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	Rural North Oxfordshire, especially Bloxham is in danger of being lost to overbuilding on Greenfield sites. Bloxham is struggling to retain its identity. Overdevelopment of Bloxham, whether by CDC or at appeal, has had a severe impact on village infrastructure. 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. 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
Oxon CC	Feb 2015	Pre-publication Consultation	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.
Thames Water	May 2015	15/00604/OUT	Thames Water believes that the sewer network downstream of this development is approaching capacity
Sustrans	April 2015	Walking & Cycling in Bloxham	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 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.
Cherwell DC	May 2015	15/00604/OUT	Bloxham has seen a higher level of growth compared to other Category A villages
Bloxham Parish Council	Dec 2014	Local Plan Examiners hearing	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.
S.Newington Parish Council	Jan 2015	Consultation	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.
Local Plan Inspectors report	May 2015	Local Plan Inspection report	"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."
Road Safety Foundation Report	Nov 2015	Link on BNDP Website	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.)

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NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

1. Residents have identified sustainability issues of particular importance to them via meetings and questionnaires[1].
2. The team working on the Bloxham Neighbourhood Development Plan expanded this list to cover additional items important to obtaining consistency with the NPPF[2] and Local Plan[3].
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 2011[4] 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;
b) Landscape and townscape;
c) Heritage and archaeology;
d) Material assets;
e) Population and human health;
f) Soils and geology;
g) Water;
h) Air quality;
i) Climatic factors.

An SEA is only required of Neighbourhood Plans where the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects[6]. 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 indeperndent 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 2004[7] 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 report[8] 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 NPPF[9] 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
2. Climate change and flood risk
3. Health and wellbeing
4. Poverty and social exclusion
5. crime and disorder
6. Vibrant communities
7. Accessibility to all services
8. Efficiency of land use
9. Air pollution
10. Biodiversity
11. Countryside and historic environment
12. Sustainable transport
13. Use of local products
14. Waste and recycling
15. Water
16. Energy
17. Employment
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

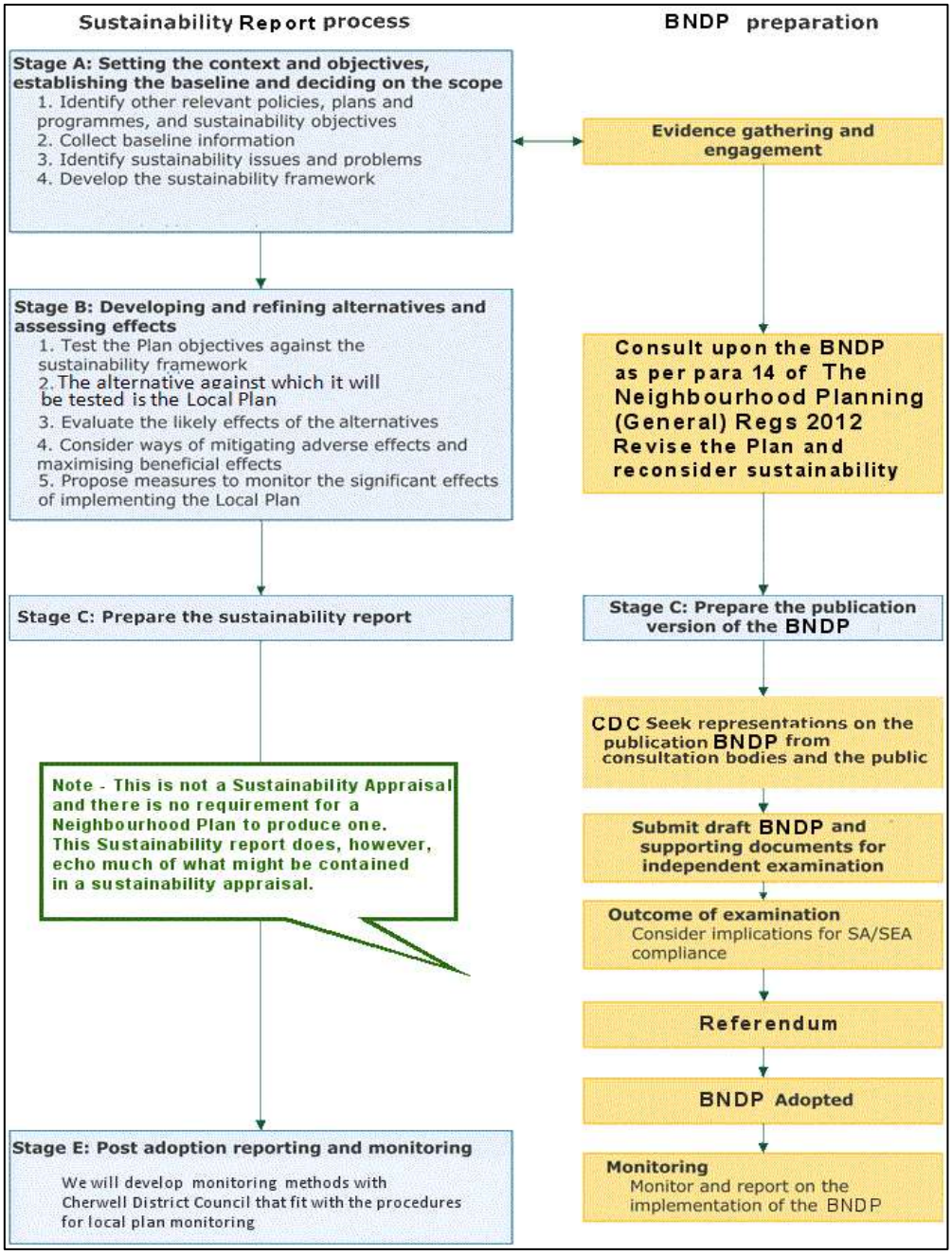
We will also make occasional use of footnotes on these pages to make access to evidence easier. More detailed data informing the sustainability has been incorporated into the three main pieces of documentary evidence informing this plan which contain around 400 additional references.

- 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
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
10. Accessibility
11. Air quality
12. Biodiversity and habitats
13. Resources
14. Waste & Recycling
15. Water
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 website[10].
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 average[12].
b. Residents score low on deprivation[13] 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 population[14]. 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 pledge[16]. 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 average[17]. Recent village expansion has not provided any new pitches and this will shortly emerge as an increasing issue[18].

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 police[19], 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 shows[20] 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.

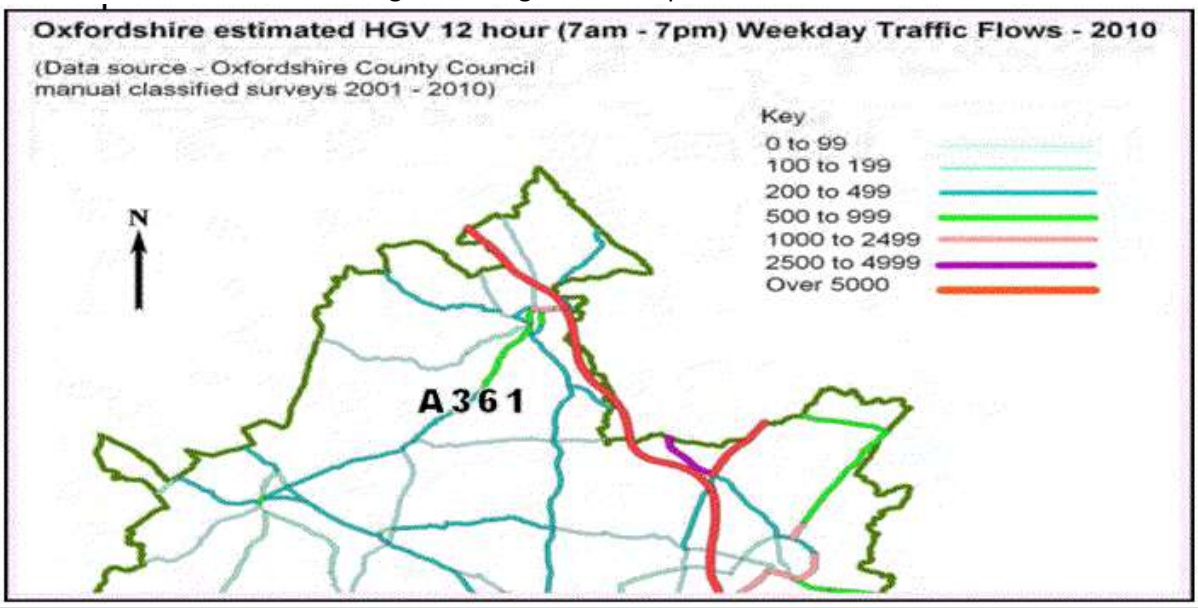


Bloxham from the south-east. A minority have genuine pedestrian access to fresh food.

[20] See Housing Report – Bloxham Retail Facilities

11. Air Quality

a. 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.
b. We do not have measures of air quality but a study is currently being undertaken.
c. 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?

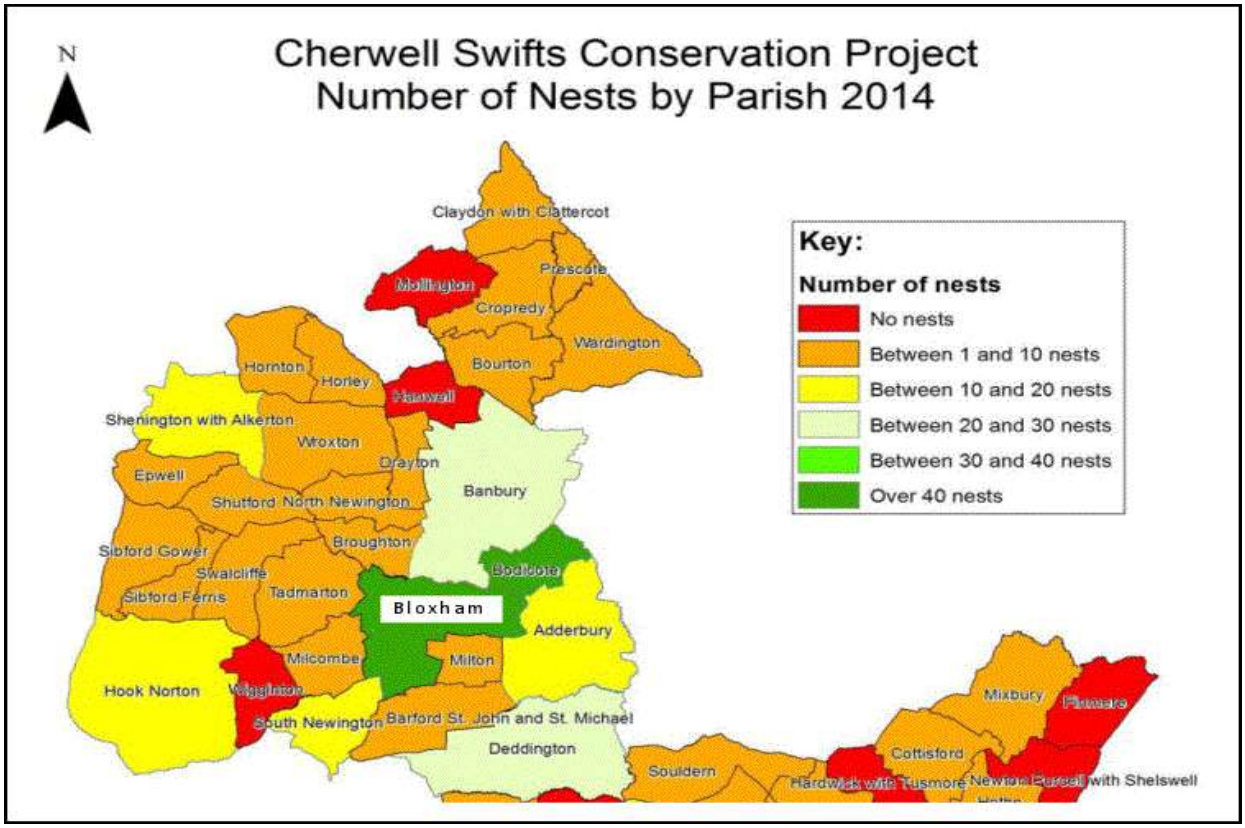
12. Resources

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

a. Bloxham is 25km from any Ramsar or Natura 2000 sites.
b. 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.)
c. Recent surveys show the village is a significant nesting area for swifts.
d. Bats are also quite common but we do not have quantitative data on this.
e. It has a nature reserve the bird-life of which has led to a national publication.
f. A village hedgerow survey exists which identifies more significant hedgerows.
g. 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 Vodaphone 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	☑	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	☑	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	☑	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	Only the High Street offers *fresh* food. (There is also a garage that offers a limited range of mostly processed, foodstuffs.) 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. ❖ 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	We have a High Street post-office though not within walking distance of potential new developments – particularly for older people. (See above) ❖ 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	We have two village pubs. There is also a third pub that residents hope may be re-opened one day! ❖ 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	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. ❖ 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	☑	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	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
	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
	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 *some* 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

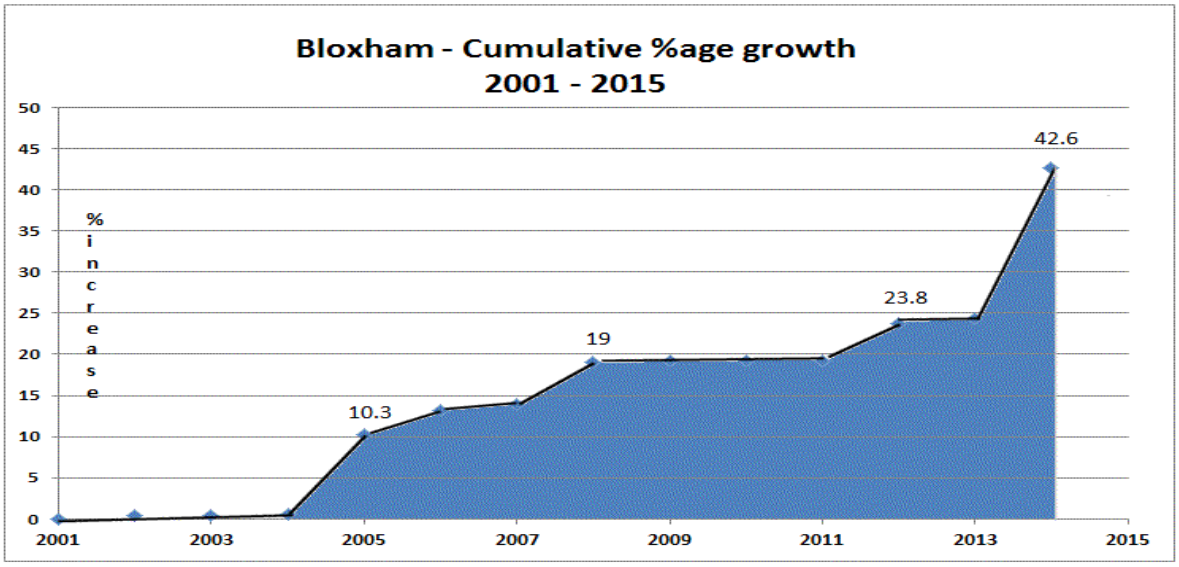
We do not intend defending the precise score obtained on BNDP CRAITLUS-Plus although we think we have actually assigned points rather generously! We simply point out that looking at the detail paints a drastically different picture of sustainability to the high-level CRAITLUS categorisation.
We note also para 216 from the Cherwell Local Plan (2016) Examiners report[33] 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 NPFF 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 C22-3,C26-8 H6	ESD10, ESD13, ESD16 B272, C211, C218	B10
2B Enhance village character	17, 56-64, 125-6			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 I 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?

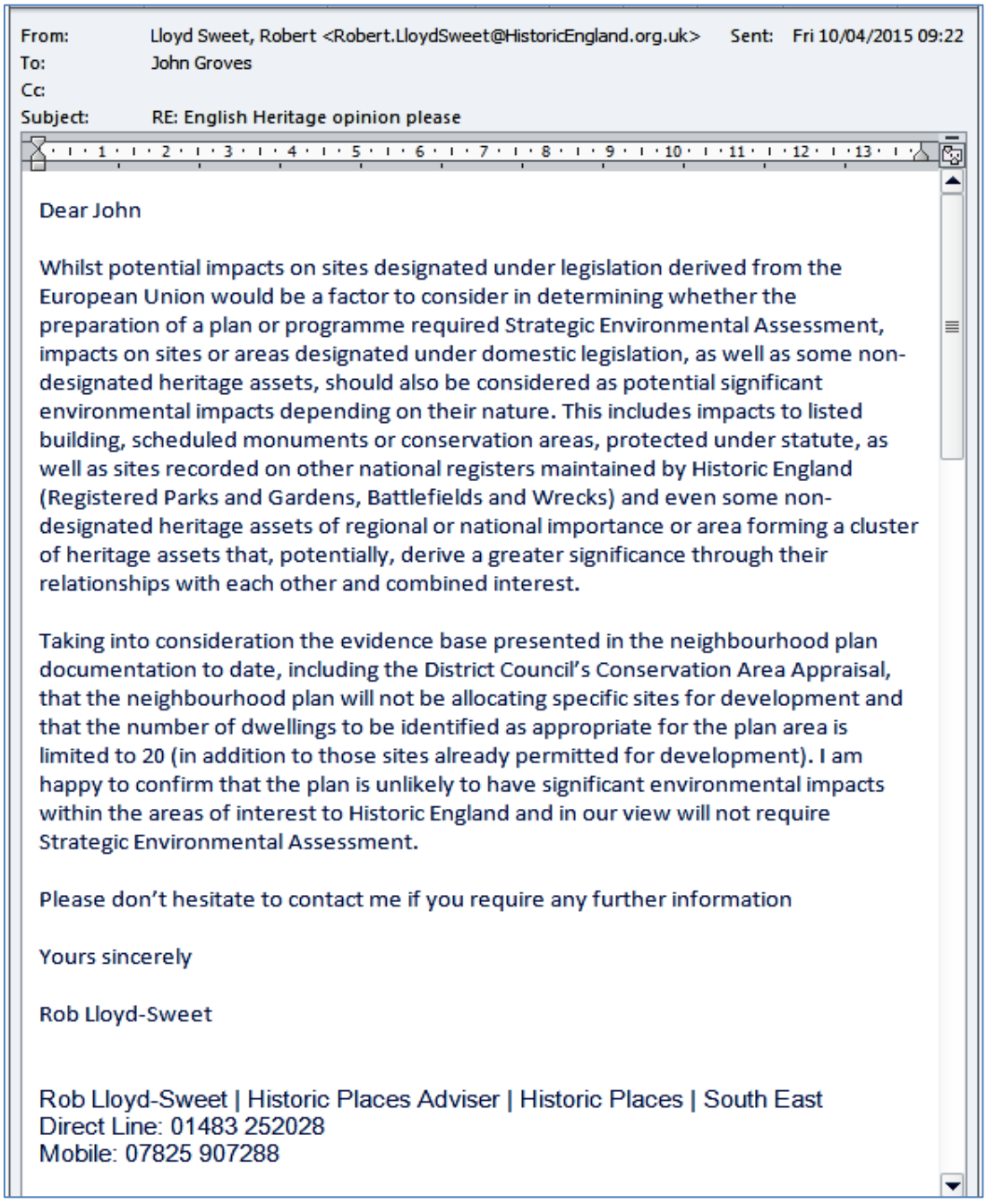
En1 Encourage greater resilience of the electrical system.

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



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.

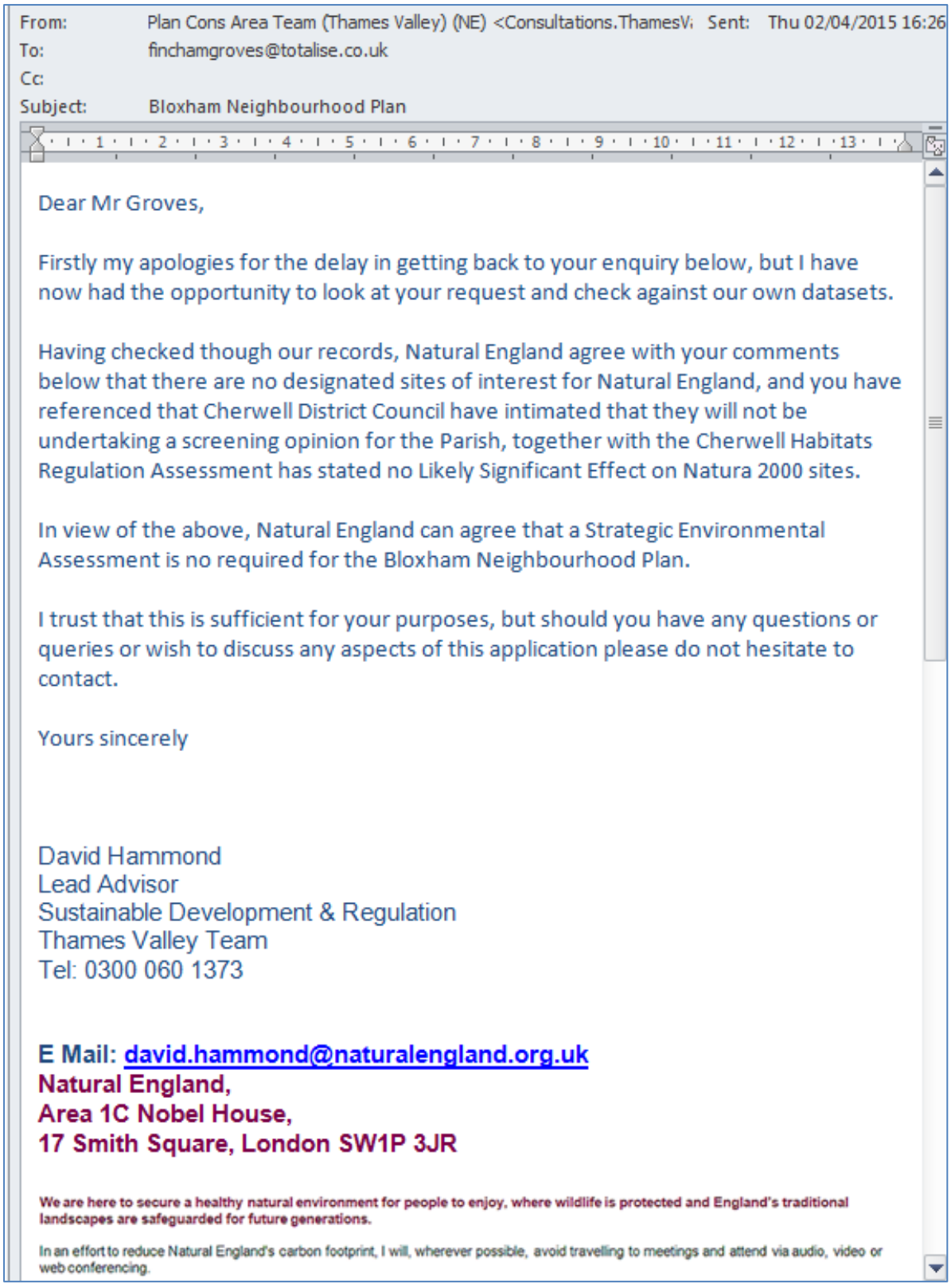
Please don't hesitate to contact me if you require any further information

Yours sincerely

Rob Lloyd-Sweet

Rob Lloyd-Sweet | Historic Places Adviser | Historic Places | South East
Direct Line: 01483 252028
Mobile: 07825 907288

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

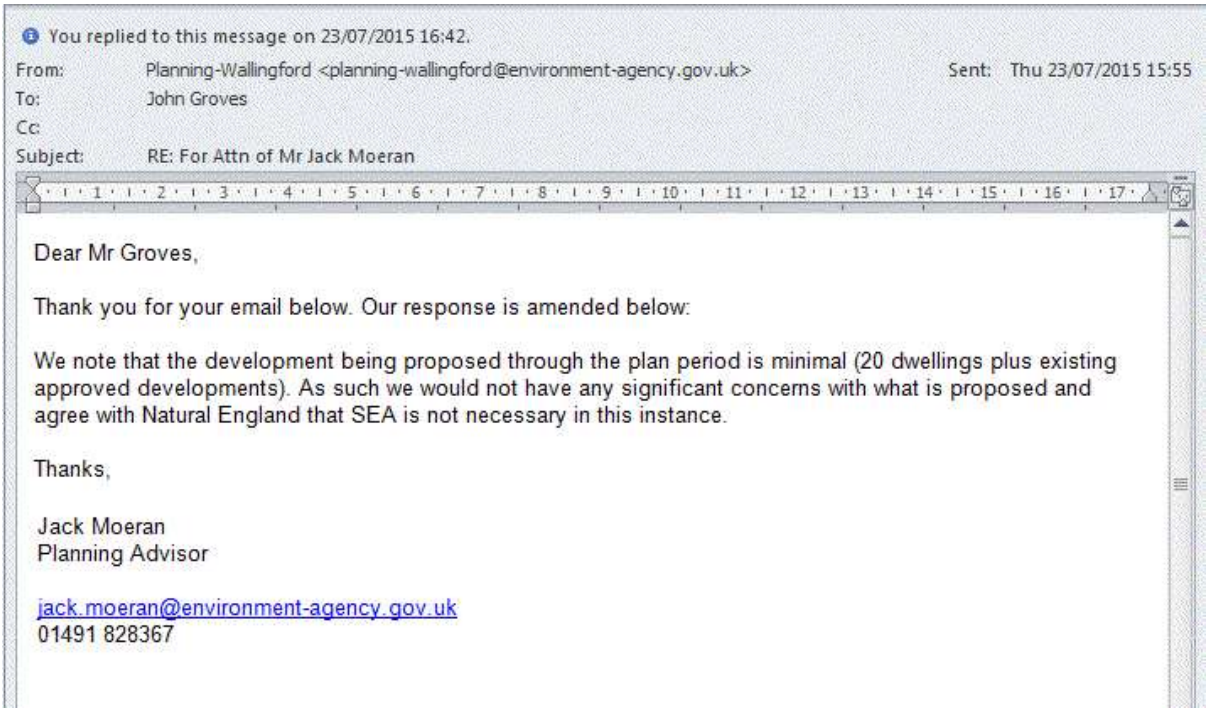
David Hammond
Lead Advisor
Sustainable Development & Regulation
Thames Valley Team
Tel: 0300 060 1373

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



You replied to this message on 23/07/2015 16:42.

From: Planning-Wallingford <planning-wallingford@environment-agency.gov.uk> Sent: Thu 23/07/2015 15:55
To: John Groves
Cc:
Subject: RE: For Attn of Mr Jack Moeran

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

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.

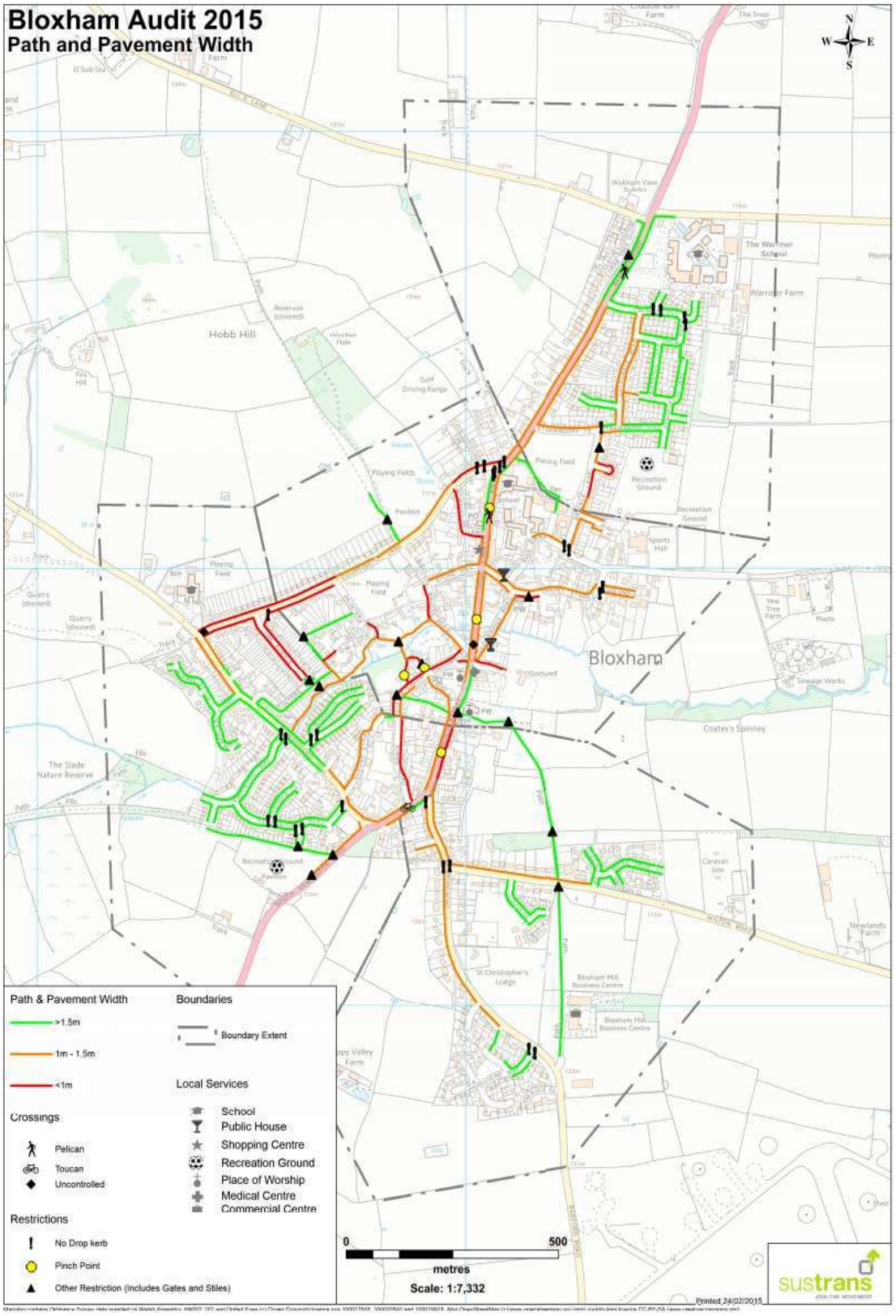
Particular challenges are presented by:

- 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.

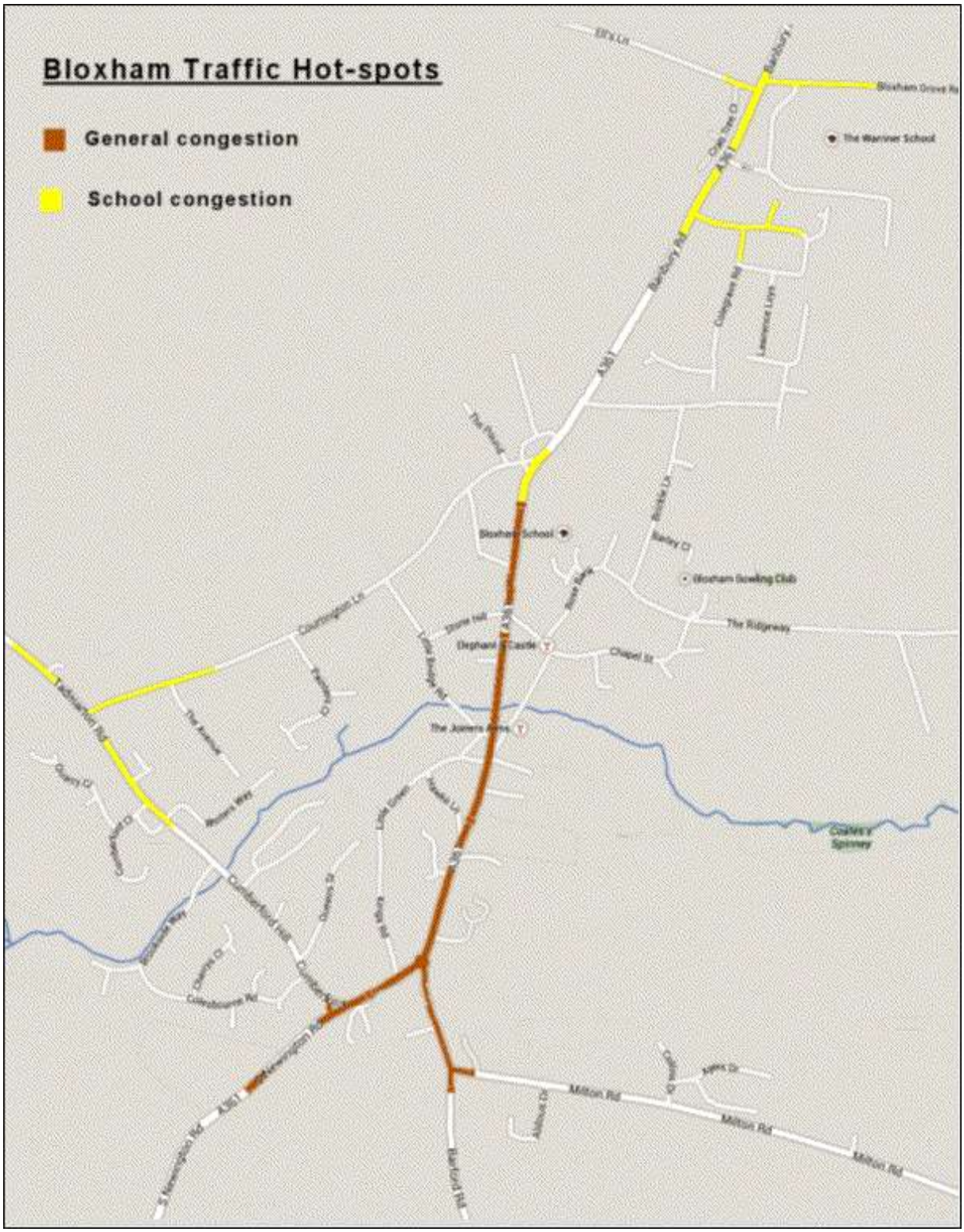
These and other challenges will need to be addressed to achieve the full potential for walking and cycling in the village. Possible solutions are suggested for some of these issues but others seem more intractable.

4. Sustrans Report on Bloxham Pavements

Green represent pavements of recommended width

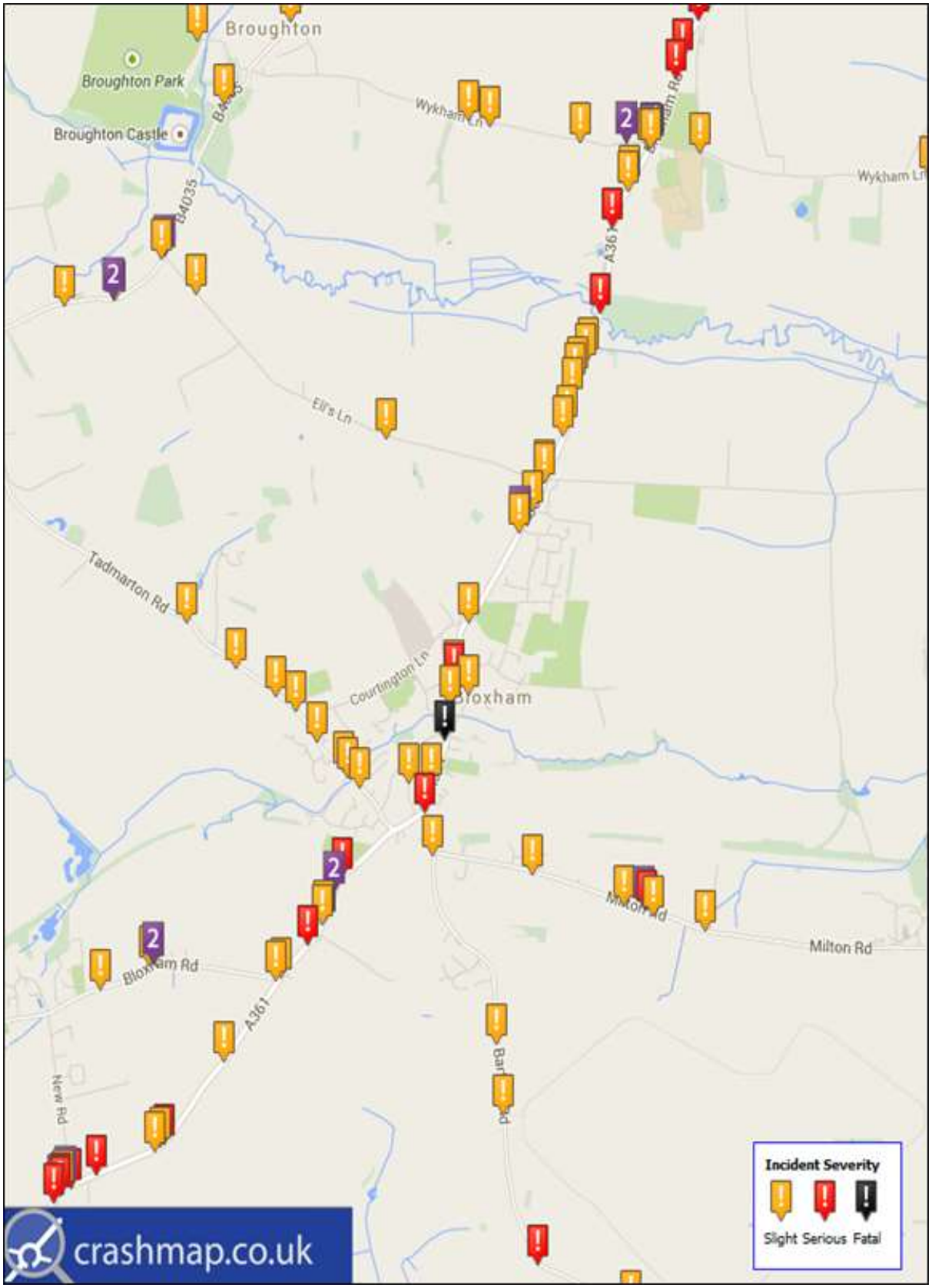


5. Traffic Hotspots



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 Service[35]

Stagecoach is among several bus companies who will consulted on their willingness to continue to provide services without a subsidy.

Is your bus service affected?

There are 105 services across Oxfordshire currently receiving full or partial subsidies from Oxfordshire County Council. Services in the Banburyshire area have been listed below:

For a full breakdown of which services are affected visit: www.banburyguardian.co.uk/news/business/oxfordshire-bus-services-under-threat-and-dial-a-ride-to-be-scrapped-under-new-2-6m-cuts-1-6745479

X8: Chipping Norton - Banbury

X9: Chipping Norton - Banbury

S3: Oxford City Centre - Aylesbury

22: Bicester - Langford - Carterfield - Bicester (circular)

X15: Abingdon - Witney

W10: Woodstock - Shipton on Cherwell - Kidlington - Woodstock

23: Bicester - Langford - Carterfield - Bicester (circular)

25: Oxford - Gosford - Kidlington - Bletchington - Kirtlington - Weston-on-the-Green - Bicester

V8: Iffley - Westcotes - Iffley - Wychwoods - Chipping Norton

V12: Upper Oddington - Chipping Norton

V26: Upper Oddington - Chipping Norton - Leafield - Witney

V17: Upper Oddington - Chipping Norton

269: Banbury - Stratford upon Avon

B7: Grimsbury & Edmunds Road - Banbury

270: Banbury - Stratford upon Avon

277: Lighthorne Heath - Banbury

B2: Bodicote - Banbury

B10: Hanwell Fields - Banbury

275: Oxford City Centre - High Wycombe

50A: Stratford - upon-Avon - Chipping Norton

X9: Witney - Charlbury - Chipping Norton

H2: Sandhills - Headington Quarry - Headington Centre

B4: Easington - Banbury

41: North Abingdon Town Service anti-clockwise

37: Bicester - Hardwick - Finmere

82: Silverstone to Bicester via Brackley

50: Stratford-upon-Avon - Chipping Norton

S04: Horton - Horley - Banbury

X8: Kingham - Chipping Norton

S4: Banbury - Oxford

S3: Chipping Norton - Oxford

SPECIAL REPORT Dial-a-Ride could be scrapped and bus subsidies face sweeping cuts

Proposals for sweeping cuts which would 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 to run 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 £3.68m to subsidise bus routes. These include the 488 and 489 service between Banbury 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 heading 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 £530,000 has been saved this year, £2m in 2015 to 16, £2.1m in 2016 to 17 and £1.7m in 2017 to 18. Cllr Ian Hudspeth, the leader of Oxfordshire County Council, said the council is left with "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.

Ian Hudspeth.

"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

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 Excelbus. 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.

[35] County Council cabinet members recommeded withdrawal of all bus service subsidies on 10th Nov 2015.

9. Bloxham Surface Water Flood Map

