

# **Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan 2015 -2031**



## **Basic Conditions Statement**

Submission Version  
19<sup>th</sup> Nov 2015

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# SUMMARY

Section	Content
Section 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sets out how this Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan fits into and complies with the legal framework.</li></ul>
Section 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Considers the extent to which The Plan conforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) core planning principles.</li></ul>
Section 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Draws attention to the existence of a Sustainability Report.</li><li>• It also draws attention to three major BNDP reports that offer a large part of the evidence upon which the sustainability report is based.</li><li>• 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.</li></ul>
Section 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 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 20<sup>th</sup> July 2015.</li><li>• 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.</li></ul>
Section 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Looks at BNDP conformity with the Strategic Objectives of the Adopted Cherwell Plan (2015) and finds a good fit.</li></ul>
Section 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We worked with the Cherwell Planning Authority to be sure that they had the information they needed to formulate an SEA screening opinion.</li><li>• 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.</li><li>• 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.</li><li>• We consider the need for an HRA but with no sites of European interest within 20km we deduce any impact is extremely unlikely.</li><li>• 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.</li></ul>
Section 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Offers a very brief bibliography of the evidence base.</li></ul>
Section 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Conclusion is that the BNDP meets the basic conditions.</li></ul>

# 1. INTRODUCTION

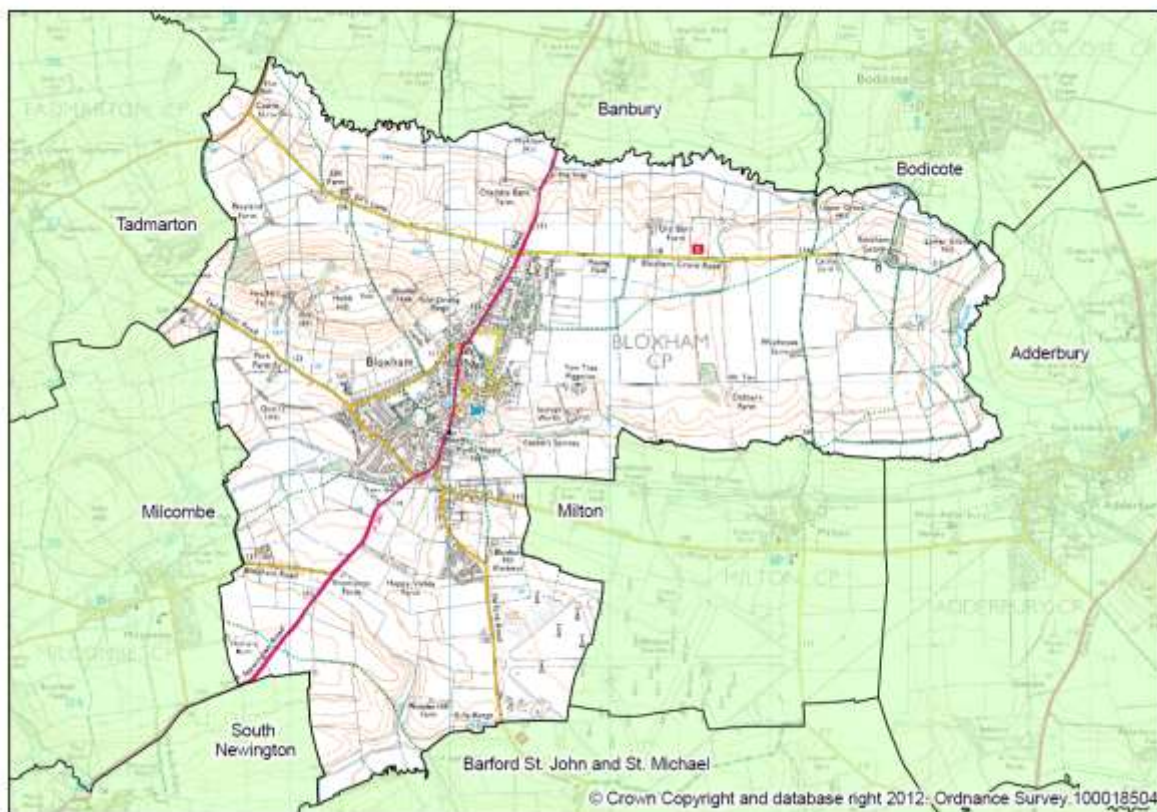
## LEGAL FRAMEWORK

### 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 <span style="float: right;">BL14</span></p> <p>Include open-market dwellings for older residents <span style="float: right;">BL8</span></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 <span style="float: right;">BL9d</span></p> <p>Ensure school age and the mobility impaired, have safe access to village services. <span style="float: right;">BL3</span></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 <span style="float: right;">BL1-2</span></p> <p>Supporting joint-use recreation facilities. <span style="float: right;">BL19</span></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.<sup>1</sup>

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.

<sup>1</sup> [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	
<b>SO 1</b>	To facilitate economic growth and employment and a more diverse local economy with an emphasis on attracting and developing higher technology industries	<b>Theme 3.</b> Policies encourage high-level jobs such as business consultancy, web-design etc.	✓
<b>SO 2</b>	To support the diversification of Cherwell's rural economy	<b>Theme 3</b> Policies encourage start-up and expansion	✓
<b>SO 3</b>	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.	✓
<b>SO 4</b>	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.	✓
<b>SO 5</b>	To encourage sustainable tourism	<b>Theme 2</b> seeks to preserve the attractive rural character of the village: something essential to maintain the flow of visitors.	✓
<b>SO 6</b>	To accommodate new development so that it maintains or enhances the local identity of Cherwell's settlements and the functions they perform	<b>Theme 1</b> seeks to accommodate an appropriate share of rural development (105 dwellings)  Theme 2 seeks to preserve or enhance the character of the village.	✓
<b>SO 7</b>	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.	<b>Theme 1</b> 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	
<b>SO 8</b>	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	<b>Theme 1</b> Bloxham will be accommodating the recommended percentage of affordable homes	✓
<b>SO 9</b>	To improve the availability of housing to newly forming households in rural areas.	<b>Theme 1 and 2</b> Bloxham has been and continues to be one of the fastest growing villages in the area for several years.	✓
<b>SO 10</b>	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.	<b>Theme 1</b> addresses avoidance of major incoherence between development and infrastructure capacity. <b>Theme 2</b> touches upon green infrastructure and <b>Theme 4</b> at community Health	✓
<b>SO 11</b>	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	<b>Theme 1</b> addresses both flood resilience and water efficiency and also seeks to encourage low carbon transport.	✓
<b>SO 12</b>	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.	<b>Theme 1</b> 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.	✓
<b>SO 13</b>	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.	<b>Theme 1</b> 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	
<b>SO 14</b>	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.	<b>Theme 2</b> has policies upon conserving and enhancing our distinctive environment.	✓
		<b>Theme 3</b> has policies that encourage live-work accommodation and better digital infrastructure	✓
<b>SO 15</b>	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.	<b>Theme 2</b> 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.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> [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](mailto: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](mailto: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

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.<sup>3</sup>

They are:

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<sup>3</sup> [BNDP Website Post consultation documents](#)



- Housing and Landscape Report<sup>4</sup>
- Infrastructure and Business Report<sup>5</sup>
- Recreation Report<sup>6</sup>

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 base<sup>7</sup> 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.

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<sup>4</sup> [Housing Report](#)

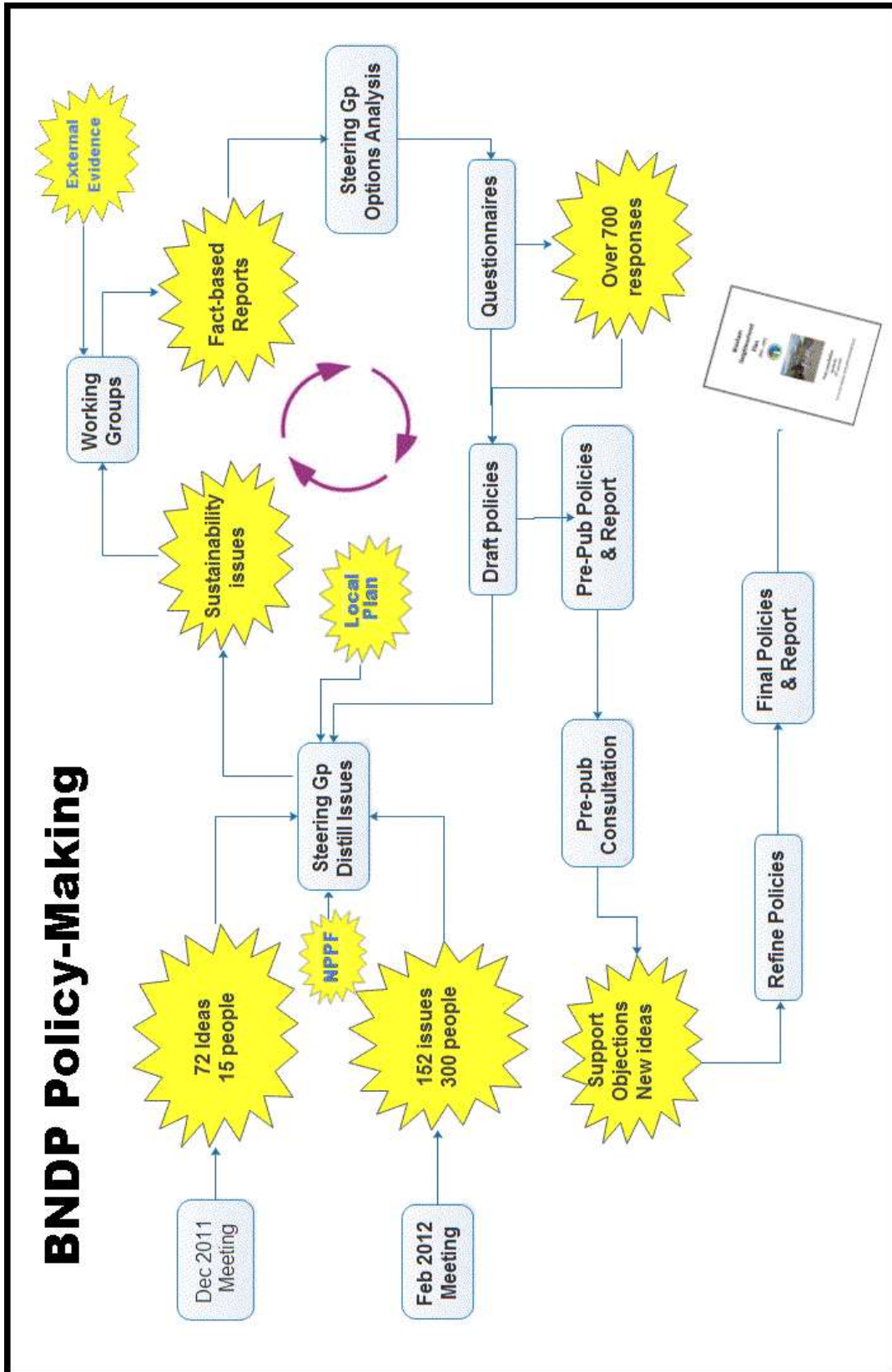
<sup>5</sup> [Infrastructure and Business report](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Recreation Report](#)

<sup>7</sup> [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 Groups<sup>8</sup> 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 report<sup>9</sup>

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

<sup>8</sup> Note – There was inevitably some degree of “coming and going” in the various groups to accommodate people’s changing commitments.

<sup>9</sup> Data from this report makes a major contribution to the content of the sustainability Report

<b>5</b>	Broadband	69	Peter	Lawson
<b>6</b>	Mobile phone reception	75	Patrick	Moore
<b>7</b>	Traffic in Bloxham	80	Mike	Morris
<b>8</b>	Flooding	106	Les	Worthington
<b>9</b>	Business in Bloxham	122	David	Yates
<b>10</b>	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

<b>Section</b>	<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>	<b>Group Members</b>	
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.

<b>Section</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Page</b>	<b>Steering Group members</b>	
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.