Specific and special grants inside AEF (as income)	-100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
FUNDING					
Revenue Support Grant	-38%	-52%	-66%	-100%	0%
Other Government Grants	0%	-18%	-9%	-19%	-10%
Business Rate Retention Scheme	2%	2%	3%	3%	2%
Reserves	-11%	-85%	31%	-537%	101%
Council Tax	-40%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Other Items	-64%	3%	11%	-169%	8%

Vale of White Horse	2017 Growth	2018 Growth	2019 Growth	2020 Growth	2021 Growth
EXPENDITURE					
Highways and Transport Services	-26%	-22%	0%	0%	0%
Housing Services (GFRA)	-6%	-4%	0%	0%	0%
Cultural and Related	26%	-6%	-8%	-84%	0%
Environmental and Regulatory	0%	-2%	1%	1%	0%
Planning and Development	6%	-18%	-12%	-7%	0%
Central Services	-7%	-3%	-1%	1%	-1%
Other Services	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Housing Benefits	-103%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Precepts & Levies	-100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Misc. Items.	-25%	0%	6%	-13%	-29%
Specific and special grants outside AEF (as income)	-100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Specific and special grants inside AEF (as income)	-100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
FUNDING					
Revenue Support Grant	-38%	-53%	-68%	-100%	0%
Other Government Grants	0%	-16%	3%	-3%	-16%
Business Rate Retention Scheme	-493%	2%	3%	3%	2%
Reserves	-198%	1%	40%	12%	-25%
Council Tax	-34%	6%	6%	5%	3%
Other Items	-82%	0%	80%	-290%	5%

West Oxfordshire	2017 Growth	2018 Growth	2019 Growth	2020 Growth	2021 Growth
EXPENDITURE					
Highways and Transport Services	14%	0%	0%	2%	2%
Housing Services (GFRA)	-28%	0%	-7%	2%	2%
Cultural and Related	-3%	0%	-3%	2%	2%
Environmental and Regulatory	8%	2%	2%	1%	2%
Planning and Development	-7%	0%	-27%	2%	2%
Central Services	3%	-2%	-8%	-1%	2%
Other Services	0%	0%	0%	2%	2%
Housing Benefits	-98%	0%	0%	2%	2%
Precepts & Levies	-100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Misc. Items.	-12%	2%	1%	2%	2%
Specific and special grants outside AEF (as income)	-100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Specific and special grants inside AEF (as income)	-100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
FUNDING					
Revenue Support Grant	-33%	-40%	-41%	-79%	-100%
Other Government Grants	100%	-22%	-1%	2%	-6%
Business Rate Retention Scheme	-28%	1%	1%	1%	-24%
Reserves	-119%	286%	-114%	119%	-528%
Council Tax	-44%	7%	7%	6%	3%
Other Items	-175%	61%	9%	11%	9%

Oxfordshire County Council	2017 Growth	2018 Growth	2019 Growth	2020 Growth	2021 Growth
EXPENDITURE					
Education Services	-12%	-1%	-1%	0%	
Highways and Transport Services	-16%	-18%	-1%	-3%	
Childrens Social Care	-4%	-6%	0%	0%	
Adult Social Care	2%	2%	2%	2%	
Public Health	-12%	0%	0%	0%	
Housing Services (GFRA)	22%	-10%	-10%	-12%	
Cultural and Related	-16%	-2%	-1%	0%	
Environmental and Regulatory	-2%	2%	2%	2%	
Planning and Development	-49%	-6%	12%	-2%	
Fire and Rescue Services	-5%	-2%	0%	0%	
Central Services	-21%	0%	0%	0%	
Other Services	0%	0%	-41%	-120%	
Housing Benefits	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Precepts & Levies	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Misc. Items	-6%	51%	2%	0%	
Specific and special grants outside AEF (as income)	-60%	0%	0%	0%	
Specific and special grants inside AEF (as income)	-4%	0%	0%	0%	
FUNDING					
Revenue Support Grant	-37%	-53%	-69%	-100%	
Other Government Grants	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Business Rate Retention Scheme	-1%	3%	3%	-6%	
Reserves	-89%	-100%	0%	0%	
Council Tax	6%	7%	6%	6%	
Other Items	-16%	-100%	0%	0%	

Note - no projections were provided for 2020/21. Nil growth assumed in year 2020/21.

Council Tax assumptions - rate

	Cherwell	Oxford	South Oxfordshire	Vale of White Horse	West Oxfordshire
2015/16					
District Band D Equivalent 15/16	123.50	278.97	111.24	116.69	81.63
Oxford CC Band D Equivalent 15/16	1,232.46	1,232.46	1,232.46	1,232.46	1,232.46
Town/Parish Council 15/16	84.64	4.03	77.23	63.63	74.12
TOTAL AVERAGE BAND 15/16	1,440.60	1,515.46	1,420.93	1,412.78	1,388.21
2016/17					
District Band D Equivalent 16/17	123.50	288.46	111.24	116.69	86.63
Oxford CC Band D Equivalent 16/17	1,281.64	1,281.64	1,281.64	1,281.64	1,281.64
Town/Parish Council 16/17	84.64	4.03	77.23	63.63	74.12
TOTAL AVERAGE BAND 16/17	1,489.78	1,574.13	1,470.11	1,461.96	1,442.39
2017/18					
District Band D Equivalent 17/18	123.50	293.43	111.24	121.69	91.63
Oxford CC Band D Equivalent 17/18	1,358.95	1,358.95	1,281.64	1,358.95	1,358.95
Town/Parish Council 17/18	84.64	4.03	77.23	63.63	74.12
TOTAL AVERAGE BAND 17/18	1,567.09	1,656.41	1,470.11	1,544.27	1,524.70
2018/19					
District Band D Equivalent 18/19	123.50	298.46	111.24	126.69	96.63
Oxford CC Band D Equivalent 18/19	1,414.85	1,414.85	1,414.85	1,414.85	1,414.85
Town/Parish Council 18/19	84.64	4.03	77.23	63.63	74.12
TOTAL AVERAGE BAND 18/19	1,622.99	1,717.34	1,603.32	1,605.17	1,585.60
2019/2020					
District Band D Equivalent 19/20	123.50	303.57	111.24	131.69	101.63
Oxford CC Band D Equivalent 19/20	1,474.18	1,474.18	1,474.18	1,474.18	1,474.18
Town/Parish Council 19/20	84.64	4.03	77.23	63.63	74.12
TOTAL AVERAGE BAND 19/20	1,682.32	1,781.78	1,662.65	1,669.50	1,649.93
2020/21					
District Band D Equivalent 19/20	123.50	308.78	111.24	134.31	103.66
Oxford CC Band D Equivalent 20/21	1,454.80	1,454.80	1,454.80	1,454.80	1,454.80
Town/Parish Council 20/21	84.64	4.03	77.23	63.63	74.12
TOTAL AVERAGE BAND 20/21	1,662.94	1,767.61	1,643.27	1,652.74	1,632.58

Council Tax assumptions – Tax base

	Cherwell	Oxford	South Oxfordshire	Vale of White Horse	West Oxfordshire
2015/16					
Council Tax Base	48,253	42,659	54,234	47,563	41,176
2016/17					
Council Tax Base	50,356	43,665	54,965	48,177	41,512
2017/18					
Council Tax Base	50,494	43,770	55,553	49,094	41,927
2018/19					
Council Tax Base	51,506	44,208	56,141	50,041	42,415
2019/20					
Council Tax Base	52,534	44,650	56,697	50,793	42,982
2020/21					
Council Tax Base	53,587	45,096	57,253	51,465	43,519

Transition cost assumptions

Type of transition cost	Assumption	Source
Employee severance costs	Average public sector redundancy pay is £25k	https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-a-public-sector-exit-payment-cap/consultation-on-a-public-sector-exit-payment-cap
	Reduced FTEs in new organisational structure is 945	PwC evidence-based assumption
	100% of reduced FTEs receive a redundancy payout	PwC assumption which potentially overestimates true cost (as not accounting for natural attrition)
	Excludes pension costs	This will mean that severance costs will be underestimated, which counterbalances the above over-estimate
Member costs	Additional member allowances moving to a new democratic system, as outlined	County Council annual 2015/16 allowances
	Role	Allowance/Cost
	Leader	£29,290
	Deputy Leader	£20,200
	Cabinet Member (assume 6 per UA)	£16,160
	Regulatory Committee Chair (assume 5 per UA)	£6,060
	Planning Committee Chair (assume 5)	£6,060
	Scrutiny Committee Chair (assume 5 per UA)	£6,060
Other transition costs	Includes: Project/change management, Business management/systems change, ICT integration, Closedown of authorities, Signs/logos/branding	Evidenced from existing UA business cases, and amalgamated.
Senior management structures	Current cost of 71 senior management roles within tegion is £7.2m	FTE data provided by client, and publically available information on salaries (www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmselect/cmcomloc/191/191.pdf)
	Assumes a span of control of 4	PwC evidence-based assumption
Member savings	282 Members across Oxfordshire	Publically available information
	Assumed 25% reduction in Members over a 4 year period in new organisational structure	Client's suggested assumption
Election savings	Assumed 50% election costs saved over 4 years	PwC evidence-based assumption
Office asset disaggregation	FTE to desk space ratio of 5:4	Industry best practice
	Best practice square footage of 100 square foot	Industry best practice
Transformation savings	Transformation savings estimated as average annual saving of £24m p.a. (annualised over 5 year period, gearing up to maximum annual transformation benefit of £37m)	PwC evidence-based assumption
	Potential scale of transformation benefits has a proportionate relationship to expenditure	PwC evidence-based assumption
	As number of UAs increase, scale of potential saving reduces slightly, between 2% and 6%	PwC evidence-based assumption

Appendix E – Stakeholder engagement

Below is a list of the stakeholders that PwC have engaged with during the course of this study to seek views on current local government organisation, UA options, opportunities and risks. Their input has influenced the options analysis aspect to this work.

- Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)
- District Council leaders and Chief Executives
- Oxfordshire County Council
- Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OXLEP)
- Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group
- Thames Valley Police
- University of Oxford
- Oxford Brookes University
- Oxford Health NHS Trust
- Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust
- Oxford Spires Academy

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Oxfordshire Unitary Government Summary of PwC study and District Proposal

1. Overview

This paper provides a summary of the key findings of an independent study commissioned by the Oxfordshire District Councils and carried out by PwC to look into the case and options for reorganising the existing two tiers of local government into a single tier unitary model.

Drawing on the analysis and evidence of that report this paper sets out a proposition for district based unitary authorities and a combined authority as the optimum solution for the future structure of local government.

2. Background

The government is currently in the process of negotiating devolution deals as a means of providing greater powers and funding locally to stimulate economic growth and to reform the way that public services are designed and delivered locally. As part of this, Government are requiring new collaborative governance arrangements in the form of combined authorities to be accompanied by either a directly elected Mayor and/or a move to unitary councils. The Cities and Devolution Act has provided the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government with new simplified powers to create Unitary Authorities which have local support.

In support of a devolution deal for Oxfordshire, the five district councils in Oxfordshire are exploring proposals for a new model for local government in the County.

The District Councils' ambition is to create a viable and sustainable structure for local government in Oxfordshire that will:

- Serve the interests of residents, businesses and communities and reflect local challenges and priorities in the most effective and efficient way
- Streamline local government with one council responsible for services in each area
- Meet the government's objectives for revised governance structures required for a devolution deal which would secure significant investment in infrastructure, housing and skills
- Deliver significant efficiency savings needed to deal with reducing budgets and increasing demand for services
- Deliver better and more responsive public services and promote public sector service transformation
- Enable economic and housing growth so that all areas can meet their potential while reflecting the different interests of market towns and rural communities.
- Help to deal with the demographic pressures on adult social care and improve outcomes through integration with health services.
- Ensure a system for children's services that is better at protecting and safeguarding children.

Against this backdrop, the five District Councils in Oxfordshire commissioned an independent study to assess whether the options for a unitary and combined authority local government model in Oxfordshire would in principle be both feasible and better placed to deliver this ambition.

Option		Geography
1UA	A single Unitary authority covering all of the current Oxfordshire region	1) Oxford City, Vale of White Horse, South Oxfordshire, Cherwell and West Oxfordshire
2UA	Two Unitaries based around the current City Council and a separate authority for the wider region	1) Oxford City 2) Vale of White Horse, South Oxfordshire, Cherwell and West Oxfordshire
2UA+	As above but with an expanded boundary of the City Council	1) Oxford City (expanded boundary) 2) Vale of White Horse, South Oxfordshire, Cherwell and West Oxfordshire An expanded boundary for the city has been developed which includes new strategic-scale urban extensions around the edge of Oxford that have a close functional link. ✓
3UA	Three Unitaries based around the current city, combining the two districts in the north of the region and likewise in the south of the region	1) Oxford City 2) Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire 3) Cherwell and West Oxfordshire
4UA	As above but with districts in the north remaining separate.	1) Oxford City 2) Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire 3) West Oxfordshire 4) Cherwell

In looking at the unitary authority options, the study considered:

- The viability and sustainability of the options – estimating the resources and expenditure of the unitary authority (UA) options and taking account of the transition costs and savings from establishing UAs;
- Service transformation and redesign – identifying the potential scale of savings that could be achieved from integration and designing new operating models;
- Operation of a combined authority (CA) – identifying which functions it would be beneficial for a combined authority to be responsible for.
- Models for the integration and joint commissioning of Health and Social Care services.
- Future direction for robust governance and operation of Children and Families social services across the area.

The study involved extensive engagement with key stakeholders from business, health, academia, public sector and local government.

3. Summary of PwC Analysis and Key Findings

PwC found there is a case for a new settlement on the structure of local government in Oxfordshire for several key reasons:

- ***Rising demand and declining budgets means that traditional approaches are not sustainable.*** Oxfordshire County Council's use of reserves to balance the budget for each of the last four years is not sustainable in the long run and it needs a fundamental transformation.
- ***A sustainable solution requires integration across the whole system and a wholesale commitment by all parties to truly integrated outcomes to start shifting activity up stream to reduce long run demand.*** This is particularly the case in adult social care, and to a lesser extent children's services, where the level of demand, costs involved and importance of protecting the vulnerable demands a robust, ambitious and innovative response that recognises no single organisation can do it alone.
- ***Long standing frustrations with planning, transport and housing delivery are now having a material impact on operational performance and will increasingly hold back the potential of the region.*** The split of governance, decision making, strategic development and service provision across the two-tier system has not provided a whole-place approach to these issues.

A unitary authority and combined authority solution could provide the opportunity to balance the need for strategic and local decision making and creates the conditions for innovation and reform in service delivery.[The PwC summary of the different options is set out at appendix 1]

A summary of the PwC findings against key criteria are set out below

Value for money - transition costs and transformation savings

- After transition costs and ambitious transformation plans have occurred, by year 5 all of the options are generating financial benefits of between £37 million and £45 million per year.
- On theoretical financial analysis alone, the single unitary authority delivers the greatest efficiencies over the initial five year period due to lower transition costs.
- Realising the financial benefits will depend heavily on the scale of transformation that can be successfully delivered by each of the unitary authorities.
- Therefore decisions should not be made on theoretical financial analysis alone.

Financial sustainability of different unitary options

- Based on disaggregation of current expenditure, after transformation savings, the unitary authorities within all options are in surplus by 2020/21 except Oxford city UA on existing boundaries which has a small financial deficit (equivalent to less than 1 % of total expenditure in Oxfordshire).
- This analysis is based on existing levels of government grant and business rates income. Under any UA option allocation of grant from government would need to be recalculated on the needs based formula. Government has announced a reform of the local government finance with the potential for 100% retention of business rates for local government. Oxford City currently contributes significant business rates to the Treasury. The Government's calculation for needs and planned reform of local government finance would be expected to reflect the levels of need in the city and redress the variations in deficits and surpluses found in the analysis.
- The disparity between the funding and expenditure for Children's services is the key factor in the City's (and to a lesser extent Cherwell's) financial position. Adult services are the most significant financial factor for the other Districts. All of the unitary authorities are sensitive to this and under any of the models there must be commitment to shared commissioning and pooling of resources to ensure that funds are allocated on a needs basis.
- The ability to deliver the planned housing and business growth up to 2031 will also have a material impact on the financial position of all the unitary options. It has the potential – if managed properly – to have a positive impact on the financial capacity and resilience of a city unitary authority.

Strong and accountable leadership

- The unitary authorities will need a democratic structure (leaders, cabinet and committees) to represent residents, set the budget and make decisions for the electorate it serves. The more UAs that are created, the closer decision making is to the communities it serves.
- There is a need to balance the need for strategic decision making on issues such as better strategic planning, housing transport and close integration of health and social care, with local decision making that reflects the locality characteristics which are varied across Oxfordshire.
- PwC's analysis found

- The 4 UA model provides the maximum level of democratic accountability and connectivity to local communities.
- The 3 UA model would provide a balance between addressing local needs in communities, increased accountability through three democratic structures within Oxfordshire, and it would reflect and recognise distinct urban and rural issues and different demographic and socio economic characteristics.
- The 2 UA option recognises the difference between urban and rural priorities. However the scale of the unitary covering the whole of Oxfordshire outside the City dilutes democratic accountability in the large surrounding rural geography.
- A single UA would be the third largest UA in the country and risks a remoteness of services and gives rise to loss of accountability with potentially lower levels of political representation at decision making committees than other models. This would need to be addressed through the creation of sub- structures and area committees which could result in reduction of benefits from economies of scale.

Delivering better services

- The study found that all councils across Oxfordshire need to further transform service delivery as part of the move to a self-financing model for local government. This is an opportunity to further redesign services around users and communities with the ability to reflect local priorities and plans for growth.
- A single UA will generate economies of scale but this needs to be balanced with the fact that it will become the third largest single tier authority in England that will need to provide District level services to a city and rural areas. This option carries a risk of a lack of responsiveness to the diversity and vast differences in local needs across the County geography. A bureaucracy of this scale may be less flexible and agile to the changing nature of need and demand, so mechanisms would need to be created to enhance responsiveness of the single unitary option.
- A 2 UA option enables a tailored approach to rural and urban geographies, but is imbalanced between City and 'donut' (population size, demography and economics).
- A 3 UA option provides better alignment to geographic and urban / rural settings and economy and tailoring services to rural and urban geographies. This option addresses the imbalances of City and 'donut' option and builds on existing relationship in the South of the County.
- A 4 UA option has similar benefits to a 3 UA option with the ability to tailor service provision to local needs, however there would be fewer economies of scale and capacity and capability to absorb large county services would need to be enhanced.

Combined Authority

- The study finds that a Combined Authority for Oxfordshire would enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of the different unitary options by providing:
 - a collaborative vehicle for Oxfordshire wide decision making and accountability for delivery of the issues that are restraining economic growth, in particular strategic planning, housing, transport and infrastructure and
 - a mechanism for pooling funds, resources and raising income to maximise growth or address need/ service demand, particularly integrated commissioning

of Health and Social Care with the NHS and delivery of childrens' services in partnership with the police and NHS with a focus on prevention and greater links with community and housing services.

- At the same time, the CA model would allow a degree of local UA flexibility and efficient delivery through UAs and partners, and provides a strong platform for ongoing dialogue with government to secure further investment and devolution.
- It would also provide a means to give business, health, police and other key partners a seat at the table and a voice in collective decision making, providing overall leadership and coordination of the public sector in a single decision making body.

Children's services

- Children's services in Oxfordshire are generally good, but faced with rising demand and declining budgets there are concerns that capability and capacity will become stretched and result in a retrenchment into statutory protective responsibilities. Protecting vulnerable children must remain the overriding priority, but alongside those that need intensive support is a need to focus on those on the edge of care to help prevent more children from requiring intensive support through early identification and action.
- The ambition is to progressively reduce the number of children needing intensive support through earlier identification and action, while improving the outcomes for any children that do come into care.
- The goal is to enable local government, health and police authorities to work ever closer together to provide leadership on a shared ambition for children across the region. Helping prevent children needing external support and helping families help themselves is a shared responsibility, requiring a commitment across local government, the NHS, the police, the wider public sector, as well as the voluntary and community sectors and the engagement and commitment of children and young people, their families and their communities. It requires system wide reform which the combined authority would be committed to leading.
- Alongside the protective duties of local government, a unitary and combined authority model as part of a devolution deal would complement a fundamental review of the whole system so that it focusses on building on the strengths of the current system while also designing in early and preventative work with children and young people, their families and their communities.

Adults services

- Adult social care is a system under strain nationally and locally. In Oxfordshire there is a need to find savings of £176 million by 2020/21 across health and social care. There is universal recognition that better co-ordination of health and social care designed around the person is needed to both improve service outcomes and to reduce costs. Shifting care into the community, closer to home, making care more personalised and supporting people to live independently for longer is the overall aim.
- The challenge in Oxfordshire is making this shift happen. There is overall agreement on the need for integration of commissioning but the execution of those plans are still at a formative stage and linked to specific services. In addition there is a need for one team delivery of out of hospital services, which a unitary solution for local government would

help create. Greater alignment and collaborative working could be designed in with synergies across community services such as housing, recreation and leisure that help to keep people out of hospital and enable them to live independently for longer.

- The overall state of health in Oxfordshire is good, and has improved, but it is recognised that to continue improving a more comprehensive approach to tackling health challenges is needed.
- Integration of health and social care was a key element of the devolution proposals which all parties in Oxfordshire agreed. That remains the case, but there is an increasing ambition to move forward at pace and truly integrate the resources, responsibilities and roles in a shared approach across health and local government. A joined up approach to service delivery and effective demand management is the aim of pooling budgets and jointly commissioning services through a Combined Authority with CCG membership and full participation.
- Integrating commissioning is one pillar but further work will be needed to align all stakeholders behind a clear set of outcomes and a clear set of interventions identified that will deliver change in both community services and in hospital health settings. That work needs the comprehensive approach and agreed principles for developing the right solution in Oxfordshire, including the development of the appropriate Local Care Organisation.

4) Proposition

Having considered the feedback from stakeholders, analysis and evidence of PwC's report, the five district councils in Oxfordshire believe there is a strong case for a district unitary and combined authority solution to improve public services and local accountability as part of a devolution deal for Oxfordshire.

Devolution Deal

Securing agreement with government for a devolution deal for Oxfordshire is an important element of our proposals to achieve Oxfordshire's economic potential and improve the prosperity and health and well-being of our residents. It is an opportunity Oxfordshire cannot afford to miss. We wish to pursue with government the proposals developed by the Oxfordshire local authorities, the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and the Oxfordshire LEP which make the case for badly needed investment in infrastructure and the reform of public services to allow:

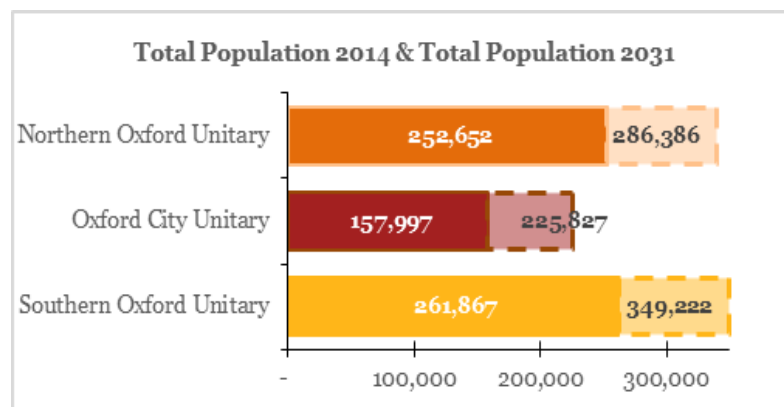
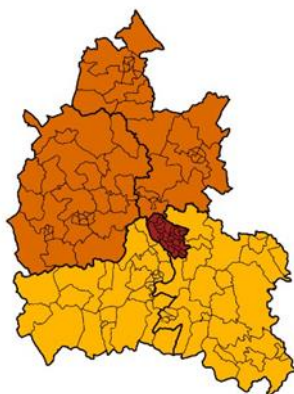
- Acceleration of housing delivery to meet the pressing need for affordable homes to support growth;
- Acceleration of enabling infrastructure to address transport challenges throughout the region;
- Provision of skills and competencies people need to access jobs in Oxfordshire's knowledge economy to drive economic prosperity
- Reformed public services to adapt to reduced funding and shift to preventing demand for higher cost services
- Health and well-being services redesigned around the user with integration of provider and commissioner responsibilities.

A new model for local government in Oxfordshire

A new model for local government in Oxfordshire is needed to meet the government's criteria to secure the devolution deal, address the future challenges and constraints we face and deliver better services for our residents. Our proposal is to replace the current two-tier system of local government with new unitary authorities that would be accountable for all local government services in their area at a level which reflects the diverse characteristics and different interests across the county. This would reduce confusion and complexity, enable greater joining up of decisions and deliver significant efficiency savings whilst ensuring all services are responsive and accountable to local communities.

Our proposal is for three unitary authorities which would be responsible and accountable for all local government services in their area. The three unitary authorities proposed are:

- **Northern Oxfordshire** (comprising of current Cherwell and West Oxfordshire District Councils with a geographical area of 1,303km²)
- **Oxford City** (comprising of current Oxford City Council with a geographical area of 46km²)
- **Southern Oxfordshire** (comprising of current South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils with a geographical area of 1,257km²)



Combined Authority

A combined authority would be established as a statutory collaborative vehicle for leaders of the district unitary authorities to work in partnership with the LEP and CCG to manage services that need to be coordinated over a wider area, drive transformation and deliver the devolution deal.

The combined authority would provide accountability and enable collective decision making on statutory functions but also collaboration and joint commissioning of services under a single structure with responsibility for:

- Strategic planning – one agreed strategic spatial plan for growth, housing and employment sites, transport and connectivity.
- Infrastructure strategy – an agreed investment programme to deliver the infrastructure required to unlock growth.

- Economic development to provide a consistent and streamlined approach to attracting investment and providing a coherent and streamlined service to business.
- Skills – providing the skills training for local people to meet local and future business need.
- Integrated commissioning Adult Social Care and Health (with CCG) with a new focus on improving the health and well-being of the population to reduce demand for acute services.
- Children’s services jointly led and commissioned with the Police and NHS, and other partners with focus on early intervention, resilience and synergy with community investment and housing services.

Crucially, the combined authority would provide the NHS (through the CCG), business representatives (through the LEP) a seat at the table with voting rights, giving them a voice in the decisions. This would create, for the first time, a single strategic partnership body committed to tackling the big challenges facing Oxfordshire.

The combined authority would create a coherent voice for Oxfordshire with local partners and businesses. It would also provide a route for a stronger ongoing dialogue with national government and greater influence with national commissioners and agencies to secure further investment and devolution.

The combined authority would have powers to increase resources for investment in Oxfordshire’s priorities by:

- Pooling of funding to create investment pots and greater borrowing power
- Prioritise collectively where investment will make the biggest impact on growth or where the needs are greatest
- Raising funds through precepts, levy and business rates
- Securing devolution of significant investment pot (successful devolution deals have included £1bn over 30 years).

Taking on these powers is likely to require agreement to a directly elected Mayor of the combined authority.

Proposed governance of the combined authority is set out below

Strategic Leadership and accountability



Strategy and policy development and joint commissioning



Assurance



It is proposed that the combined authority would have a small core officer team, drawing on the resources of the unitary authorities and partner organisations as opposed to creating an additional large employment organisation (similar to the Sheffield City Region Combined Authority).

Rationale

The proposal for 3 unitary authorities, with a combined authority meets the criteria agreed with the former government and would create the governance structures that could strike the best balance between the criteria:

1) Value for money

The new unitary authorities would be financially sustainable and have the ability to deliver efficiency savings and better public services through an ambitious transformation programme. It would create the right structure to balance economies of scale with the ability to deliver services locally in ways which are most cost effective and reflective of local priorities and needs. The combined authority would provide a robust means for the authorities to be able to work together to take decision on strategic issues and services that need to be delivered across a wider area with the ability to connect these to services delivered locally.

2) Long term efficiency savings

In the longer term (once transition and transformation have occurred) the PwC report identifies potential savings of £39.4 million per year, compared to £45.2 million for the single unitary option. The PwC report finds that the difference of total net transition savings between the options is largely immaterial when considered in the context of total net annual expenditure in Oxfordshire (the difference is 0.83% over the 5 year period). With the ability to build on the existing districts strong track record of delivering efficiencies and joint working, the new district unitaries would be more likely to deliver an ambitious programme of transformation required to achieve these savings.

3) Better public services

The new unitary authorities would retain the flexibility to design services around the different needs and challenges that Oxfordshire's communities face, aligning services to insight and intelligence about customers' needs. The district unitaries would build on existing joint working arrangements and alignments between authorities to develop joint solutions while retaining the ability to tailor services to local needs. The combined authority would provide the means for the unitary authorities to work jointly with partners including the NHS and the LEP to deliver whole systems reform of services like transport and infrastructure planning and health and social care to deliver better outcomes for residents.

4) Strong and accountable local leadership and governance

Oxfordshire is a diverse county and stakeholders have expressed a view that there is a need to balance the need for strategic decision making on issues such as better strategic planning, housing, transport and closer integration of health and social care with local decision making and accountability that reflects the different characteristics and interest of local areas. The PwC report finds that the three unitary option creates democratic accountability that

reflects differences between rural and city areas and the geographical and socio-economic characteristics of the North and the South of the County. The combined authority would be accountable to local people through each of the leaders of the unitary authorities with a seat on the combined authority and through the directly elected mayor if one is required.

Adult Social Services and Health

The PwC report identifies the significant challenges Oxfordshire faces in delivering £176 million savings in the next five years whilst meeting increased demand from an ageing population and in tackling persistent problems such as bed-blocking as a result of delays in transferring patients out of hospital. The study concludes that the current model of delivery needs to change.

In line with our devolution deal proposals and discussions with health partners, our aim is to deliver a single approach for health and social care in Oxfordshire, bringing together organisations, budgets and commissioning to create a system that will deliver better care and better value for money. This will be achieved through a focus on economies of scale in commissioning, reducing demand for acute services, reducing delays in transferring patients to next stage of care and the delivery of care closer to home. Pooling of budgets and joint commissioning of services would be managed through a strengthened health and well-being board under the combined authority, bringing together the unitary authorities and the clinical commissioning group into a single body responsible for commissioning all health, social care and public health services for Oxfordshire's residents. The new unitary structure proposed would also help facilitate greater integration with services which are important to the wider determinants on health, such as transport, housing, social isolation and leisure and recreation. These issues and their relative importance can vary significantly between different areas, where for example the needs of the city are quite different to those in rural areas.

The unitary authorities would be able to jointly appoint a single Director of Adult Social Services to cover all of the unitary areas and enable joint funding of posts with the NHS.

We wish to work further with government and local health partners to ensure that the unitary and combined authority model support and add value to the fundamental reform of the health and social care services and new models of care that are urgently needed.

Children's services

We recognise that any change in current arrangements for Children's services must not put children or young people at risk and proposals will need to be developed with shared understanding and expertise. At the same time, a new approach is needed to deal with the financial challenges and increasing pressure on services as a result of rising demand.

We therefore wish to work with government, partners and service users in Oxfordshire to undertake a review of the way that children's services are delivered by public service providers and how more integrated and efficient ways of delivering services can be achieved. The proposals will be delivered within a framework of locally accountable leadership, delivery and commissioning arrangements.

Our aim is to develop a model for safeguarding children and young people which establishes a new relationship between local government, health and the police to provide integrated strategic leadership and commissioning of services and joint delivery that puts children and families at the heart of services.

In developing the new model, the first priority will be to continue keeping children and young people safe from abuse and neglect and meeting statutory duties effectively and efficiently. We also wish to see a focus on prevention and early intervention and the provision of specialist services to prevent children from becoming vulnerable, helping them to achieve their potential, change behaviour and reduce demand for statutory services. This will require integrated local provision of services with the flexibility to focus on what is needed in each locality and link effectively with community partnerships, housing and leisure and recreational services aimed at young people.

The objective is to ensure better outcomes for Oxfordshire in terms of: lower levels of vulnerable children and families; enhanced aspirations of families for their children and improved educational attainment and achievement; and a reduction in the impact of parental risk factors that contribute most to abuse and neglect of children. Within five years the goal could be to have shifted resources into positive activities without increasing the risk to vulnerable children, making the case for upfront investment to change the projected profile of demand.

Under our proposals for unitary government, the combined authority could provide a streamlined and accountable partnership framework for leadership, commissioning and delivery of outcomes for children and young people that are the shared responsibility of many partners. This would allow an opportunity to review overlap and functions of numerous existing committees and bodies with a view to streamlining, clarifying and strengthening governance and monitoring of services.

There is also the need for integrated delivery at locality level and flexibility on delivery models, recognising that challenges and needs across Oxfordshire vary considerably. The building blocks for this is in three key partners – local government, health and the police which are all modelled on three localities (Northern Oxfordshire, Oxford and Southern Oxfordshire) within which more local delivery arrangements involving children, families and schools operate. The proposed 3 unitary authorities map onto these locality areas and could therefore provide accountable governance for operational delivery responsibilities at this level.

Conclusion

The government's devolution programme provides an opportunity for Oxfordshire to tackle the challenges our communities face, achieve our economic potential and improve public services for our residents. Alongside this there is an opportunity to reform the structure of local government that is sustainable and can serve the interests of residents, businesses and communities and reflect local challenges and priorities in the most effective and efficient way.

Our proposals would achieve this through unitary authorities with the insight, focus and accountability to represent their communities interests and deliver services in a way that are most cost effective and reflective of local priorities. A combined authority would provide the means for the unitary authorities to work together and in partnership with public bodies to take decisions on strategic issues and services and drive the transformation of public services that is needed.

6 *Summary of unitary authority options*

The following factors, as outlined also in section 3 above, provide the basis from which to appraise the options. These factors are assessed in an evidence-based way, based on the above analysis and the stakeholder conversations we have had.

Financial analysis (feeds into ‘value for money’ and costs against efficiency savings)

- The financial viability of the UA including payback from transition;
- The scale of efficiency savings possible from the two-tier system and service transformation;
- Ability to build on innovative cost-saving management and service delivery models already adopted by the councils;

Ensure strong and accountable local leadership and governance

- The ratio of democratic representation;
- Balances the need for strategic and local decision making;
- Maintains effective span of control

Delivering better public services

- Ability to reflect local priorities and the interests of different communities, including those of the city, of market towns and rural communities – enabling a responsiveness to local needs;
- Enables development and growth across the area to meet its economic potential and sustainability, supporting the economic and housing growth planned;
- Helps to deal with the demographic pressures on adult social care and improve outcomes through integration with health services;
- Ensures a system for children’s services that delivers a robust approach to child protection and safeguarding based upon need and through transformation;
- Benefit from potential service synergies from unitary authorities having responsibility for planning and delivering services such as spatial planning, economic development, housing, transport infrastructure, social care and health.
- Supports the growth of the knowledge economy.

Financial analysis (feeds into ‘value for money’ and costs against efficiency savings)				
1UA	2UA	2UA+	3UA	4UA
<p>County wide unitary based on economies of scale.</p> <p>Generates large surplus post reorganisation (£45.2m in 2020/21).</p> <p>Generates greatest potential net savings (£113.3m) over the period to 2020/21.</p> <p>Driven by lowest “Other Transition Costs” (£9.8m) and highest potential transformation savings (£119.2m) of the proposed UA options.</p> <p>Quickest payback period at just 2 years.</p>	<p>Considerable mismatch between the two Unitaries in terms of financial position.</p> <p>Oxford City remains in deficit post transformation (£6.2m in 2020/21).</p> <p>Only when Adults and Children’s Social Care services are elevated to a CA level does Oxford City generate a surplus (£7.0m).</p> <p>Potential to generate comparable transformation savings with the 1UA option (£116.8m vs £119.2m) though “Other Transition Costs” double from £9.8m to £19.6m.</p> <p>Generate potential net savings of £94.5m over five years to 2020/21.</p> <p>Payback period of 3 years.</p>	<p>An Expanded Oxford City Council sees an improved financial position pre and post transformation with a surplus (£1.9m in 2020/21) generated following reorganisation.</p> <p>The elevation of Adults and Children’s Social Care to a CA level increases this surplus (£13.8m).</p> <p>Potential to generate comparable transformation savings with the 1UA option (£116.8m vs £119.2m) though “Other Transition Costs” double from £9.8m to £19.6m.</p> <p>Generate potential net savings of £94.5m over five years to 2020/21.</p> <p>Payback period of 3 years.</p>	<p>Southern and Northern Oxfordshire deliver financial surplus post transformation.</p> <p>Oxford City in deficit post transformation (£6.9m 2020/21)</p> <p>Oxford City’s deficit becomes a surplus (£6.2m) if Adults and Children’s Social Care services are removed from outside its control.</p> <p>Potential to generate comparable transformation savings with the 1UA option (£114.4m vs £119.2m) though “Other Transition Costs” treble from £9.8m to £29.4m.</p> <p>Generate potential net savings of £75.5m over five years to 2020/21.</p> <p>Payback period of 3 years.</p>	<p>Considerable financial mismatch between proposed unitary authorities.</p> <p>Southern Oxfordshire delivers strong surplus pre and post transformation.</p> <p>West Oxfordshire delivers marginal surplus pre-transformation (£0.1m) but more of a surplus post-transformation (£5.8m).</p> <p>Cherwell delivers a small deficit pre-transformation (£3.3m) and a small surplus post-transformation (£5.0m).</p> <p>Oxford City in deficit before and post reorganisation, though generates a surplus (£5.5m) should provision of Adults and Children’s Social Care services be elevated to a CA level.</p> <p>UA option that would generate lowest potential net savings (£56.4m) over the period to 2020/21</p> <p>Driven by highest “Other transition Costs” (£39.2m) and lowest transformation savings (£112.0m) of the proposed UA options.</p> <p>Payback period of 3 years.</p>
<p>Largely immaterial difference between all UA options if consider total net transition savings in context of total net annual expenditure in Oxfordshire 2015/2016 (£1,040,422,000). The figure is 0.83% looking at the year 5 picture, i.e. £8.7m divided by annual expenditure, or if you consider over 5 years the figure is 1.1%, i.e. £56.9m divided by five times annual expenditure. This does not account for the surplus/deficit position but solely looking at UA transition savings.</p>				

See supporting summary table for further details

Ensuring strong and accountable local leadership and governance

1UA	2UA	3UA	4UA
<p>A single UA could rise to loss of accountability with potentially lower levels of political representation at decision making committees than other UA models (i.e. a democratic deficit). This could be addressed through design of the UA with for example the creation of Area Boards (e.g. Wiltshire model). However, further consideration should be given to the characteristics of Oxfordshire and the replicability of the Wiltshire model. For example. Oxfordshire is larger and more diverse, with Oxford as a large urban centre where needs and priorities are distinct from the surrounding rural area.</p>	<p>Recognises the difference between urban and rural priorities.</p> <p>Improves democratic accountability compared with one UA option.</p> <p>However the scale of the residual ('donut') area of Oxfordshire dilutes democratic accountability in rural geography, with a population of 452,246 and a geographical area of 2,245km².</p>	<p>Improves level of accountability compared to 1UA and 2Uas.</p> <p>Recognises geographic differences between North and South of the County and the different demographic and socio economic characteristics.</p> <p>Provides a balance between addressing local needs in communities, increased accountability through three democratic structures within Oxfordshire, and it would reflect and recognise distinct City and rural issues that any new local government settlement needs to address.</p>	<p>Provides the maximum level of democratic accountability and connectivity to local communities.</p> <p>Greater costs of democratic system with increased UAs, although this depends on number of Area Boards/increase in Parish role.</p>

Delivering better public services			
1UA	2UA	3UA	4UA
<p>Economies of scale have potential to drive efficiency. Will become third largest UA in England.</p> <p>Complex process of integration but potential opportunity for single wholesale transformation is significant.</p> <p>Risk of a lack of responsiveness to the diversity and vast differences in local needs across the County geography. But the creation of Area Boards could help with this.</p> <p>A bureaucracy of this scale may be less flexible and agile to the changing nature of need and demand.</p>	<p>Economies of scale driving efficiency.</p> <p>Enables tailored approach to rural and urban geographies.</p> <p>Population and economics imbalance between City and 'Donut' which could be addressed to some extent by the 2UA+ option which extends the City boundary to some of the surrounding wards.</p>	<p>Alignment of UAs better reflects geographic and urban / rural settings and economy.</p> <p>More effective tailoring services to rural and urban geographies.</p> <p>Addresses imbalance of City and 'Donut' option.</p> <p>Builds on existing relationship in the South of the County.</p> <p>Provides a mechanism for innovation around County services through a CA.</p>	<p>Limited economies of scale / duplication.</p> <p>Unequal sizing of UAs.</p> <p>Partial change / ability to change.</p> <p>Tailored and responsive service provision to local needs is more possible.</p> <p>Capacity and capability to absorb large county services is enhanced.</p>

	Surplus/(deficit) 2015/16	Surplus/(deficit) 2020/21	Surplus/(deficit) 2020/21 after transformation	Surplus/(deficit) 2020/21 after transformation (No ACSC)
4 UAs Option				
Southern Oxfordshire Unitary	£16.8m	£20.1m	£33.3m	£17.3m
Cherwell Unitary	(£5.6m)	(£3.3m)	£5.0m	£10.6m
Oxford City Unitary	(£10.7m)	(£16.8m)	(£7.6m)	£5.5m
West Oxfordshire Unitary	(£0.5m)	£0.1m	£5.8m	£3.1m
3 UAs Option				
Southern Oxfordshire Unitary	£16.8m	£20.1m	£34.3m	£18.4m
Oxford City Unitary	(£10.7m)	(£16.8m)	(£6.9m)	£6.2m
Northern Oxfordshire Unitary	(£6.1m)	(£3.2m)	£11.9m	£14.8m
2UAs Option				
Oxford City Unitary	(£10.7m)	(£16.8m)	(£6.2m)	£7.0m
“Donut” Unitary	£10.7m	£16.8m	£48.5m	£35.3m
2UAs + Option				
Expanded Oxford City Unitary	(£6.2m)	(£12.4m)	£1.9m	£13.8m
Revised Donut Unitary	£6.2m	£12.4m	£40.4m	£28.5m
1UA Option				
Oxfordshire Unitary	£0.0m	£0.0m	£45.2m	£45.2m

	Year 1 (£m)	Year 2 (£m)	Year 3 (£m)	Year 4 (£m)	Year 5 (£m)	TOTAL (£m)
4 UAs Option						
Total costs	22.0	22.0	22.0	1.6	1.6	69.3
Total savings	3.4	11.6	34.6	38.1	38.1	125.7
Total net savings	18.6	10.5	12.5	36.5	36.5	56.4
3 UAs Option						
Total costs	18.3	18.3	18.3	0.7	0.7	56.3
Total savings	3.9	12.2	35.6	40.0	40.0	131.8
Total net savings	14.5	6.2	17.3	39.4	39.4	75.5
2UAs Option						
Total costs	14.9	14.9	14.9	0.5	0.5	45.5
Total savings	4.5	13.0	37.0	42.8	42.8	140.0
Total net savings	10.3	1.9	22.1	42.3	42.3	94.5
2UAs + Option						
Total costs	14.9	14.9	14.9	0.5	0.5	45.5
Total savings	4.5	13.0	37.0	42.8	42.8	140.0
Total net savings	10.3	1.9	22.1	42.3	42.3	94.5
1UA Option						
Total costs	11.5	11.5	11.5	0.3	0.3	35.0
Total savings	5.2	13.9	38.3	45.5	45.5	148.3
Total net savings	6.3	2.4	26.8	45.2	45.2	113.3

Note: figures have been presented to one decimal place, hence rounding differences.

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Cherwell District Council

Executive

5 September 2016

<p style="text-align: center;">Notification of Urgent Action(s) – In relation to the Contract Award for the demolition of the Bolton Road Car Park</p>

Report of Chief Executive and Commercial Director

This report is public

Purpose of report

To notify Members of urgent action taken by the Chief Executive and Commercial Director as set out below.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the urgent action taken by the Chief Executive in relation to the budget and to refer this to full council for noting.
- 1.2 To note the urgent action taken by the Commercial Director in relation to the award of the contract.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The Bolton Road car park which is owned by CDC has been managed through Indigo Car Park Services under a long lease arrangement. The Council has been in negotiations with Indigo regarding the release of the lease and had reached agreement as to the financial settlement that would apply subject to the obligations relating to a communications mast tower attached to the car park.
- 2.2 In June 2016, the Council commissioned a review of the condition of the car park to inform its approach around potential demolition or using the car park over the medium to longer term. Specialist concrete consultants were appointed to complete the necessary investigations. A report from the consultants was received by the Council on 16 June 2016. This report concluded that the structural integrity of the car park was such that immediate action to close the facility should be taken.

- 2.3 Working in partnership with Indigo, the car park was closed and handed back to the Council on 21 June 2016 and the Council immediately commenced a tender process for the early demolition of the structure. Three tenders for this demolition were received and through the procurement evaluation process a preferred bidder was identified.

3.0 Report Details

Tender proposal

- 3.1 The final contract sum including all disbursements and fees of £700,000 was agreed with the preferred bidder to complete a 2 phase demolition and the provision of a new surface car park consisting of some 145 spaces. The contractor has indicated that to complete the demolition process and provide an operational surface car park they will need to gain access to the site and commence work during week commencing 22 August. This will enable contract completion by the 25 November 2016. To achieve this date, which is critical for the necessity to have the surface car park operational from the beginning of December, mobilisation must take place ASAP.
- 3.2 Other significant factors impacting on the demolition process are:-
- structural integrity of the building remains of significant concern;
 - health and safety issues are of significant importance;
 - weather conditions over the summer period should ensure minimum delay;
 - reduced security issues arising and cost savings of some £400 per week for existing security patrols on the site.

Additional Budget Allocation

- 3.3 The following funds were currently identified for the demolition process:-

£300,000	payment from current contractor Indigo on surrender of lease
£ 50,000	Economic Development Reserve
£ 25,000	Additional payment from Indigo if demolition > £350,000 (contract award support this)

£375,000 TOTAL AVAILABLE

The total cost of the revised scheme is £700,000, which results in a shortfall of £325,000. This funding shortfall has been met from the use of capital receipts, through an urgent decision taken by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman of Council and the lead member for finance.

Contract Award Options

3.4 The following options were considered:

- Award contract in August 2016 by taking urgent decision in consultation with the Leader of the Council
- Award contract in September 2016 after consideration at the Executive meeting scheduled 5th September 2016

3.5 This urgent decision was taken on 17 August 2016 as delaying the award of the contract until 5 September 2016 would have an impact on the timetable which is already extremely tight. By awarding the contract in August and mobilising resources w/c 22nd August 2016, we hope to have it finished and a temporary car park operational in time for Christmas shopping when the traders and town are at their busiest.

3.6 The decision taken was that Armac Group be awarded the tender for the demolition of the Bolton Rd car park and the construction of a temporary car park facility with 145 spaces in line with their tender sum dated 1st August 2016.

3.7 As a result of the award of the contract the Council has positively engaged with all stakeholders as appropriate including dialogue with nearby businesses. A number of drop in sessions for businesses and local residents have been arranged so stakeholders can hear more about the planned demolition and temporary car park provision.

3.8 The work has commenced and progress will be monitored through the Banbury Developments Board.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

4.1 The Chief Executive took urgent action(s) in consultation with the Chairman of the Council and the Lead Member for Financial Management to approve the allocation of £325,000 to this scheme.

4.2 The Commercial Director took urgent action in consultation with the Leader of the Council to approve the award of the contract to the preferred bidder.

5.0 Consultation

5.1 The Leader of the Council, the Chairman of the Council, the Lead Member for Financial Management and Lead Member for Estates and the Economy only due to the urgency.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 As this report is for the information of Members there are no alternative options to consider.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 The cost of the contract award can be met from the contribution of £325,000 from the current operator in recognition for the surrender of the lease, the £50,000 economic development reserve allocated in 2015 and the balance can be met from the urgent decision taken by the Chief Executive to allocate capital receipts of £325,000 for this capital scheme.

Comments checked by:

Denise Taylor, Deputy Section 151 Officer, Finance and Procurement Service,
01295 221982,
denise.taylor@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Legal Implications

- 7.2 The demolition works contract has been completed and has been subject to the input of the shared legal team. It is a constitutional requirement to report the taking of urgent executive action by an authorised officer to the Executive. It is also necessary for the urgent action taken in respect of the budget to be reported to full council for noting.

Comments checked by:

Kevin Lane, Head of Law and Governance, 0300 0030107,
kevin.lane@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision

Financial Threshold Met: Yes

Community Impact Threshold Met: No

Wards Affected

Banbury Cross and Neithrop

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

A District of Opportunity

Lead Members

Councillor Barry Wood, Leader of the Council

Councillor Ken Atack, Lead Member for Financial Management

Councillor Lynn Pratt, Lead Member for Estates and the Economy

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
None	
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Karen Curtin, Commercial Director
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Cherwell District Council

Executive

5 September 2016

Re-commissioning of Single Homeless Pathway

Report of Head of Regeneration and Housing

This report is Public

The appendices to this report are exempt from publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972

Purpose of report

To advise Executive of the proposals recommended by the District Councils, the County Council, and the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (OCCG) as endorsed by the Health Improvement Board, to work jointly to provide housing related support services and accommodate single homeless from across the county for the next 3 years commencing from 1 April 2017.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To support the new proposals which provide a plan and include a financial contribution from Cherwell for a period of 3 years as calculated and recommended by the Oxfordshire Districts, Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (OCCG) and Oxfordshire County Council.
- 1.2 To note and support the proposal for a new joint governance structure to procure and manage services through senior officer representation with delegated authority.
- 1.3 To approve a financial contribution of £62,700pa (as calculated on Cherwell's current use of hostels with 24 hour care) and required to be paid from Cherwell for 3 financial years commencing from 1 April 2017.
- 1.4 That Executive note that a further report on the longer term sustainability of single homeless pathway arrangements across the county be submitted within the 3 year period covered by this report.

2.0 Introduction

Accommodation services for single homeless were previously funded through the Government's Supporting People Programme. Supporting People funding became unringfenced in the Oxfordshire County Budget spending allocation under

Government changes, followed by significant reductions from central Government to its budget. The County Council's financial position has now led the County to review and reduce service provision and this has also resulted in an announcement that confirms Oxford County Council are no longer in a position to continue to provide housing related support funding.

Therefore a final grant of £1.5m is due to be paid for housing related support in April 2017 from the County Council.

This grant of £1.5m from Oxfordshire County Council currently funds a pathway of services for rough sleepers/single homeless people who have a range of support needs in 285 units of accommodation across the County, with 252 beds based in the City. The value of these contracts was reduced by approximately 30% in 2015/16, due to budget pressures with new contracts only awarded to the end of March 2017.

Eligibility for all bed spaces is for single homeless clients with support needs, with a county connection. The phased withdrawal of this grant from April 2017 with no further action could leave no accommodation based services with housing related support in the County for this client group after March 2019.

The City Council and District Councils fund a range of other services in each District which wrap-around this provision for single homeless clients. In Cherwell this includes outreach and verification services to identify rough sleepers; access to Day Centre drop ins and help to access the private rented sector.

A new proposal has now been formed in partnership by the County Council, OCCG and Districts at a time when the system is already under considerable pressure. City and District estimates for rough sleeping for 2015/16 were: City (56- a 50% increase), Cherwell (21 - a 40% increase), South (5), Vale (5), and West (3). The Health and Wellbeing Board's target to not exceed the baseline rough sleeping County-wide estimate for rough sleeping (an alternative to street counts) of 68 set in 2014/15, has been missed in 2015/16 with an official estimated figure of 90.

The current demographic of the hostel population demonstrates that rough sleeping and single homelessness is a serious County-wide issue. Around 60% of rough sleepers have multiple needs including homelessness, offending, substance misuse and mental health issues. The withdrawal of these services would most certainly impact on statutory homelessness duties but the real and high cost would also be shunted onto mental health wards, public health, especially substance misuse, statutory adult social care under the Care Act 2014, A&E as well as policing, custody and prison as people will inevitably deteriorate on the streets and reach crisis point.

3.0 Report Details

- 3.1 Since the County Council announced its final funding contribution for support for single homeless accommodation, officers from across the Districts have been working very closely together to agree and plan how best we can continue to provide services to meet these ongoing needs for this complex group. There have been extensive officer meetings including two Health Improvement Board (HIB)

workshops which include elected members from across the Districts. All have worked to agree how best we can find a way to re-commission services, undertake remodelling, recommend new and fair financial contributions, and utilise a financial contribution from OCCG to meet the health needs of this client group. We have also liaised with the County Council to suggest how to make best use of the final financial contribution from them.

3.2 An officer working group has been established to:

- Develop proposals for medium term financial plans and transition planning. This included how the County Council contribution can be re-profiled within the scope of its agreed budget and the modelling of its longer term plans following the removal of these contributions
- Propose joint governance arrangements for overseeing a pooled budget to support homeless people with complex needs
- Model options for maintaining existing services for up to an additional year so that a review and re-commissioning process can be completed
- Determine the scope of a review which will include discussions about where to locate services, the level of support provided and what criteria will be used to determine eligibility. As part of this a definition of complex needs and health outcomes will be agreed
- Consider the impact of national housing policy changes on medium term plans

3.3 The outcomes of their work were presented for discussions and decision by the HIB on 1 July where they recommended Option 3 as detailed in **Appendix 1** (exempt). The officer group has now been tasked to develop an implementation plan and transition plan based on the proposed commissioning plan subject to each Council agreeing a financial contribution, new joint commissioning principals and a proposal for new joint governance arrangements.

3.4 New Commissioning Principals

Commitment is required from all parties to enter into a set of new medium term governance and commissioning arrangements for housing related support across the county. This will include the creation of a new pooled budget arrangement to be identified with financial contributions agreed from all partners to form a pooled budget.

3.5 Housing related Support Pooled Budget

A new officers group from the 7 partners is recommended to oversee and negotiate and monitor the transition from existing services, also undertake and specify new commissioning. It is proposed that the County Council continue to provide contract management for the period of this arrangement to provide continuity and whilst they continue to make the most significant financial contribution.

For the next three years starting from 1 April 2017, the pooled budget will oversee spending of £2,940,000 contributed by 7 partners as outlined in **Appendices 1&2** (exempt).

District and City councils contributions will be new and have been calculated based on their current usage of the adult homeless pathway; officers have spent time monitoring to ensure this percentage reflects Cherwell current use:

The County Council contribution remains as agreed by their cabinet in February 2016 which is a final contribution of £1.5 million which will be spread across the first two years to enable services to initially continue. Transition arrangements will include decommissioning services and commissioning of a new service which is equal to the amount of district financial contributions. The new services include 56 beds in one hostel in Oxfordshire for those with more complex needs requiring 24 hour support.

OCCG are committed to continue to contribute financially to this proposal. They will be investigating how to gain health outcomes which justify their health spending to benefit this client group during the three year period, they may also be considering some remodelling of their health spending. They will consider any further funding for this pathway by the end of the three year period.

The pooled budget has been profiled and is to be agreed by each District /City Council to supplement the County Council and OCCG contributions. This is detailed in **Appendix 1** (exempt).

In Cherwell the Council made provision of a financial reserve for this purpose which remains available and can provide our first year contribution. This proposal provides the Council with a three year window when Officers can undertake a full review of their needs for this client group and of the current spending to form future plans and provision. The Council will need to take steps to ensure it makes adequate provision for its financial contributions required in years two and three of this proposal.

3.6 New Governance – **Appendix 2** (exempt)

The working group have proposed a two tier governance structure to set strategic direction for a 3 year period to manage the new housing related support funding pool budget.

Tier 1 – elected members / senior officers through the Health Improvement Board

Tier 2 – Officer level through a Housing Related Support Joint Management Group

Draft terms of reference have been modelled on the latest section 75 agreement in Oxfordshire. These are draft to be signed in due course. The County Council is continuing to provide the most significant contribution to the pooled budget for the period of the agreement.

3.7 The preferred commissioning option – see option 3 **Appendix 1** (exempt)

This option will provide a hostel with 24 hour support which will continue to be located in Oxford City. Cherwell will be able to refer to 19 % of the bed spaces for those clients who meet the criteria in line with its budget contribution as above. This will mean we may access up to 10/11 beds which we will refer to and monitor.

This option will also initially continue to provide funding for the housing related support provided to 13 beds of supported accommodation in Cherwell.

3.8 HIB workshop members considered all the following proposals and agreed them subject to each constituent party also giving approval to the governance structure. They are recommending acceptance of officer recommendations which are:

- Agreement to the new commissioning principals as outlined above
- Agreement to creating a new Housing Related support pool budget as described
- Confirmation of financial contributions to the new Housing related support pool budget from each constituent party
- Agreement to the draft terms of reference for the new governance structure
- To task the officer led working group to produce an implementation plan and a transition plan, in preparation for and subject to these decisions being formally ratified by each constituent party within the agreed timescale.

3.9 Finally it should also be noted that additional funding from the County Council also funds floating support services across the County for nearly 500 clients. This has a hugely preventative focus, helping clients remain independent in the community.

The County Council also currently funds domestic abuse services (including advice, outreach, refuge provision) across the County to the value of approximately £330,000 per annum, alongside various other funding streams. A strategic review of these services is also currently underway and expects to report Autumn 2016. Decisions regarding the future funding for these services remains outstanding. It should be noted that Cherwell currently contribute from their Cherwell Homeless Prevention Grant for the Domestic Abuse Outreach service in this District. This review may be the subject of a further report in due course

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

4.1 The new proposals have been a significant achievement and demonstrate excellent joint working across all partners. Officers have made considerable efforts to negotiate across the County to reach this stage and form these proposals. All parties have considered a full range of options to retain hostel beds for complex case with 24 hour support in Oxford, also to maintain and hopefully expand local service delivery to provide housing related support. This proposal provides a full overview of the preferred recommendations which will maintain the commitment to provide the current level of housing related support funding already allocated to Cherwell to be continued during the period of the agreement. This means that although Cherwell will need to contribute £62,700 per year to maintain the service for complex needs in Oxford, this also means housing related support investment will continue to be received in Cherwell during the next 3 years.

5.0 Consultation

None

These proposals will be fully consulted once all 7 districts and partners have confirmed their agreement to the HIB Board

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: Not to agree the joint county plan and financial contribution as recommended for the next 3 years. This would result in Cherwell needing to fully fund and make its own arrangements for rough sleepers with multiple and complex needs. It would also result in the withdrawal of the housing related support funding currently received from the County and spent within the district.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 A commitment for payment to the joint housing related support financial pool for a period of 3 years commencing 1 April 2017. Cherwell payment is calculated at £62,700 pa. Provision has been made through a reserve for 2017/18 in anticipation of this request. The Council will need to ensure adequate funding can be available to meet payments they will be committed to in 2018/19 and 2019/2020.

Comments checked by:

Denise Taylor, Group Accountant, 01295 221982
Denise.taylor@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Legal Implications

- 7.2 A new governance agreement is in draft for the Council to agree to describe commissioning and management of the joint financial pool across the County Council, OCCG and the District Councils of Oxfordshire. Cherwell can appoint suitable officer representation for the officer working group which will report to the Health Improvement Board where the Council is also represented by an elected member from Cherwell District Council.

Comments checked by:

Nigel Bell, Team Leader Planning & Litigation, 01295-221687,
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Risk

- 7.3 By supporting this proposed way forward the existing services to provide housing related support for single homeless and those with complex needs can be initially sustained and remodelled in a suitable time frame. These services provide a vital safety net for the most vulnerable in society. This plan for 3 years also provides a period which allows the Council to consider and explore all new and different options to make alternative provision for this client group in future, with adequate time to review and commission as necessary to ensure adequate arrangements can continue.

If one party does not agree there will need to be further consideration to reach any agreement on a way forward to provide services for this complex need. It is unlikely that a further joint proposal can be identified which may mean increased costs for Cherwell.

These risks will be managed through the operational risk register and escalated to the corporate risk register as and when necessary.

Comments checked by:

Louise Tustian, Senior Performance & Improvement Officer 01295 221786

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8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision

Financial Threshold Met: Yes

Community Impact Threshold Met: Yes

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

Cherwell: a thriving community

c.3 Provide high quality housing options advice and support to prevent homelessness

c.4 Work to promote health and wellbeing across the District

Lead Councillor

Councillor John Donaldson, Lead Member for Housing

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
1 - EXEMPT	Paper on Housing Related Support Re-commissioning Options for HIB workshop on 1 July 2016
2 - EXEMPT	Housing Related Support Pooled Budget Agreement
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Marianne North, Housing Needs Manager
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