

# Bloxham NP SEA Scoping Report

## Scoping Report

Bloxham Parish Council

February 2025

Quality information

Prepared by	Checked by	Verified by	Approved by
OM	EH	NCB	NCB
Graduate Environmental Planner	Environmental Planner	Technical Director	Technical Director

Revision History

Revision	Revision date	Details	Name	Position
V1.0	11 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	Draft for client comment	NCB	Technical Director

Prepared for:  
Bloxham Parish Council

Prepared by:  
AECOM Limited  
4th Floor, Landmark  
One Temple Quay  
Temple Back East  
Bristol BS1 6DZ  
United Kingdom

T: +44 117 901 7000  
aecom.com

© 2025 AECOM Limited. All Rights Reserved.

This document has been prepared by AECOM Limited (“AECOM”) in accordance with its contract with Locality (the “Client”) and in accordance with generally accepted consultancy principles, the budget for fees and the terms of reference agreed between AECOM and the Client. Any information provided by third parties and referred to herein has not been checked or verified by AECOM, unless otherwise expressly stated in the document. AECOM shall have no liability to any third party that makes use of or relies upon this document.

## Table of Contents

1.	Introduction .....	1
2.	Context .....	3
3.	Air quality .....	8
4.	Biodiversity.....	11
5.	Climate change and flood risk.....	17
6.	Community wellbeing.....	25
7.	Historic environment .....	31
8.	Land, soil and water resources .....	35
9.	Landscape .....	40
10.	Transportation and movement .....	43
11.	Proposed SEA framework.....	46
12.	Next steps .....	51



**Figure 1.1: Bloxham neighbourhood area**



# 1. Introduction

## Background

- 1.1 AECOM has been commissioned to undertake an independent Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of the emerging Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan (hereafter referred to as the 'Bloxham NP').
- 1.2 The Bloxham NP is being prepared under the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, and in the context of the local planning framework for Cherwell District Council (CDC).
- 1.3 The neighbourhood area (shown in **Figure 1.1** above) is made up of the village of Bloxham and surrounding area and is located in northern Oxfordshire, approximately 5km southwest of Banbury.

## SEA explained

- 1.4 SEA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the potential impacts of an emerging plan, and potential alternatives in terms of key environmental issues. The aim of SEA is to inform and influence the plan-making process with a view to avoiding and mitigating potential negative impacts and maximising the potential for positive effects. Through this approach, SEA seeks to maximise the emerging plan's contribution to sustainable development.
- 1.5 SEA is undertaken to meet the specific requirements prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations).
- 1.6 The Bloxham NP has been screened in as requiring SEA. This is predominantly because of the scope of the plan, which proposes to allocate land for additional homes with the potential to lead to a range of environmental effects. SEA is therefore required to assess the potential for significant environmental effects.
- 1.7 The next stage of SEA (this report) seeks to establish a suggested scope for the assessment. A key procedural requirement of the SEA Regulations is to present the scope for the SEA, so that the designated authorities (Historic England, Natural England, and the Environment Agency) can provide timely comment.

## SEA scoping explained

- 1.8 The scope is explored and presented under a series of key environmental themes as follows:
  - Air quality
  - Biodiversity and geodiversity
  - Climate change and flood risk
  - Community wellbeing
  - Historic environment
  - Land, soil, and water resources
  - Landscape
  - Transportation and movement

- 1.9 The selected environmental themes incorporate the 'SEA topics' suggested by Annex I (f) of the SEA Directive<sup>1</sup>. These were refined to reflect a broad understanding of the anticipated scope of plan effects.
- 1.10 Developing the draft scope for the SEA as presented in this report has involved the following steps:
1. Exploring the policy context for the neighbourhood plan and SEA to summarise the key messages arising. Overarching plans and the strategic policy context are presented in the first chapter (as part of the context for the plan), whilst localised plans and strategies are explored under each environmental theme.
  2. Establishing the baseline for the SEA (i.e., the current and future situation in the area) to help identify key sensitive receptors. Following a series of maps, key statistics, and cited evidence sources, a narrative summarises the baseline for each environmental theme. The future baseline (in the absence of the plan) is explored in the first chapter (as part of the context for the plan).
  3. Identifying particular problems or opportunities ('issues') that should be a particular focus of the SEA. Key issues are explored for each environmental theme; and
  4. Considering this information, developing a SEA framework comprising SEA objectives and assessment questions, which can then be used as a guiding framework for the subsequent assessment. Objectives are explored for each environmental theme scoped in as part of the assessment, and then brought together as a whole (the SEA framework) in the final chapter.
- 1.11 Options and proposals within the emerging neighbourhood plan will be assessed consistently using this framework.

---

<sup>1</sup> The SEA Directive (Directive 2001/42/EC) is 'of a procedural nature' (para 9 of the Directive preamble) and does not set out to prescribe particular issues that should and should not be a focus, beyond requiring a focus on 'the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors'.

## 2. Context

- 2.1 This section presents the strategic planning policy context provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the local development framework of CDC. It also identifies plans and strategies of distinct relevance to the interests of statutory consultees, and other broad national strategies of relevance.

### Strategic policy context

**Table 2.1 Strategic policies**

Document title	Year of publication
<a href="#">National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)</a>	2023
<a href="#">Levelling-up and Regeneration Act</a>	2023
<a href="#">Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan</a>	2016
<a href="#">Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1)</a>	2015
<a href="#">Cherwell Local Plan 2040</a>	Emerging

- 2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides an overarching framework for development in England. It sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It is supported by planning practice guidance, which is a suite of policy papers covering a broad range of topics, including SEA. Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the NPPF. At the time of writing, the new Labour Government are seeking feedback on the latest [NPPF consultation](#). This consultation, which closed in September 2024, addresses a broad range of national planning policy reforms. Among the proposed changes is the reintroduction of mandatory housing targets, including an increase in the number of dwellings required in Cherwell. These proposed amendments may influence the plan making process for the Bloxham NP.
- 2.3 The Government's Levelling Up and Regeneration Act seeks to reduce regional inequalities and promote economic growth and opportunities in less prosperous areas. It has been designed to address regional disparities, stimulate economic development, and enhance infrastructure and community well-being in order to create a more balanced and inclusive nation.
- 2.4 The strategic policy context is also set by the Cherwell Local Plan (CLP) 2011-2031 (Part 1), which was adopted in 2015. The CLP identifies Bloxham as a Category A 'Service Village', which are settlements deemed suitable for minor development, infilling and conversions.
- 2.5 CDC are in the process of developing a new Local Plan – the Cherwell Local Plan Review (LPR) 2042 – which, once adopted, will replace the current CLP. Regulation 18 consultation on the LPR took place between 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2023 and 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2023. The LPR is currently undergoing Submission Consultation, which runs from 19<sup>th</sup> December 2024 to 25<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

- 2.6 Under Core Policy 35 (Settlement Hierarchy) of the LPR, Bloxham is identified as a 'Larger Village'. In these settlements there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development beyond the existing built limits will only be permitted on allocated sites, and development in settlements within the Green Belt will be considered against National Policy. It is anticipated that the 11 villages within this level of the settlement hierarchy will contribute to delivering 500 homes across the plan period.
- 2.7 The LPR sets out the housing requirement for Bloxham under Policy RUR1 (Rural Area Housing Strategy), which allocates 75 homes in Bloxham.

# Historic England

**Table 2.2 Policies of relevance to Historic England**

Document title	Year of publication
<a href="#"><u>Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency: Historic England Advice Note 18</u></a>	2024
<a href="#"><u>Environmental Improvement Plan 2023: First revision of the 25 Year Environment Plan</u></a>	2023
<a href="#"><u>Historic England Advice Note 11 (Second Edition): Neighbourhood Planning and the Historic Environment</u></a>	2022
<a href="#"><u>Historic England: Heritage and Climate Change</u></a>	2022
<a href="#"><u>National Model Design Code</u></a>	2021
<a href="#"><u>The National Design Guide</u></a>	2019
<a href="#"><u>Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Appraisal Designation and Management</u></a>	2019
<a href="#"><u>A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment</u></a>	2018
<a href="#"><u>Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning: The Setting of Heritage Assets</u></a>	2017
<a href="#"><u>Historic England Advice Note 8: Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)</u></a>	2016
<a href="#"><u>Historic England Advice Note 3: The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans</u></a>	2015

2.8 Historic England champions England's heritage. The key high-level principles for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment are as follows:

- The historic environment is a shared resource.
- Everyone should be able to participate in sustaining the historic environment.
- Understanding the significance of places is vital.
- Significant places should be managed to sustain their values.
- Decisions about change must be reasonable, transparent, and consistent; and
- Documenting and learning from decisions is essential.

2.9 The significance of places is the key element which underpins the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. Significance is a collective term for the sum of all the heritage values attached to a place, be it a building, an archaeological site, or a larger historic area such as a whole village or landscape.

# Natural England and the Environment Agency

**Table 2.3 Policies of relevance to Natural England and the Environment Agency**

Document title	Year of publication
<a href="#"><u>Environmental Improvement Plan 2023: First revision of the 25 Year Environment Plan</u></a>	2023
<a href="#"><u>Green Infrastructure Planning and Design Guide: Designing nature-rich, healthy, climate-resilient, and thriving places</u></a>	2023
<a href="#"><u>The Environmental Targets (Fine Particular Matter) (England) Regulations 2023</u></a>	2023
<a href="#"><u>UK Climate Change Risk Assessment</u></a>	2022
<a href="#"><u>Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener</u></a>	2021
<a href="#"><u>Environment Act</u></a>	2021
<a href="#"><u>National Model Design Code</u></a>	2021
<a href="#"><u>Changes to the Habitats Regulations 2017</u></a>	2021
<a href="#"><u>The National Design Guide</u></a>	2019
<a href="#"><u>A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment</u></a>	2018
<a href="#"><u>Space for people: Targeting action for woodland access</u></a>	2017
<a href="#"><u>The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations</u></a>	2017
<a href="#"><u>Flood and Water Management Act 2010</u></a>	2010
<a href="#"><u>Climate Change Act 2008</u></a>	2008

2.10 The interests of Natural England and the Environment Agency span a range of SEA themes, including landscape, biodiversity, land, soil, and water resources (including waste), community wellbeing, and climate change and flood risk. Key documents which link to these interests are outlined above.

## Other national strategies

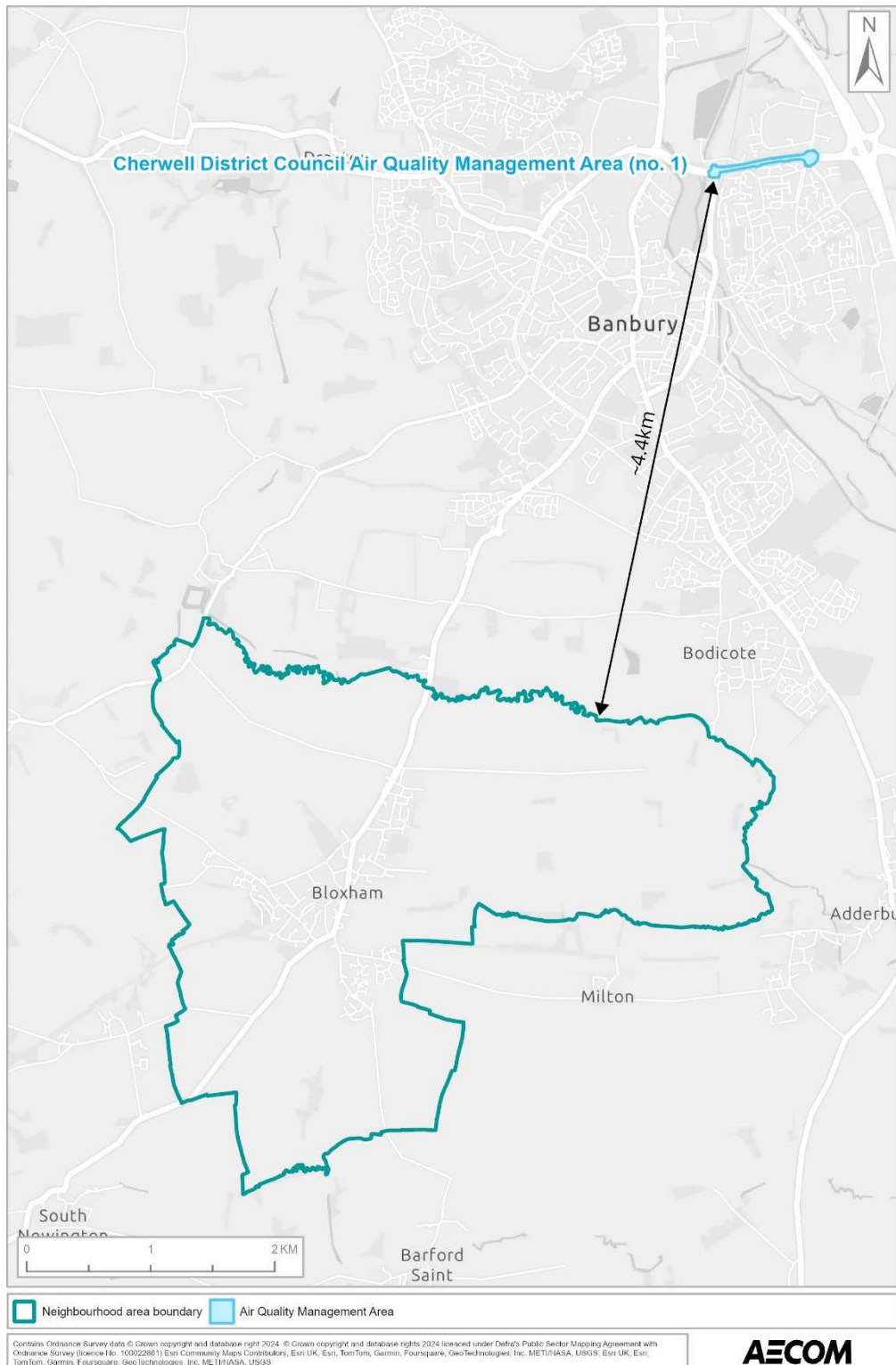
**Table 2.4 Other national strategies**

<b>Document title</b>	<b>Year of publication</b>
<a href="#"><u>UK (third) National Adaptation Programme (NAP3) 2023 to 2028</u></a>	2023
<a href="#"><u>UK Climate Change Risk Assessment</u></a>	2022
<a href="#"><u>Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain</u></a>	2021
<a href="#"><u>National Infrastructure Assessment</u></a>	2021
<a href="#"><u>Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener</u></a>	2021
<a href="#"><u>Waste Management Plan for England</u></a>	2021
<a href="#"><u>Blueprint for a resilient economy</u></a>	2020
<a href="#"><u>National Infrastructure Strategy</u></a>	2020
<a href="#"><u>Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review 10 Years On</u></a>	2020
<a href="#"><u>The UK Sixth Carbon Budget</u></a>	2020
<a href="#"><u>The Clean Air Strategy</u></a>	2019
<a href="#"><u>Future of Mobility: Urban Strategy</u></a>	2019
<a href="#"><u>Planning Practice Guidance</u></a>	2019
<a href="#"><u>Healthy High Streets</u></a>	2018
<a href="#"><u>The Clean Growth Strategy</u></a>	2017
<a href="#"><u>UK plan for tackling roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations</u></a>	2017

## 3. Air quality

- 3.1 This section seeks to summarise any air pollution issues, in particular; exceedances in air pollution objectives / declared Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) and air quality issues associated with the main road network.

### Maps



**Figure 3.1 AQMAs in the neighbourhood area**



## Key statistics

- Whilst there are no AQMAs within the neighbourhood area, the Cherwell District Council Air Quality Management Area (no. 1) is located approximately 4.4 km northeast of the area.

## Key evidence

3.2 Evidence sources which have informed the development of key issues include:

- [DEFRA UK AIR - Air Information Resource - AQMAs interactive map](#)
  - [AQMA Details \(Cherwell District Council Air Quality Management Area No.1\)](#)
- [Cherwell District Council – Air Quality](#)
  - [Air Quality Annual Status Report 2024](#)

## Policy context

**Table 3.2: Additional plans and policies relating to air quality**

Document title	Year of publication
<a href="#">Cherwell District Council - Air Quality Action Plan 2024</a>	2024
<a href="#">Cherwell District Council - Air Quality Annual Status Report 2023</a>	2023
<a href="#">Cherwell District Council - Air Quality Modelling Assessment</a>	2023
<a href="#">Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan</a>	2022

## Commentary

- 3.3 CDC monitor (and are primarily concerned with) nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), linked to tailpipe emissions and road traffic volume. The most recent Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR), published in 2024, indicates that there were no exceedances of the air quality objectives in Bloxham for NO<sub>2</sub>, with neither of the two Non-Automatic Monitoring Sites in the area registering data over the annual mean objective.
- 3.4 AQMAs are declared in areas which exceed national objectives for levels of particulates, nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide, ozone, benzene, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, butadiene, carbon monoxide, lead and/ or nitrogen oxides.
- 3.5 There are no AQMAs within the neighbourhood area, but the closest is the Cherwell District Council Air Quality Management Area (no. 1) which is located 4.4 km northeast of the neighbourhood area. The AQMA incorporates Hennef Way, between the junctions with Ermont Way and Concorde Avenue, and was declared for NO<sub>2</sub> exceedances. It has not yet been compliant with air quality objectives. The AQMA exceeded the annual mean objective by 57.5 µg/m<sup>3</sup> in the current year.

## Key issues

- 3.6 The neighbourhood area is approximately 4.4km southwest of the Cherwell District Council Air Quality Management Area (no. 1), designated due to high NO<sub>2</sub> emissions. As Banbury, where the AQMA is located, is the nearest town to the neighbourhood area, it is likely that many residents travel into this town to access wider services and facilities and employment opportunities.
- 3.7 In light of the above, development in the neighbourhood area could increase travel into neighbouring and larger centres, such as Banbury, particularly via private car. This could worsen air quality in the Cherwell District Council Air Quality Management Area (no. 1).

## SEA objective

- 3.8 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objective:

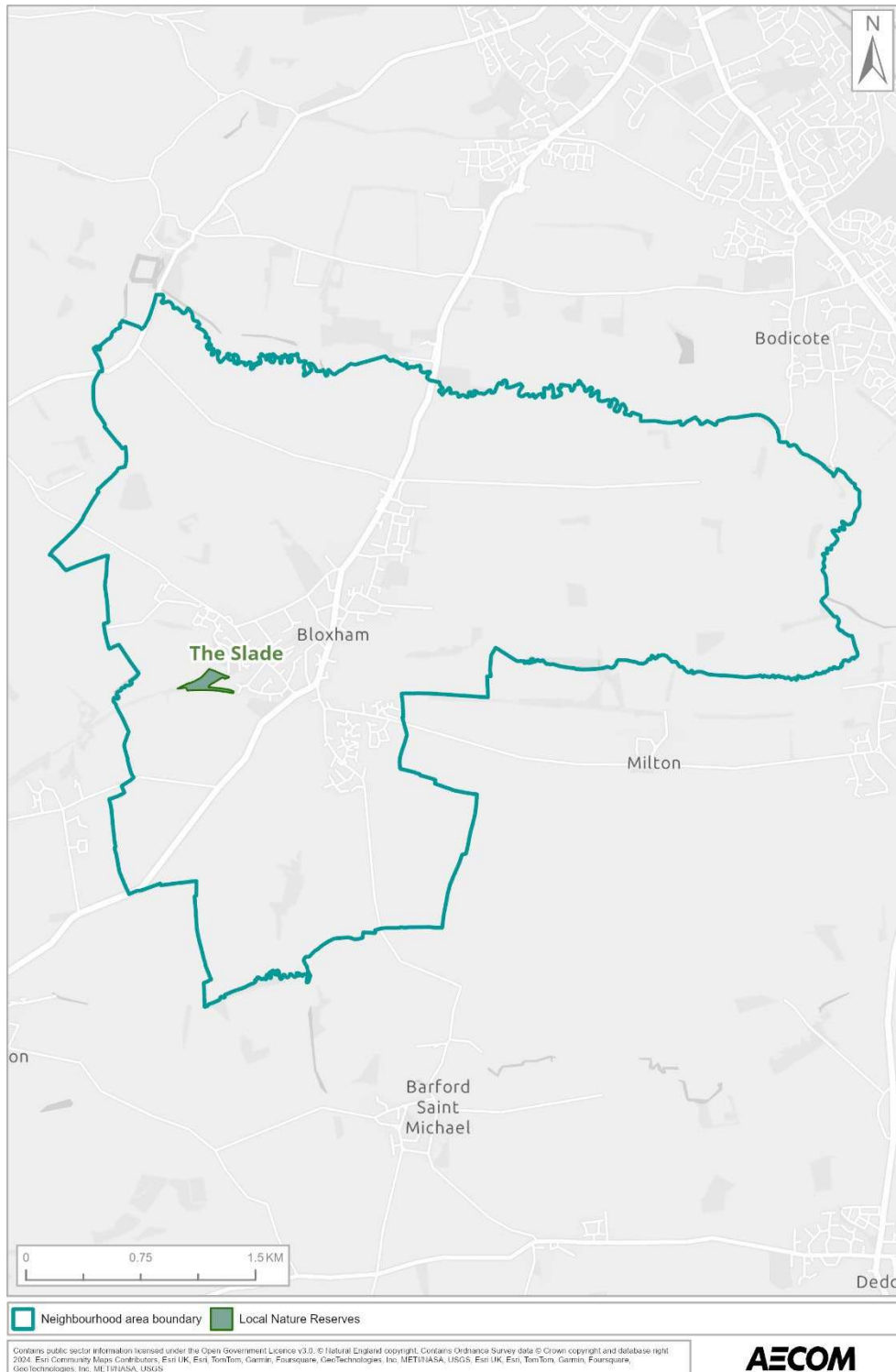
SEA theme	SEA objective
Air quality	Support objectives to improve air quality within and surrounding the neighbourhood area and minimise impacts on nearby AQMAs.

- 3.9 Supporting assessment questions include (will the option / proposal...):
- Implement measures (such as green infrastructure) which will help to support good air quality in the neighbourhood area?
  - Promote and encourage more sustainable transport options?
  - Encourage development which reduces the need to travel?

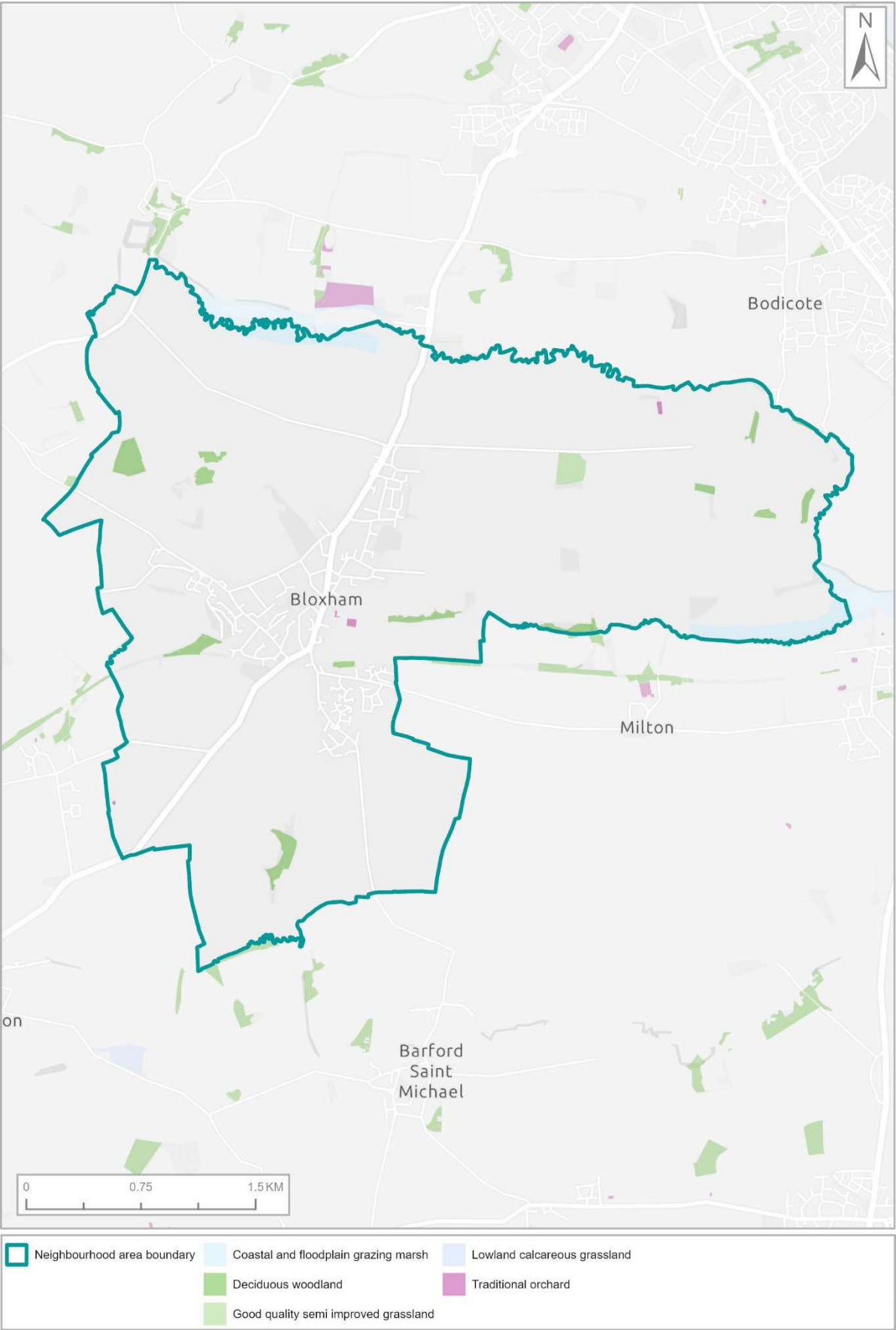
## 4. Biodiversity

4.1 This section seeks to summarise nature conservation designations, habitats, and species within and surrounding the neighbourhood area.

### Maps



**Figure 4.1 Nationally designated sites for biodiversity and geodiversity within and in proximity to the neighbourhood area**



**Figure 4.2 Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitats within the neighbourhood area**

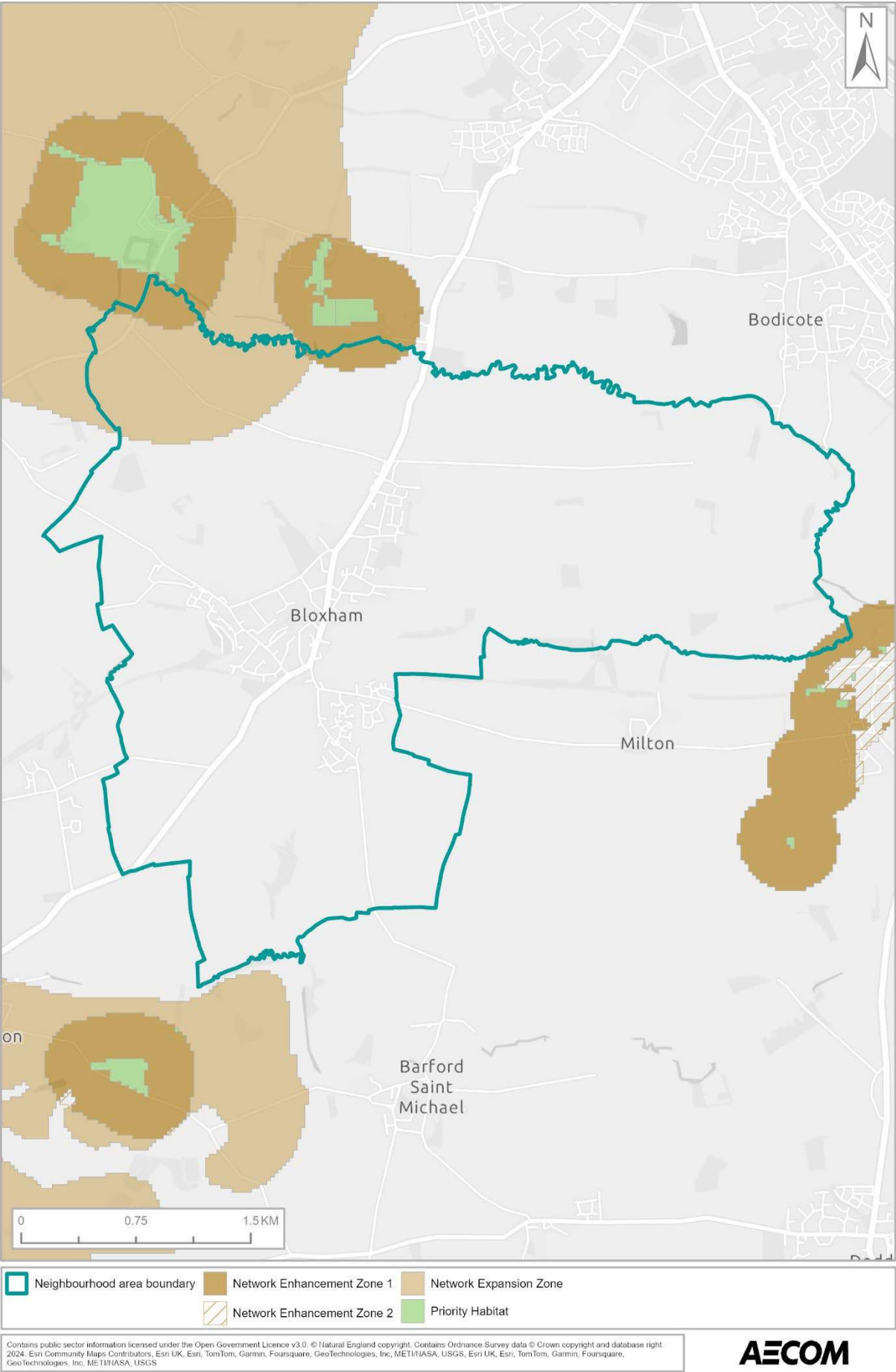


Figure 4.3 National Habitat Network within the neighbourhood area

## Key statistics

- There are no Ramsar Sites, Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), or National Nature Reserves (NNRs) within or in proximity to the neighbourhood area.
- The neighbourhood area does not overlap with any SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) associated with the types of development likely to come forward during the plan period.
- The Slade Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is located in the centre of the neighbourhood area, to the southwest of Bloxham village.
- Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitats within the neighbourhood area include deciduous woodland, good quality semi-improved grassland, traditional orchard, and coastal and floodplain grazing marsh.

## Key evidence sources

4.2 Evidence sources which have informed the development of key issues include:

- [DEFRA's Magic Map](#)
- [Natural England](#)
  - [National Habitat Network Maps](#)
  - [Protected sites and species](#)
  - [Wildlife and habitat conservation](#)

## Policy context

**Table 4.1: Additional plans and policies relating to biodiversity**

Document title	Year of publication
<a href="#">Cherwell District Council - Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy</a>	2022
<a href="#">Cherwell District Council - Natural Capital Report</a>	2021
<a href="#">Biodiversity and planning in Oxfordshire</a>	2014
<a href="#">Oxfordshire's Biodiversity Action Plan and Conservation Target Areas</a>	N/A

## Commentary

- 4.3 There are no internationally designated sites for biodiversity (Ramsar sites, SPAs or SACs) within or in proximity to the neighbourhood area, nor are there any nationally designated sites for biodiversity (SSSIs or NNRs).
- 4.4 The Slade LNR is a 2.23ha wetland site within the neighbourhood area. The land was acquired by Bloxham Parish Council in 2015; prior to this the site was owned by Oxfordshire County Council since 1969. For the majority of the time since 1969, The Slade has been managed as a nature reserve and used as an educational resource. The site is considered to be a microcosm of the local



countryside, with over 170 different higher plant species recorded, and a haven for common birds and butterflies.

- 4.5 BAP Priority Habitat coverage in the neighbourhood area is relatively low. Deciduous woodland is scattered throughout the neighbourhood area, with notable patches to the west and southwest of Bloxham village. Good quality semi-improved grassland appears in small pockets, particularly along the eastern and southern edges of the neighbourhood area's boundary. A small area of traditional orchard is located near Milton, indicating remnants of historic land use. These habitats are interspersed with agricultural and developed land, emphasising the need for their protection amidst expanding development.
- 4.6 In terms of the National Habitat Network, the majority of the neighbourhood area does not overlap with any of the network. However, there is a small area of Network Expansion Zone in the north-western corner of the neighbourhood area – this is land with potential to expand, link or join networks across the landscape. This is adjacent to an even smaller area of Network Enhancement Zone 1, which is slightly more centrally located but still on the northern border of the neighbourhood area. This is land considered to be most suitable for creating new habitats to connect existing patches of primary and associated habitats, effectively 'joining up' the ecological network by expanding and improving connections between them. There is another small area of Network Enhancement Zone 1 in the south-eastern corner of the neighbourhood area.

## Key issues

- 4.7 Whilst the neighbourhood area does not contain, or lie in proximity to, any internationally or nationally designated sites for biodiversity, The Slade LNR can be found in the centre of the neighbourhood area, adjacent to Bloxham village. Additionally, there are a variety of BAP Priority Habitats across the neighbourhood area. As such, it is likely Bloxham is an important area for local biodiversity, positively contributing to ecological networks. The Bloxham NP should make use of the opportunities these areas present to improve and enhance the biodiversity value of the neighbourhood area.

## SEA objective

- 4.8 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objective:

SEA theme	SEA objective
Biodiversity and geodiversity	Protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity.

- 4.9 Supporting assessment questions include (will the option / proposal...):

- Protect and enhance designated sites for biodiversity and priority habitats, supporting the integrity of ecological networks?
- Achieve biodiversity and environmental net gains and support the delivery of ecosystem services and multifunctional green infrastructure networks?

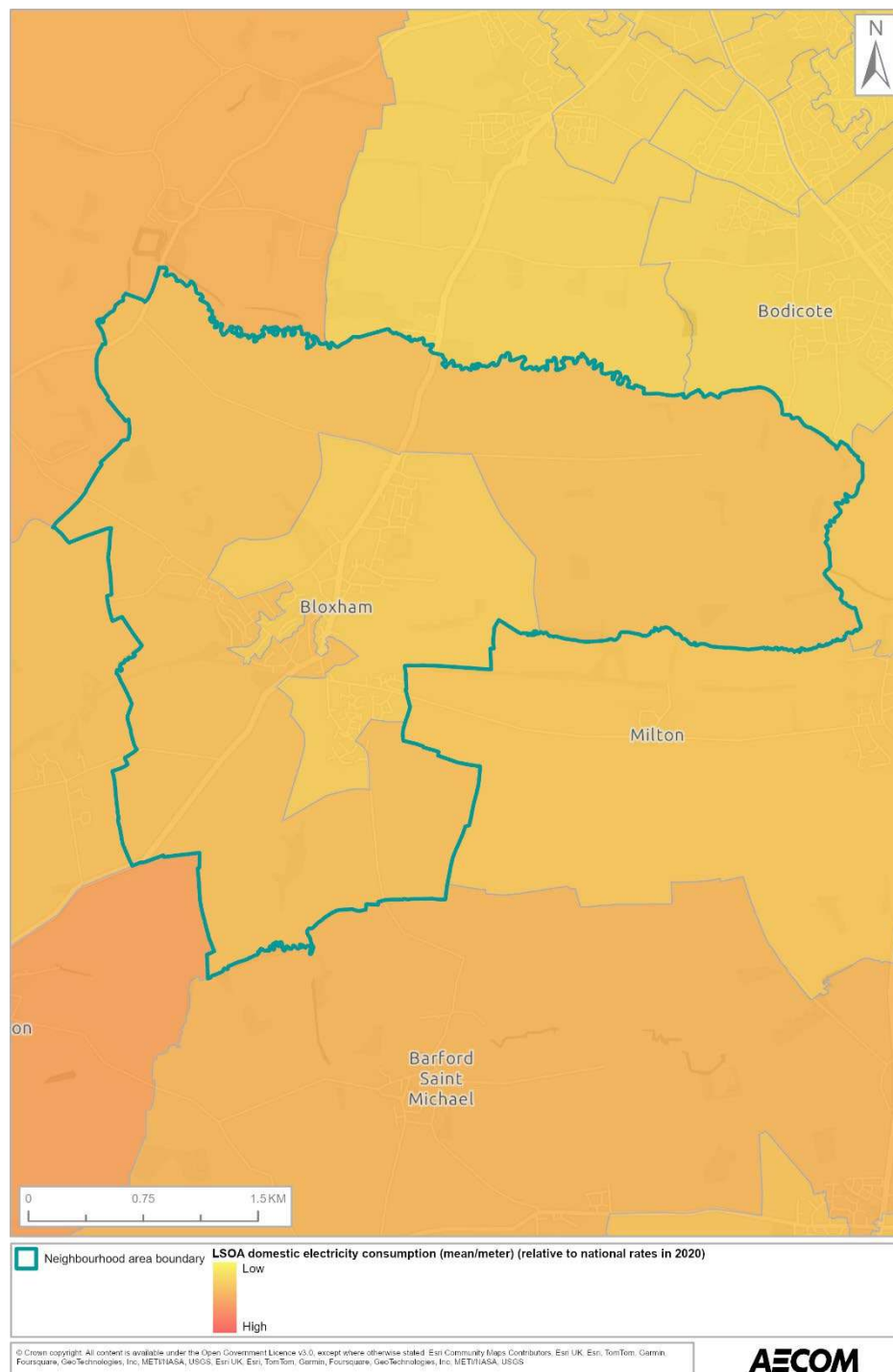
- Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the area to the effects of climate change, including through enhancements to ecological networks?
- Support access to, interpretation of, and understanding of biodiversity?



## 5. Climate change and flood risk

5.1 This section seeks to summarise existing and future flood risk and the wider impacts of climate change, activities in the borough which contribute to climate change, and measures to mitigate the effects of climate change and increase resilience.

### Maps



**Figure 5.1 Electricity consumption in the neighbourhood area**

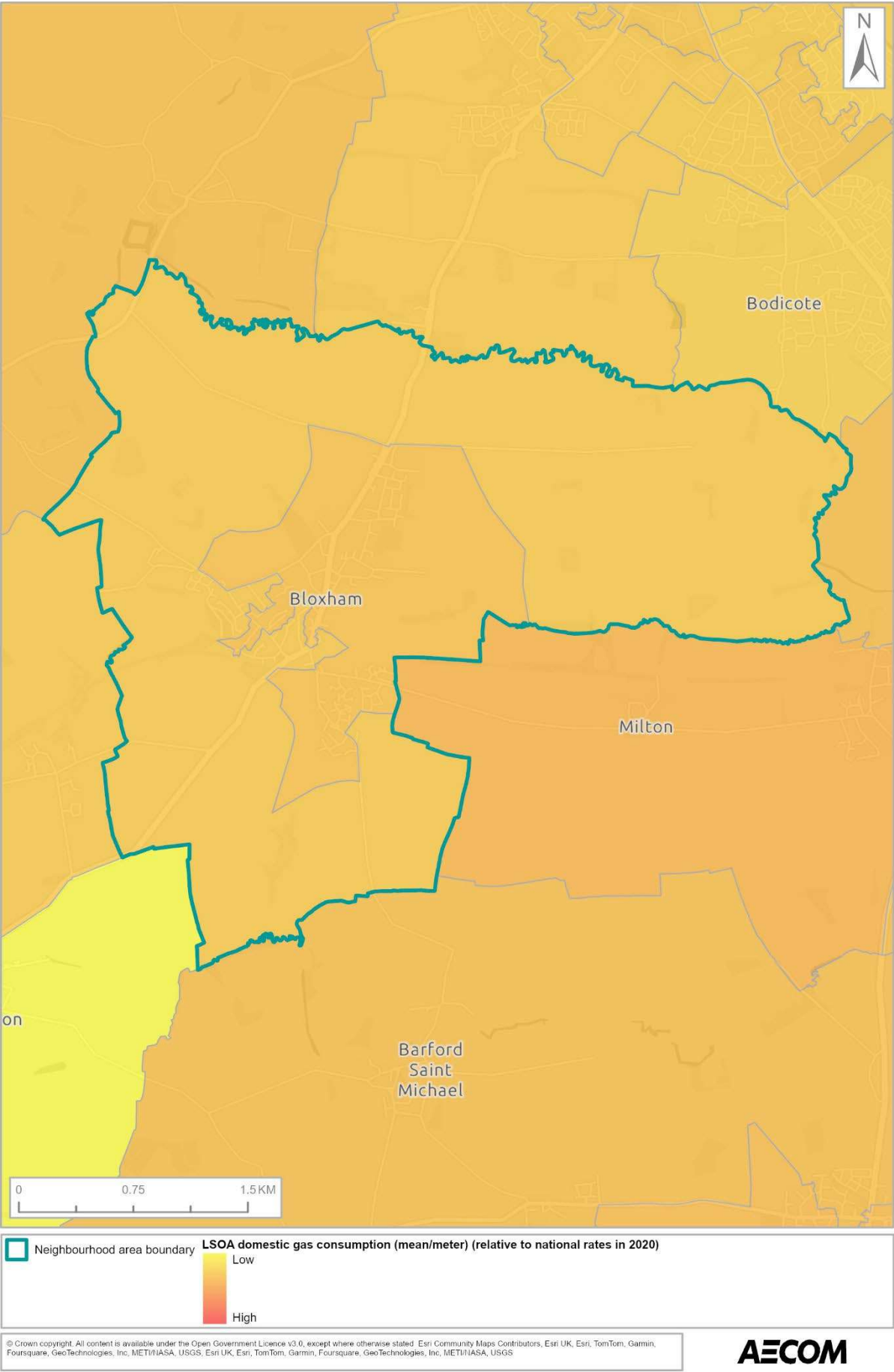


Figure 5.2 Gas consumption in the neighbourhood area

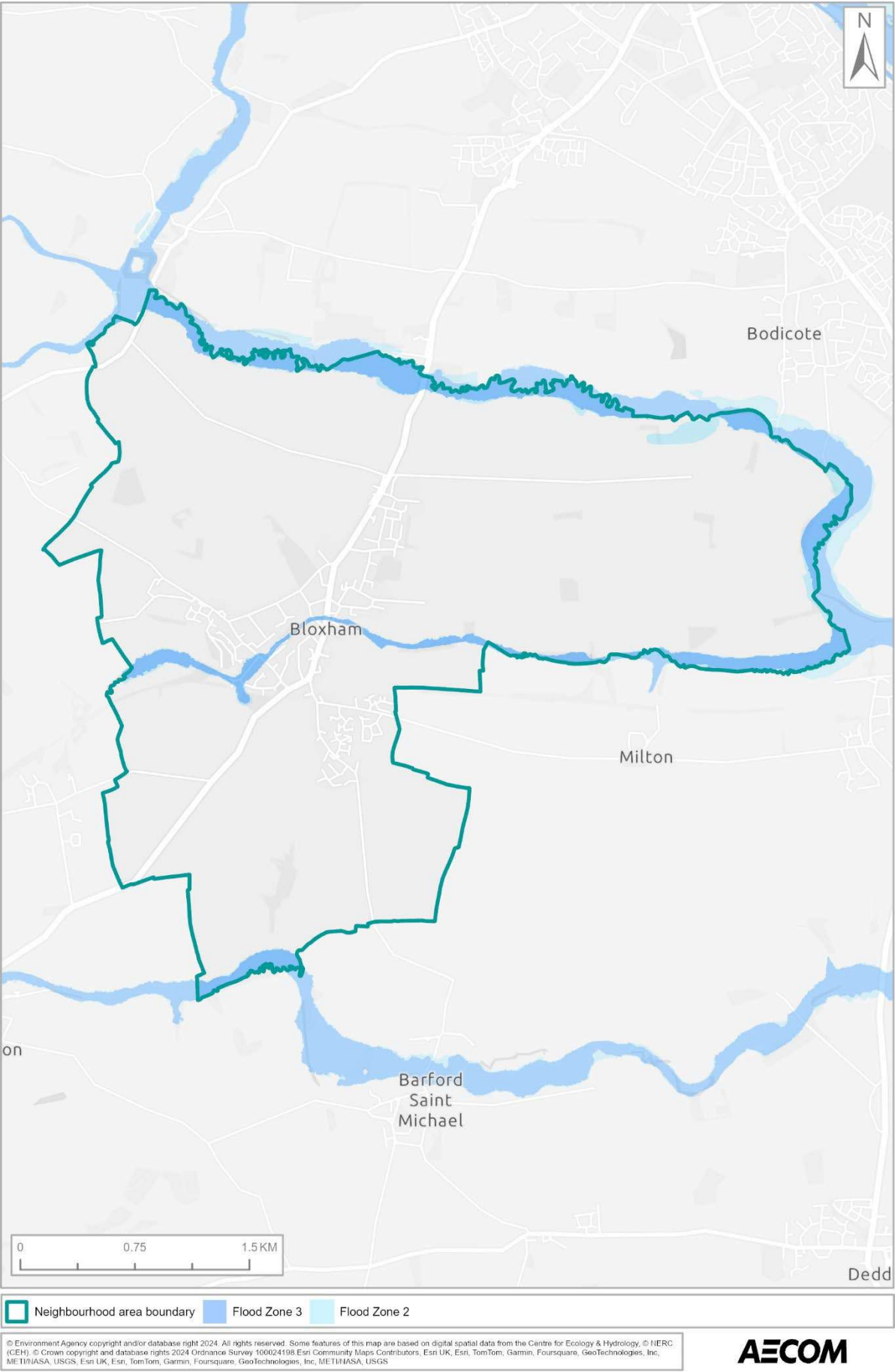


Figure 5.3 Fluvial flood risk in the neighbourhood area

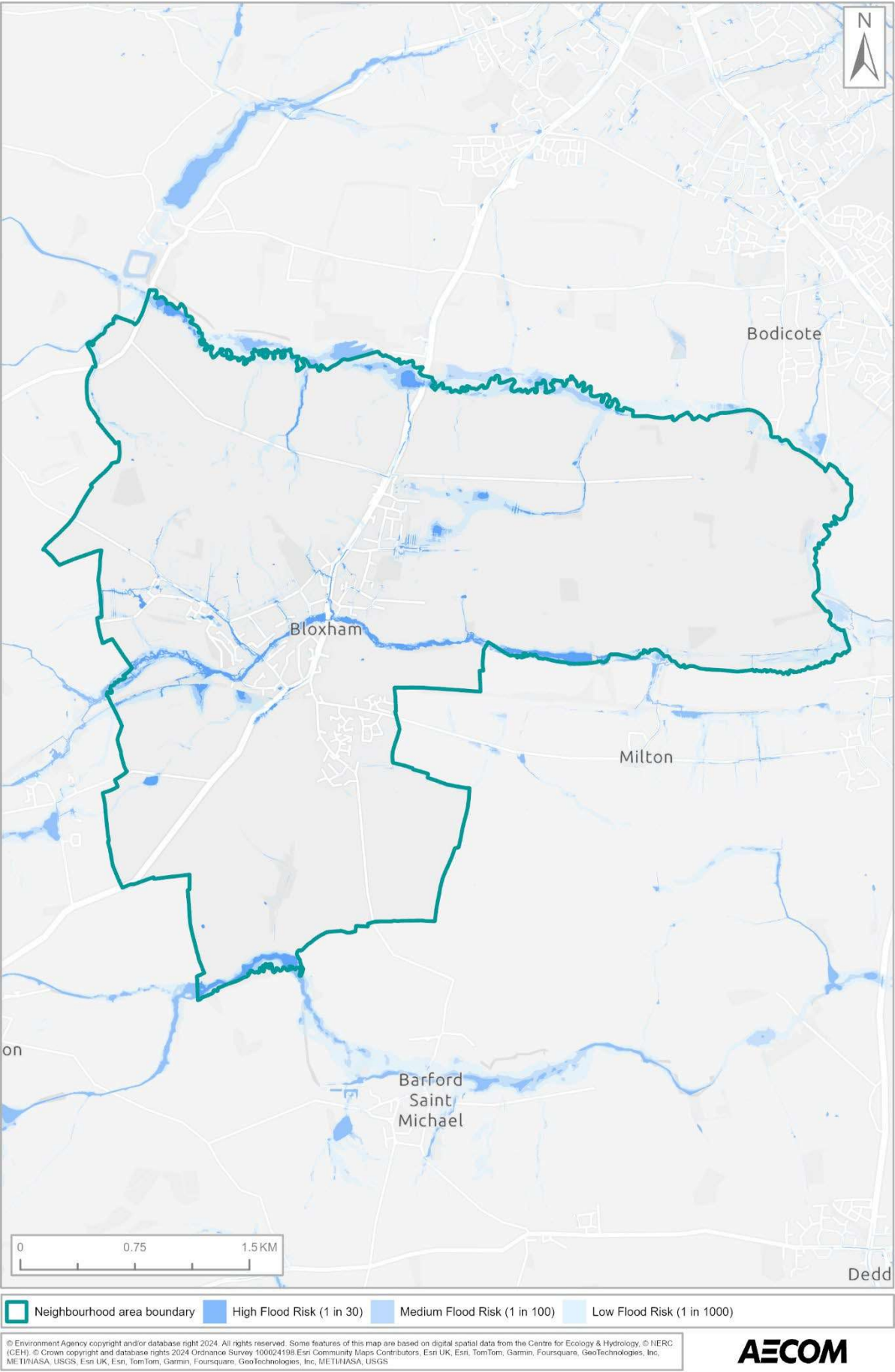
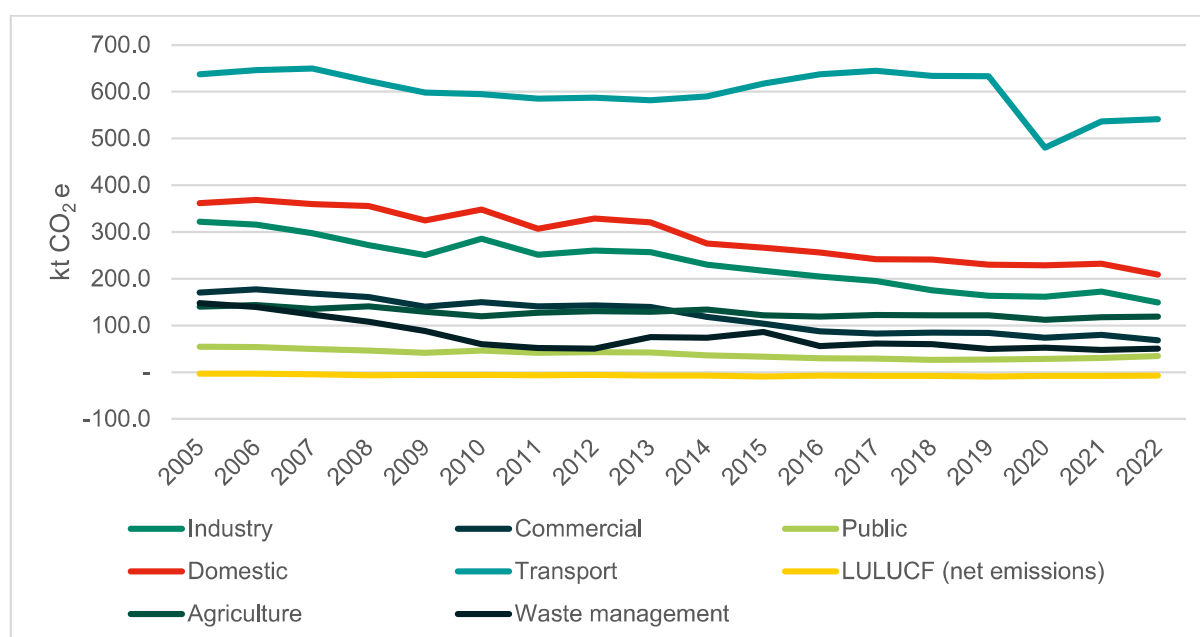


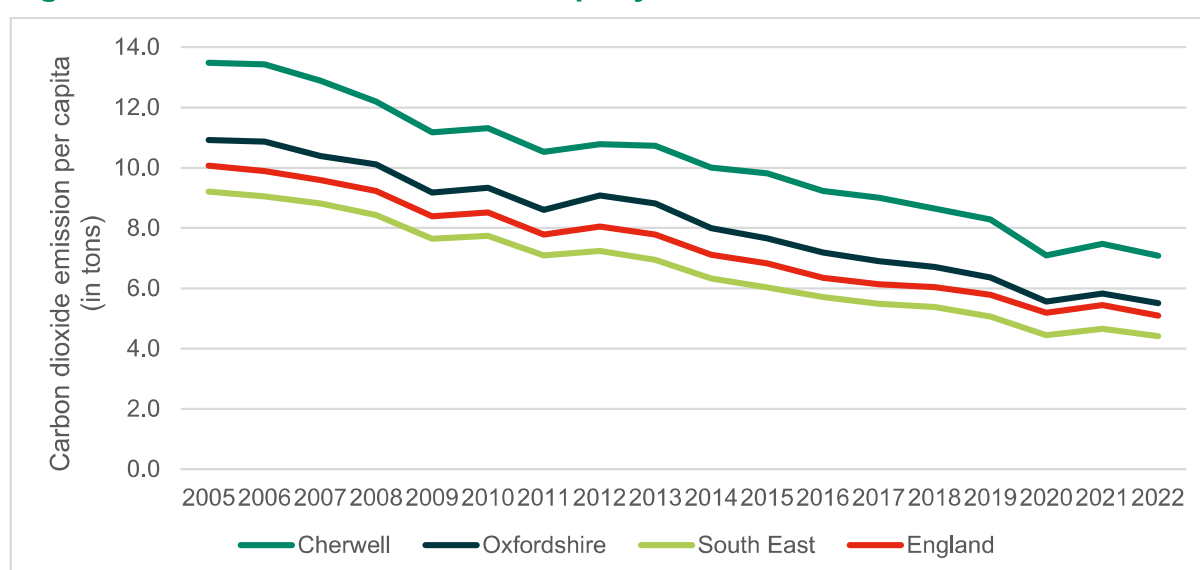
Figure 5.4 Surface water flood risk in the neighbourhood area

## Key statistics

- The largest contributor to carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions in the Cherwell district area is transportation, totalling 541 kilotons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent (kt CO<sub>2</sub> e) in 2022 – accounting for 42.5% of the total emissions in the area.
- Overall CO<sub>2</sub> emissions have reduced from 1,831.1 kt CO<sub>2</sub> e in 2005 to 1,162.9 kt CO<sub>2</sub> e in 2021.
- The land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) sector has continuously worked to slightly offset CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the Cherwell district.
- Cherwell emits more CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per capita (in tons) when compared to Oxfordshire, the South East of England, and England.



**Figure 5.5 CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in kilotons per year for each sector in Cherwell**



**Figure 5.6 CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per capita (in tons) for Cherwell, Oxfordshire, the South East, and England**



**Table 5.2: UKCP18 data for the South East ('business as usual' scenario)**

	Mean Average Air Temperature (°C)		Mean Precipitation Rate (mm/day)		Mean Relative Humidity (%)	
	Winter	Summer	Winter	Summer	Winter	Summer
1981-2000	4.54	15.81	3.22	1.71	87.48	74.27
2021-2040	5.81	18.12	3.42	1.46	87.16	69.95
2061-2080	7.66	21.15	3.94	1.05	86.82	65.08

5.2 The 'business as usual' scenario assumes there is fast population growth with high energy use and emissions. It also assumes no climate change mitigation or adaptation techniques are engaged with interventions. In this context:

- There could be a 3.12°C increase in winter mean average air temperature, and a 5.34°C increase in summer mean average air temperature.
- There could be a 0.72mm/day increase in winter mean precipitation rate, and a 0.65mm/day decrease in summer mean precipitation rate.
- There could be a 0.66% decrease in winter relative humidity, and a 9.19% decrease in summer relative humidity.

## Key evidence sources

5.3 Evidence sources which have informed the development of key issues include:

- [Environment Agency's Flood risk information for planning in England](#)
- [Check the long-term flood risk for an area in England](#)
- [UK Climate Projections \(UKCP\)](#)
- [UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005 to 2021](#)

## Policy context

**Table 5.3: Additional plans and policies relating to climate change and flood risk**

Document title	Year of publication
<a href="#">Cherwell District Council - Strategic Flood Risk Assessment</a>	2022
<a href="#">Cherwell District Council - Greenhouse gas report</a>	2021
<a href="#">Cherwell District Council - Wind Energy Study</a>	2019
<a href="#">Climate emergency (including Climate Action Framework)</a>	N/A

## Commentary

5.4 CDC declared a climate emergency in 2019. Since then, the Council has been working to ensure its operations and activities will be carbon net zero by 2030. The Council has also been working to help the whole district become net zero –

achieved through the Climate Action Framework and Climate Change Action Plans.

- 5.5 With regards to fluvial flood risk, the northern boundary of the neighbourhood area is within Flood Zones 2 and 3, as is a small area in the centre of the neighbourhood area which runs through the village of Bloxham. Fluvial flood risk along the neighbourhood area's northern boundary is associated with the Sor Brook, which flows through the north of the neighbourhood area in a west to east direction. The central flood risk is associated with Bloxham Brook, which runs through the neighbourhood area.
- 5.6 Most of the areas at risk of surface water flooding are the same as those at risk of fluvial flooding; this is likely linked to the drainage into the rivers surrounding the area, such as the Sor Brook. However, there is a higher level of surface water flood risk associated with the land to the west of the Bloxham settlement.

## Key issues

- 5.7 The majority of the neighbourhood area is at a relatively low risk of fluvial and surface water flooding; however, there is a small strip of land at risk of fluvial flooding in the centre of the neighbourhood area, as well as higher levels of surface water flood risk to the west of Bloxham village. Recognising the varying levels of flood risk throughout the neighbourhood area, there is a need to consider flood risk through the Bloxham NP, for example, by managing, and where possible, improving drainage rates. The Bloxham NP could encourage the installation of sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS) to help manage flood risk across the neighbourhood area.
- 5.8 The Bloxham NP is seeking to bring forward allocation(s) for housing. Whilst this may impact carbon emissions locally, the level of growth is likely to be relatively low. Nevertheless, it will be important for new development to adopt best building practices to limit the emissions linked to construction, as well as use sustainable features and incorporate renewable energy infrastructure where appropriate to reduce the overall carbon footprint of new housing.
- 5.9 As with much of the country, extreme heat events are likely to occur more frequently in the future. In addition to this, drought is likely to become an increasing issue in summer, whilst surface water / groundwater flooding is likely to increase during winter months. In this respect, climate change resilience should form an integral part of the Bloxham NP policy framework.
- 5.10 Whilst there has been a decrease in transport emissions in Cherwell district between 2005 and 2022, it remains the largest contributing sector of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Reducing emissions linked to transport is largely the responsibility of the local transport authority. However, the Bloxham NP could seek to address transport emissions locally through encouraging opportunities to strengthen active and sustainable travel routes and reducing the need to travel outside of the neighbourhood area. This would likely help to reduce the number of private vehicles on the local road network in the neighbourhood area.

## SEA objective

- 5.11 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objective:

**SEA theme****SEA objective**


---

Climate change and flood risk	Reduce the contribution to climate change made by activities within the neighbourhood area and increase resilience to the potential effects of climate change.
-------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

---

5.12 Supporting assessment questions include (will the option / proposal...):

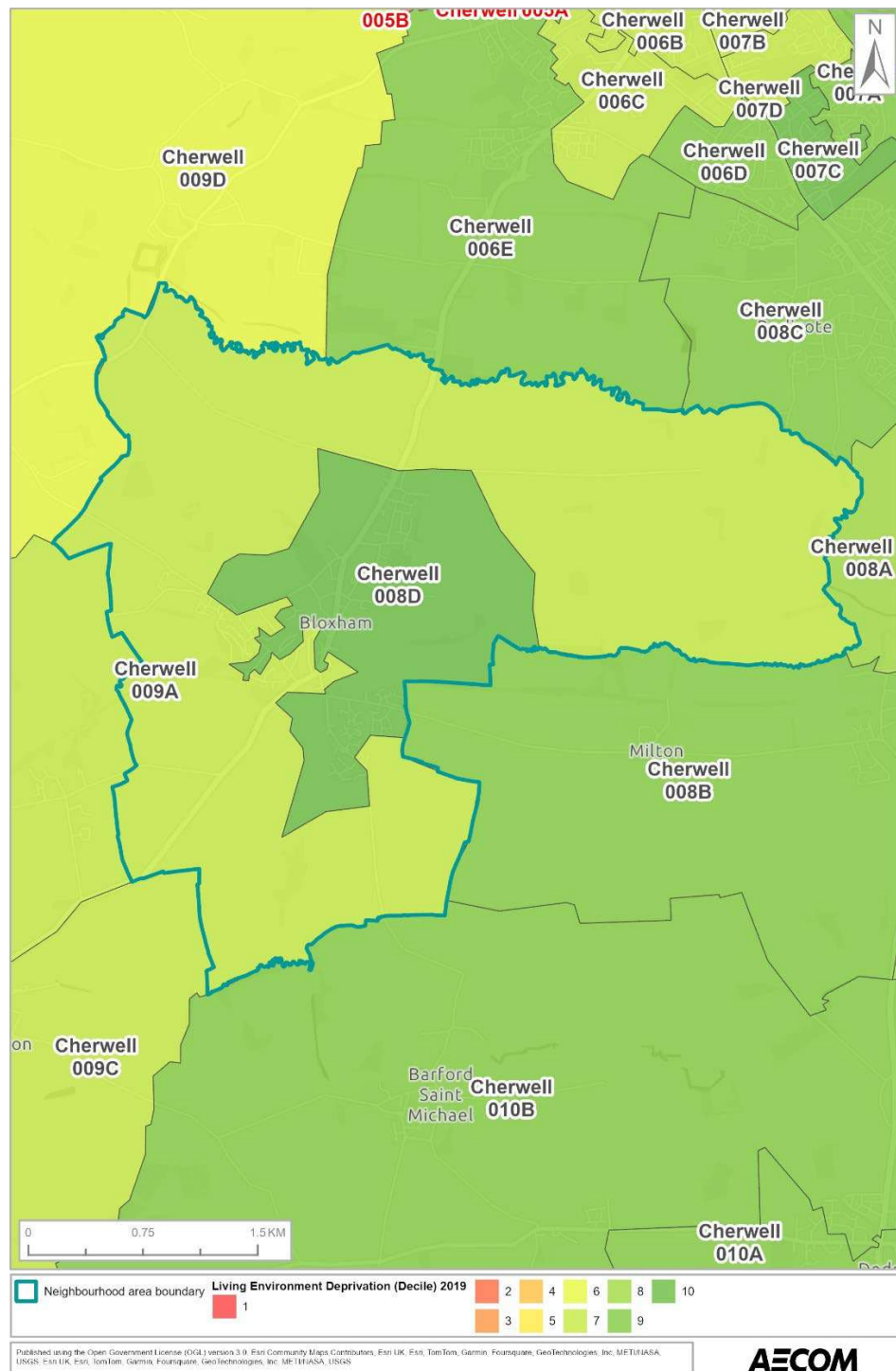
- Avoid vulnerable development in areas of elevated flood risk?
- Promote the use of more sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling, public transport, and electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure?
- Increase the number of new developments meeting or exceeding sustainable design criteria?
- Generate energy from low or zero carbon sources, or reduce energy consumption from non-renewable resources?
- Improve and extend green infrastructure networks in the neighbourhood area?
- Sustainably manage water runoff, and reduce runoff where possible?



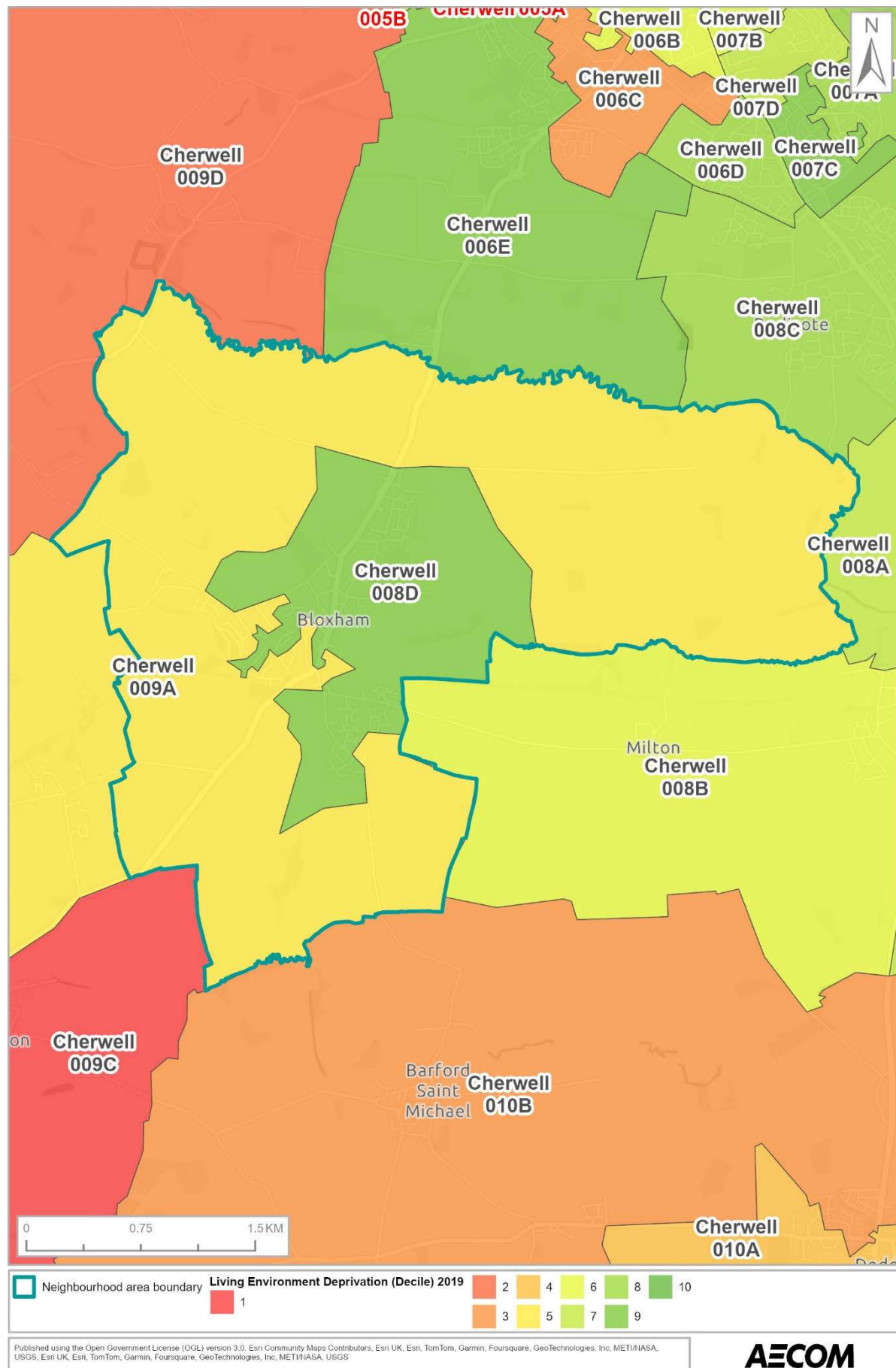
## 6. Community wellbeing

6.1 This section seeks to summarise population and age structures, deprivation issues, housing mix and affordability, community assets and infrastructure, and influences on health and wellbeing in the neighbourhood area.

### Maps



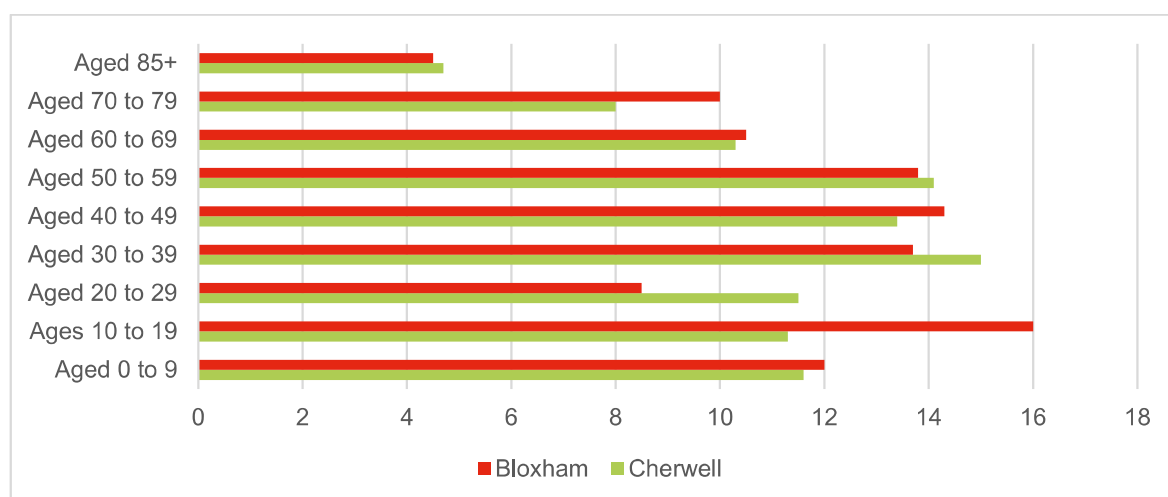
**Figure 6.1 Overall Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) for the neighbourhood area (2019)**



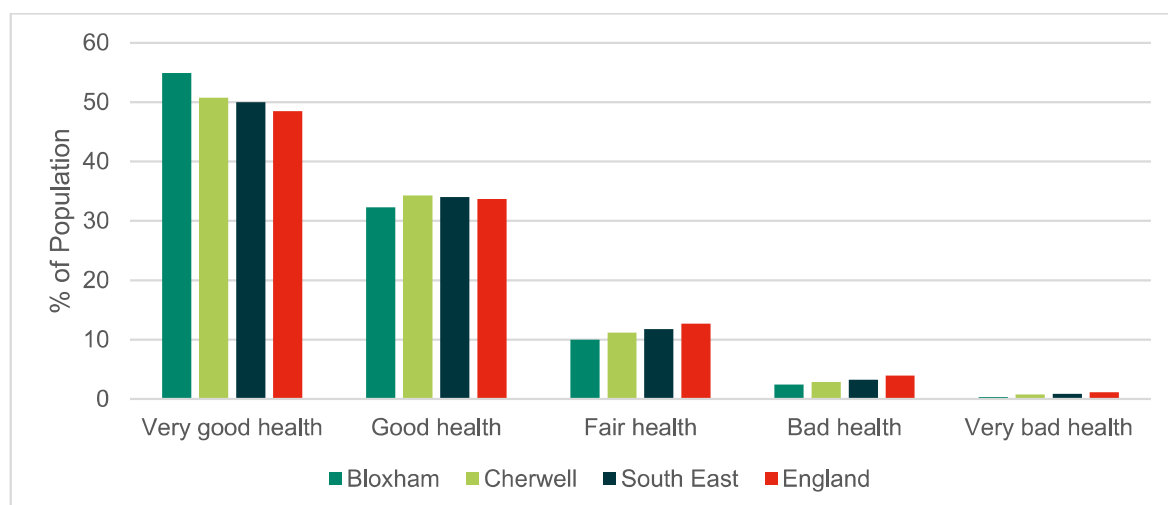
**Figure 6.2 Living Environment Deprivation for the neighbourhood area (2019)**

## Key statistics

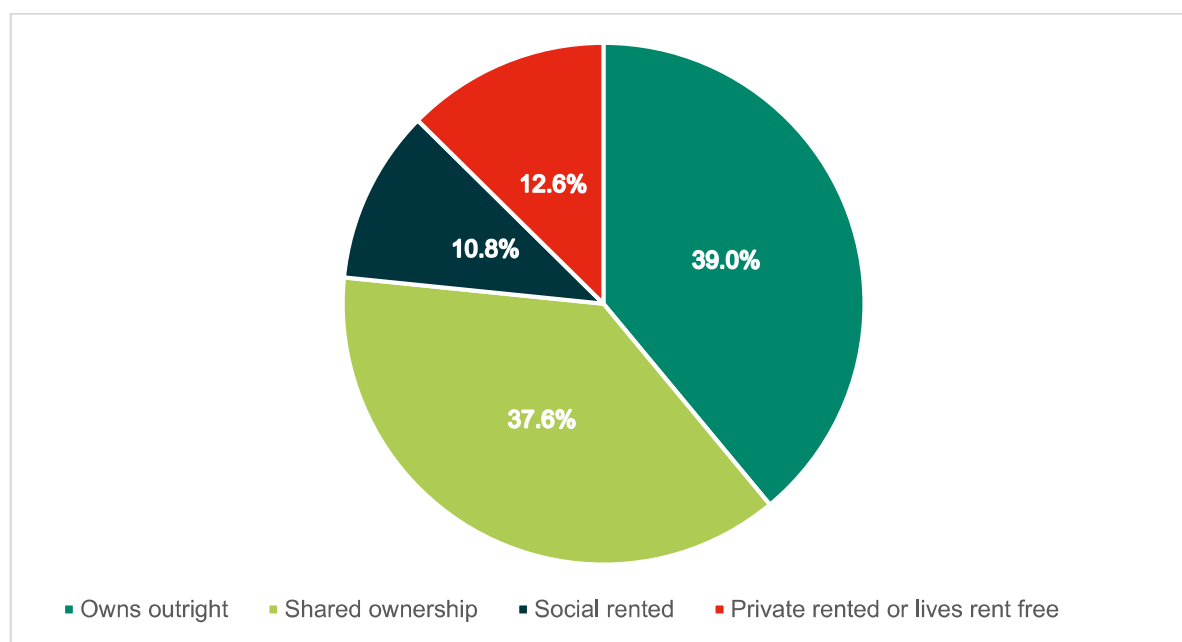
- The largest age group within the neighbourhood area is 40-49 years, at 14.3%. The second largest age group is 50-59 years (13.8%), and the third is 30-39 years (13.7%). There is also a higher proportion of 60–69 year-olds in the area, as well as 70–79 year-olds, in comparison to Cherwell as a whole. This indicates a higher-than-average proportion of elderly population.
- Overall, Bloxham residents experience a greater level of ‘Very Good’ health in comparison to the national average. Whilst it experiences lower levels of ‘Good’ and ‘Fair’ health, the neighbourhood area also experiences less ‘Bad’ and ‘Very Bad’ health in comparison to Cherwell, and regional and national figures. As such, the health of residents is considered to be relatively good in the neighbourhood area.
- The majority of the houses in Bloxham are owned, either outright or with a mortgage, loan or through shared ownership, with private rent, living rent free, and socially renting accounting overall for only 23.4%.



**Figure 6.3 Population age structure in the neighbourhood area, in comparison to the Cherwell area (Census 2021)**



**Figure 6.4 Health of residents in Bloxham in comparison to Cherwell, the South East, and England (2021)**



**Figure 6.5 Housing tenure in the neighbourhood area (2021)**

## Key evidence sources

6.2 Evidence sources which have informed the development of key issues include:

- [Indices of Deprivation: 2019 and 2015](#)
- [Office for National Statistics - NOMIS](#)
  - [Topic Summary - TS007A: Age by five-year age bands](#)
  - [Topic Summary - TS037: General health](#)
  - [Topic Summary - TS054: Tenure](#)

## Policy context

**Table 6.1 Additional plans and policies relating to community wellbeing**

Document title	Year of publication
<a href="#">Cherwell District Council - Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy</a>	2022
<a href="#">Cherwell District Council - Health and Equality Impact Assessment</a>	2022
<a href="#">Cherwell District Council - Housing and Economic Needs Assessment</a>	2022
<a href="#">Cherwell District Council - Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2021-2026</a>	2021
<a href="#">Cherwell District Council - Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment</a>	2021
<a href="#">Cherwell District Council - Open Space and Play Areas</a>	2020

<a href="#"><u>Cherwell District Council - Open Space, Sport and Recreation Assessment and Strategies: Sports Facilities Strategy</u></a>	2018
<a href="#"><u>Cherwell District Council - Indoor Sports, Recreation and Community Facilities (LEI06PM, LEI07PM and LEI08PM)</u></a>	2014

## Commentary

- 6.3 The existing Bloxham NP outlines several named community facilities designed to enhance the quality of life for residents. These include Jubilee Park, which offers sports fields and playgrounds for recreational activities. The Ex-Servicemen's Hall provides a venue for social gatherings and events, while Bloxham Surgery ensures access to healthcare services, as well as Bloxham Dental Practice, offering both NHS and private dental services. Additionally, The Red Lion pub acts as a social hub for residents.
- 6.4 Bloxham Primary School and Warriner School (11-18 secondary school) serve the educational needs of the community.
- 6.5 The IMD is an overall relative measure of deprivation and is the combination of several different domains: income; employment; education, skills and training; health deprivation and disability; crime; barriers to housing and services; and living environment. Lower super output areas (LSOAs)<sup>2</sup> are designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics in England and Wales. They are standardised geographies intended to be as consistent as possible, with each LSOA containing approximately 1,000 to 1,500 people. Deprivation levels are typically examined at the LSOA level.
- 6.6 In this respect, the neighbourhood area is within two LSOAs – Cherwell 008D, which covers the village of Bloxham, and Cherwell 009A, which covers the surrounding area, and extends outside of the neighbourhood area. According to the most recent deprivation data from 2019, the neighbourhood area generally experiences low levels of deprivation – Cherwell 008D is amongst the 10% least deprived neighbourhoods in England, and Cherwell 009A is amongst the 40% least deprived neighbourhoods.

## Key issues

- 6.7 The neighbourhood area has a relatively large senior population. The Bloxham NP presents an opportunity to ensure that infrastructure within the neighbourhood area is inclusive and accessible for all age groups. For example, by implementing age-friendly design principles in public spaces, such as ensuring accessible pedestrian pathways, benches, and lighting, the plan can enhance the quality of life for older adults while also benefiting residents of all ages.
- 6.8 Whilst the neighbourhood area offers a range of services and facilities, residents may need to travel to neighbouring towns like Banbury to access wider services and facilities. With relation to other SEA topics, the Bloxham NP presents an opportunity to protect and enhance transport links to these areas,

<sup>2</sup> The Indices of Deprivation Explorer can be accessed [here](#).

to ensure residents have access to essential services beyond the immediate neighbourhood.

- 6.9 The neighbourhood area does not experience particularly high levels of deprivation. Development through the Bloxham NP can positively contribute to maintaining this low level of deprivation by bringing forward new housing to meet the local need and encouraging new community services and facilities to be brought into the neighbourhood area.

## SEA objective

- 6.10 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objective:

SEA theme	SEA objective
Community wellbeing	Ensure growth in the neighbourhood area is aligned with the needs of all residents, improving accessibility, anticipating future needs and specialist requirements, and supporting cohesive and inclusive communities.

- 6.11 Supporting assessment questions include (will the option / proposal...):

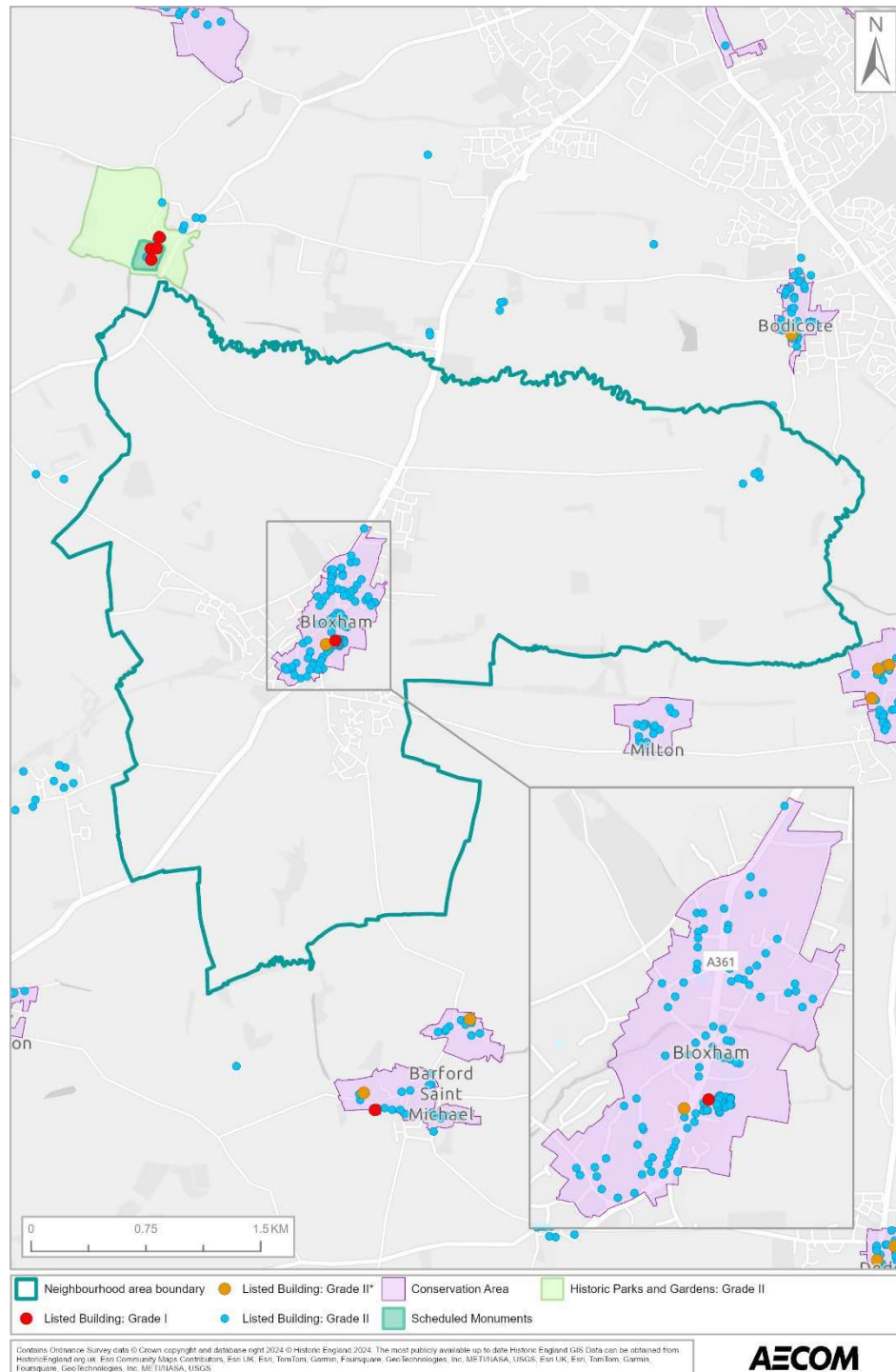
- Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing?
- Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes?
- Meet the needs of all sectors of the community?
- Provide flexible and adaptable homes that meet people's needs, particularly the needs of an ageing population?
- Improve the availability and accessibility of key local facilities, including health infrastructure?
- Encourage and promote social cohesion and active involvement of local people in community activities?
- Facilitate green infrastructure enhancements, including improved access to open space?
- Maintain or enhance the quality of life of existing residents?



## 7. Historic environment

7.1 This section seeks to summarise designated and non-designated heritage assets (including archaeology) and their settings, within and in proximity to the neighbourhood area.

### Maps



**Figure 7.1 Designated heritage assets in the neighbourhood area**

## Key statistics

- There are 133 listed buildings within the neighbourhood area: One Grade I, One Grade II\*, and 131 Grade II. The Grade I structure is the Church of St Mary ([HE Number: 1284130](#)) and the Grade II\* structure is the Rectory Farmhouse ([HE Number: 1046194](#)).
- The Bloxham Conservation Area covers part of the village, in the centre of the neighbourhood area.
- None of the nationally designated heritage assets within the neighbourhood area are on the Heritage at Risk Register 2024.

## Key evidence sources

7.2 Evidence sources which have informed the development of key issues include:

- [DEFRA's Magic Map](#)
- [Heritage Gateway](#)
- [Historic Environment Records | Oxfordshire County Council](#)
- [Historic England](#)
  - [Heritage at Risk Register 2024](#)
  - [Search the List - Advanced Search](#)

## Policy context

**Table 7.1 Additional plans and policies relating to the historic environment**

Document title	Year of publication
<a href="#">Bloxham Conservation area appraisal</a>	2007

## Commentary

- 7.1 Designated heritage assets within the neighbourhood area are shown in **Figure 7.1**. There is one conservation area in the neighbourhood area: the Bloxham Conservation Area. The Bloxham Conservation Area Appraisal (May 2007) highlights the village's historic environment assets, emphasising its architectural and archaeological significance. The area showcases a well-preserved vernacular-built environment, primarily constructed from local ironstone, with numerous listed buildings from the 16th and 17th centuries. St. Mary's Church exemplifies the village's medieval and later architectural heritage, while remnants of Anglo-Saxon, Norman, and Victorian influences contribute to its layered historical character. The appraisal aims to protect and manage these assets, ensuring that future development enhances rather than detracts from Bloxham's historic integrity.
- 7.2 St Mary's Church – a Grade I listed building first listed in 1955 – is located within Bloxham village. This parish church features architectural elements from the 12th to the 20th centuries, including a 14th-century nave, north and south aisles, and a west tower with a spire. Significant restorations were carried out



in 1864 and 1956. The church is noted for its Gothic Revival windows, intricate tracery, and lively sculptures. It also houses notable monuments, including those dedicated to the Thornycroft family and 19th-century members of the Holloway family. The church was under royal patronage until 1541 and is considered one of the finest in the country.

## Key issues

- 7.3 The neighbourhood area contains several designated heritage assets that significantly contribute to the historic character of the village, particularly within and near the Bloxham Conservation Area. Therefore, the neighbourhood area is regarded as having a sensitive historic environment that could be affected by development. Consequently, any proposed development close to important heritage assets (both designated and non-designated) must carefully assess the potential impact on the inherent qualities of these assets and their surroundings.
- 7.4 It is also acknowledged that development under the Bloxham NP provides an opportunity to enhance the understanding of, and access to, heritage assets of both local and national significance, which is likely to be a crucial factor in the emerging neighbourhood plan.
- 7.5 By promoting greater understanding of and access to local and national designations within and around the neighbourhood area, the Bloxham NP offers a chance to establish a growth strategy that safeguards the area's historic character and specific heritage features. Additionally, the Bloxham NP can contribute to preserving and enhancing the historic environment by ensuring that new developments are designed and laid out with sensitivity to the historic context of the neighbourhood area.

## SEA objective

- 7.6 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objective:

SEA theme	SEA objective
Historic environment	Protect, conserve, and enhance the historic environment within and surrounding the neighbourhood area.

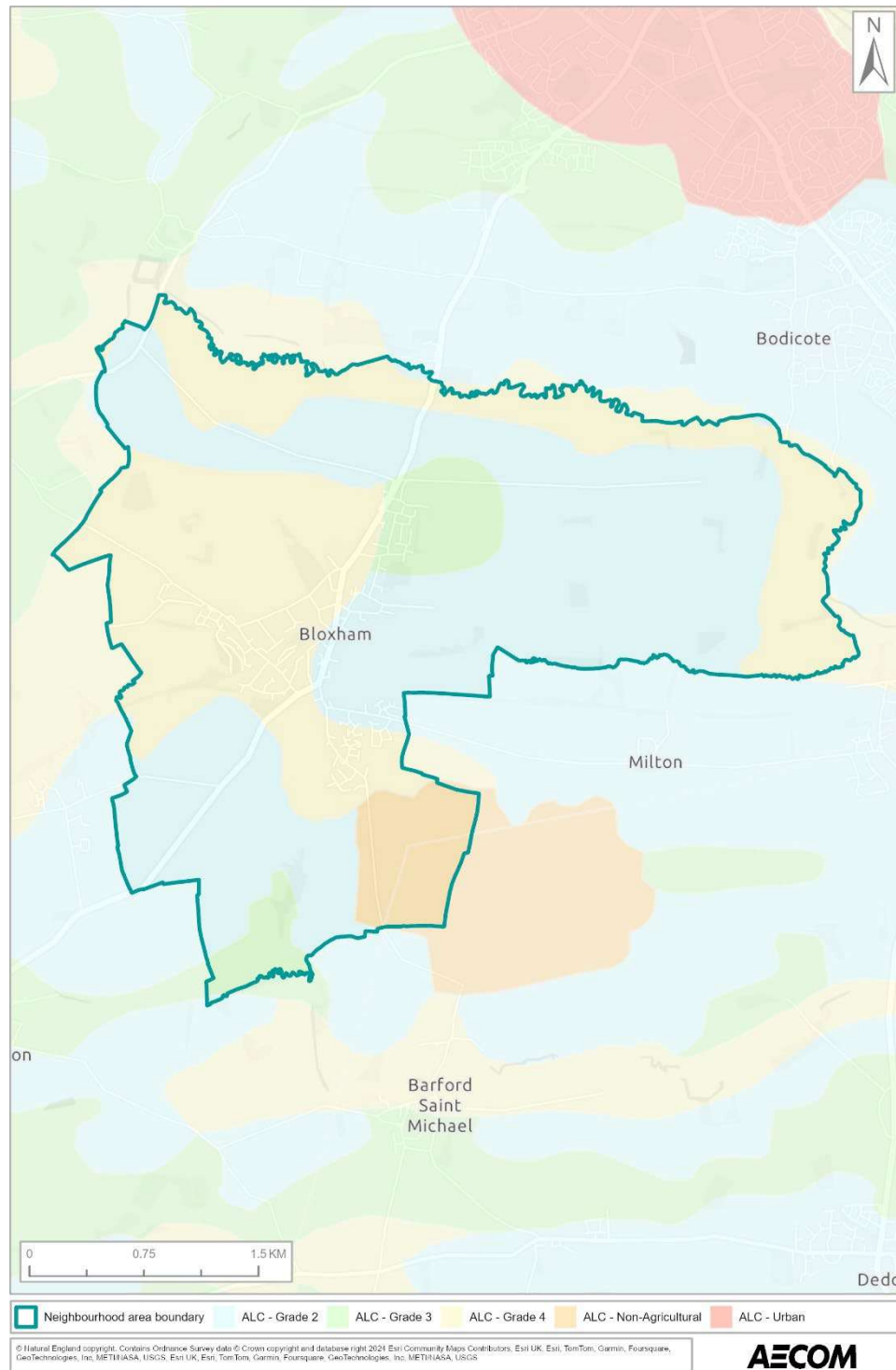
- 7.7 Supporting assessment questions include (will the option / proposal...):
- Protect the integrity of the historic setting of the Bloxham Conservation Area?
  - Conserve and enhance buildings and structures of architectural or historic interest, and their settings?
  - Conserve and enhance the special interest, character and appearance of locally important features and their settings?
  - Protect the integrity of the historic setting of key monuments of cultural heritage interest as listed in the Oxfordshire County Council Historic Environment Record (HER)?

- Support the undertaking of early archaeological investigations and, where appropriate, recommend mitigation strategies?
- Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic evolution and character of the neighbourhood area?

## 8. Land, soil and water resources

8.1 This section seeks to summarise the quality of soil resources, the extent of mineral resources, water supply resources, and water quality within and surrounding the neighbourhood area.

### Maps



**Figure 8.1 Provisional ALC in the neighbourhood area**

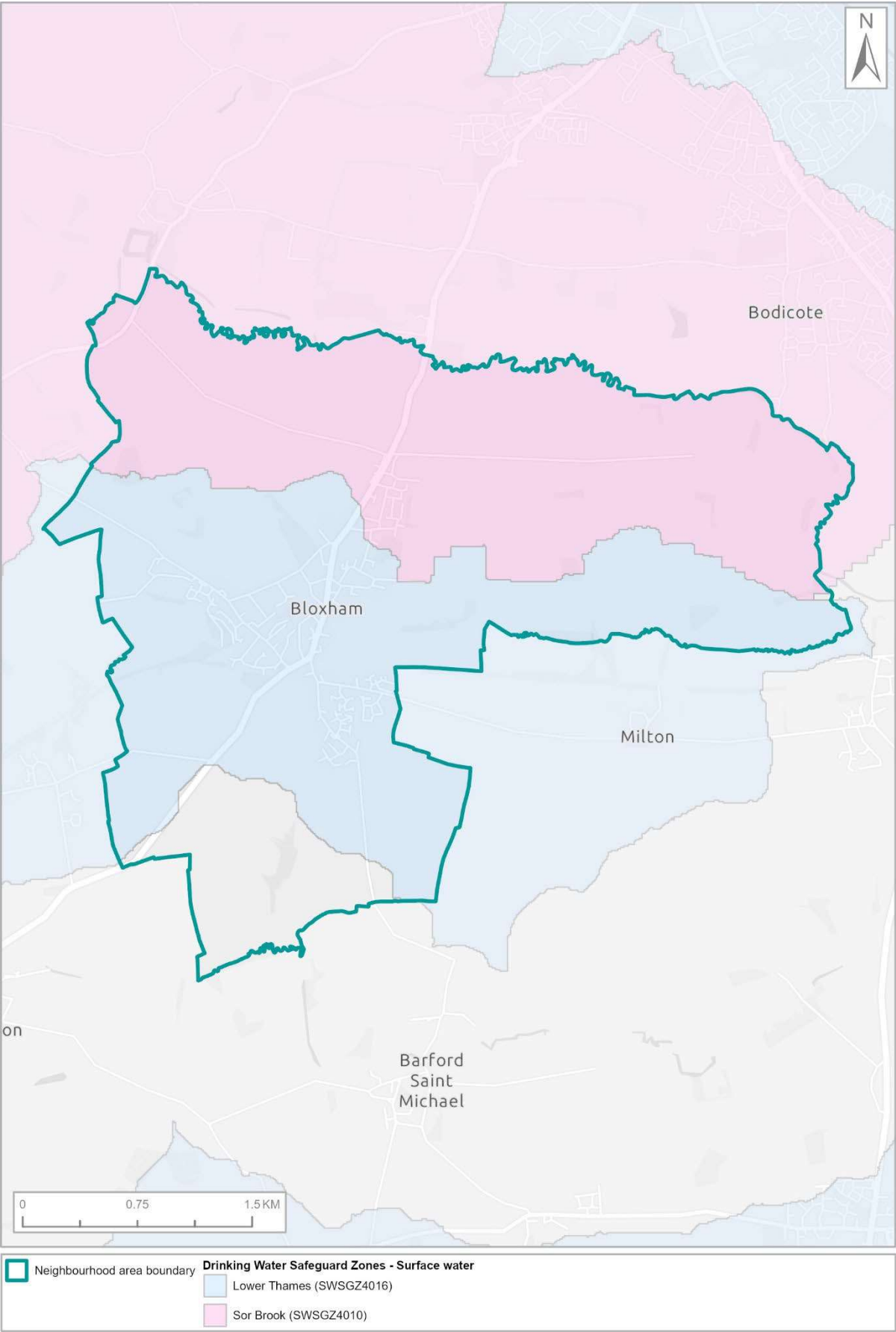


Figure 8.2 Water quality in the neighbourhood area

## Key statistics

- The neighbourhood area is within the Thames River Basin District, and within the Cherwell Operational Catchment.
- The neighbourhood area falls within two Drinking Water Safeguard Zones (Surface Water): the Lower Thames (SWSGZ4016) and the Sor Brook (SWSGZ4010).

## Key evidence sources

8.2 Evidence sources which have informed the development of key issues include:

- [DEFRA's Magic Map](#)
- [Environment Agency - Check for Drinking Water Safeguard Zones and NVZs](#)
- [Environment Agency Catchment Data Explorer – Cherwell Operational Catchment](#)
  - [Bloxham Brook \(Source to Sor Brook\) Water Body](#)
  - [Sor Brook \(Broughton to Cherwell\) Water Body](#)
- [Natural England](#)
  - [Agricultural Land Classification Map South East Region](#)
  - [Likelihood of Best and Most Versatile \(BMV\) Agricultural Land – Strategic Scale Map South West Region](#)

## Policy context

**Table 8.1 Additional plans and policies relating to land, soil and water resources**

Document title	Year of publication
<a href="#">Cherwell District Council - Water Cycle Study Stage 1</a>	2023
<a href="#">Thames Water Water Resources Management Plan 2020-2100</a>	2020
<a href="#">Thames Water Water Resources Management Plan</a>	2019
<a href="#">Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan</a>	2017
<a href="#">Thames River Basin Management Plan</a>	2015

## Commentary

8.3 In the absence of post-1988 data for the remainder of the neighbourhood area, Natural England (2019) indicative data is relied upon. **Figure 8.1** above shows that approximately half of the undeveloped land in the neighbourhood area is considered to be Grade 2 'Good' land. Given that Bloxham is surrounded by farmland, it is likely that the areas of provisional Grade 2 ALC are in agricultural use and are productive agricultural fields. However, large parts of the area are 'Grade 4' Poor land, which indicates that this land is not considered productive with regard to agriculture. This is notable to the west of Bloxham village, as

well as to the north and northeastern boundary, where the Sor Brook runs. There are also smaller areas of Grade 3 'Moderate' land.

- 8.4 The neighbourhood area is located within the Cherwell Operational Catchment. There are two waterbodies that run through the neighbourhood area: the Bloxham Brook (Source to Sor Brook) and the Sor Brook (Broughton to Cherwell). Both waterbodies have a moderate ecological quality according to the latest condition assessments from 2019, and a failed chemical test. However, it is noted that all waterbodies in England failed the 2019 chemical test due to a change in assessment methodology.
- 8.5 The majority of the neighbourhood area is within a drinking water protected area for surface water resources. This covers the whole neighbourhood area, bar the southwestern corner of the neighbourhood area.
- 8.6 Water is supplied to the neighbourhood area by Thames Water, who are also responsible for sewerage services in this area. Their Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) identifies how they expect to balance the demand for water with available supplies over an 80-year plan period. The WRMP indicates that there is adequate supply over this period without a need to develop new sources of water.

## Key issues

- 8.7 Allocating land for development could trigger changes to land, soil and water resources. It will be important for development to be focused away from BMV land. It is noted that high quality agricultural land is focused away from Bloxham village, where development is more likely to be focused.
- 8.8 The Bloxham NP should consider potential effects on waterbody catchments and water quality. Ensuring that future development does not harm water quality, both on-site and off-site, is vital. This might involve introducing measures to prevent water pollution during all stages of development. Additionally, the Bloxham NP should look for opportunities to improve water quality, particularly in terms of its chemical makeup.
- 8.9 The Bloxham NP could also consider supporting additional measures to strengthen the resilience of water supplies. This could involve promoting local water recycling projects and finding ways to increase the efficiency of water usage, especially given the expected rise in population and the subsequent increase in water demand.

## SEA objective

- 8.10 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objective:

SEA theme	SEA objective
Land, soil, and water resources	Ensure the efficient and effective use of land, and protect and enhance water quality, using water resources in a sustainable manner.

- 8.11 Supporting assessment questions include (will the option / proposal...):

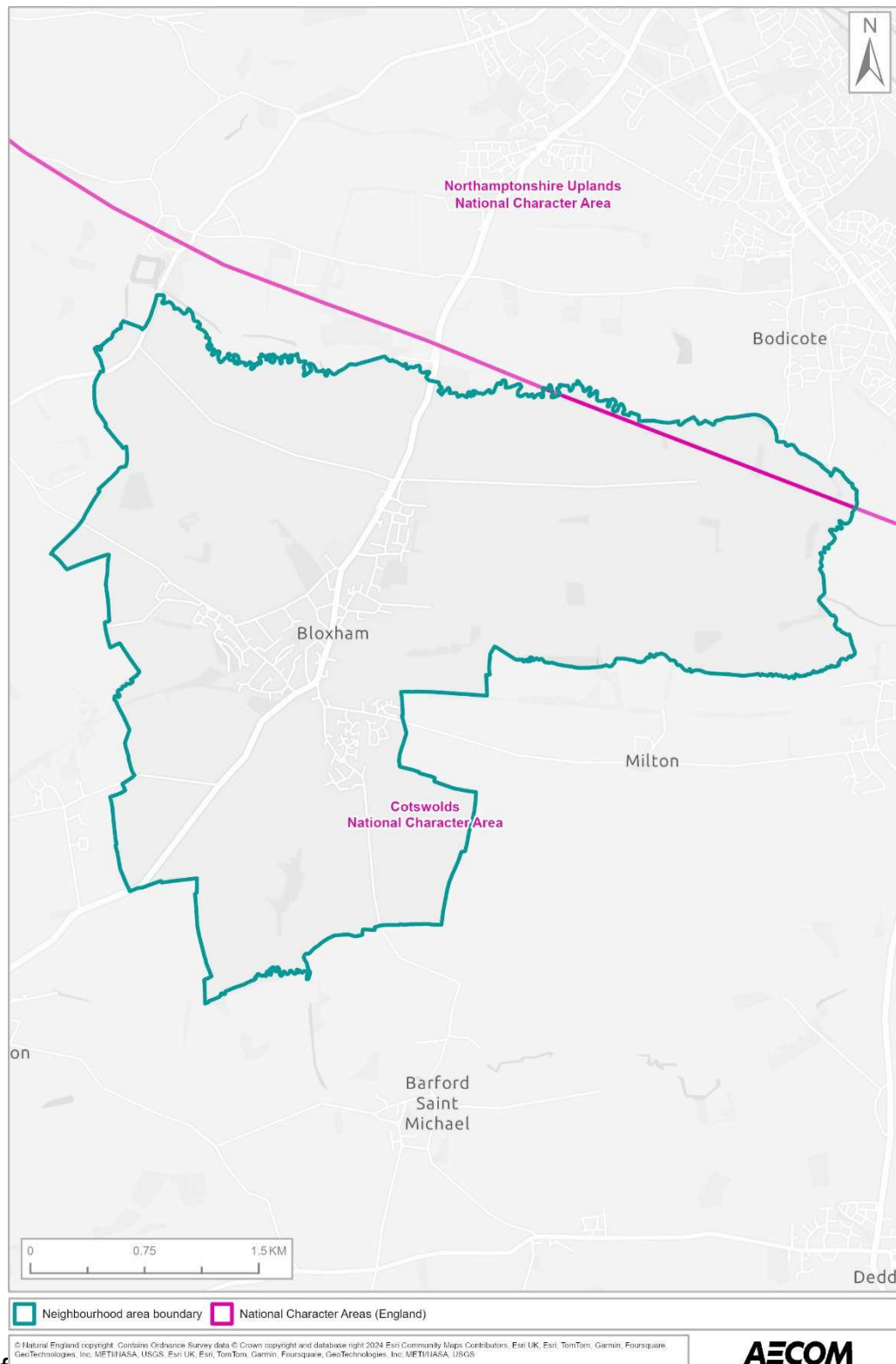
- Promote the use of previously developed land wherever possible?
- Identify and avoid the development of the BMV land?
- Support the minimisation, reuse, and recycling of waste?
- Avoid any negative impacts on water quality and support improvements to water quality?
- Ensure appropriate drainage and mitigation is delivered alongside proposed development?
- Protect waterbodies from pollution?
- Maximise water efficiency and opportunities for water harvesting and/or water recycling?
- Avoid any negative impacts on mineral and waste infrastructure?



## 9. Landscape

9.1 This section seeks to summarise landscape character and key landscape features and sensitivities in the neighbourhood area.

### Maps



**Figure 9.1 Landscape designations in relation to the neighbourhood area**



## Key statistics

- The neighbourhood area is not within a National Park or National Landscape and does not contain any areas of Green Belt land.
- There are a number of tree preservation orders (TPOs) within the neighbourhood area; most are concentrated in Bloxham village.
- The neighbourhood area sits almost entirely within the Cotswolds National Character Area (NCA), and partially within the Northamptonshire Uplands NCA in the northeast (see **Figure 9.1** above).

## Key evidence sources

9.2 Evidence sources which have informed the development of key issues include:

- [Cherwell District Council](#)
  - [Brownfield Register 2023](#)
  - [Tree Preservation Order – Online Map](#)
- [Natural England](#)
  - [National Character Area 107: Cotswolds](#)
  - [National Character Area 95: Northamptonshire Uplands](#)

## Policy context

**Table 9.1 Additional plans and policies relating to landscape.**

Document title	Year of publication
<a href="#">Cherwell District Council - Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy</a>	2022
<a href="#">Cherwell District Council - Landscape Sensitivity Assessment</a>	2022
<a href="#">Cherwell District Council Green Space Strategy</a>	2008

## Commentary

9.3 The neighbourhood area overlaps with two NCAs – 107: Cotswolds, which covers the majority of the neighbourhood area, and 95: Northamptonshire Uplands. The Cotswolds NCA is defined by its underlying geology and is characterised by prominent natural and built features, evidence of industry and historical occupation, agriculture and large areas of woodland. The Northamptonshire Uplands NCA is described as an area of gently rolling, limestone hills and valleys capped by ironstone-bearing sandstone and clay Lias, with many long, low ridgelines that contribute to wide, long-distance views.

9.4 The entire neighbourhood area overlaps with several Cherwell landscape types. The neighbourhood area primarily sits within the Upstanding Village Farmlands landscape type, which is characterised by a hilly landscape with a strong pattern of hedgerows and nucleated villages, characteristically built from

the local ironstone. The other three landscape character types that the neighbourhood area overlaps are described below:

- **River Meadowlands:** A linear riverine landscape with a flat, well-defined alluvial floodplain. It has pastoral character with meadows, wet and semi-improved pasture.
- **Pasture Hills:** A landscape dominated by remote hills that are mainly pastureland enclosed by prominent hedges with small copses and patches of gorse scrub.
- **Rolling Village Pastures:** The landscape type is characterised by a distinctive landform of small, rounded hills and narrow valleys. Unspoilt ironstone villages, with a strong vernacular character, form part of the tranquil countryside.

## Key issues

- 9.5 There are a number of TPOs in the neighbourhood area, which are important features of the settlements and likely contribute to a number of views. New development through the Bloxham NP should avoid visual impacts to and from these TPOs where possible to maintain the character and quality of built-up areas in Bloxham.
- 9.6 The neighbourhood area sits within a diverse landscape, including across two NCAs and multiple local character areas. As such, development will need to be considerate of the varying landscape features and sensitivities. The Bloxham NP has the potential to positively contribute to landscape amenity through encouraging development to integrate with the various national and local landscape characters. This will maintain the unique landscape value of the neighbourhood area.

## SEA objective

- 9.7 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objective:

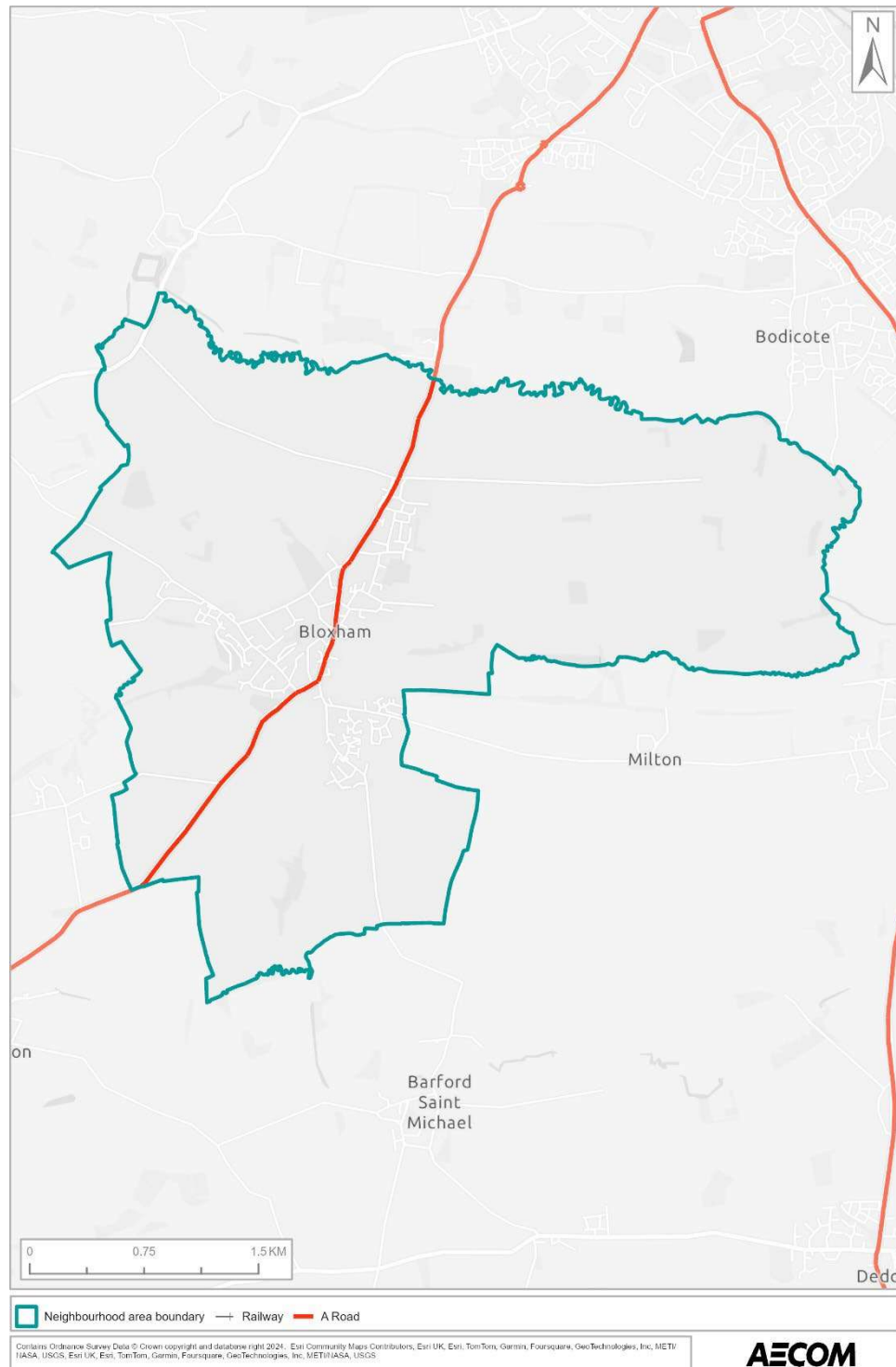
SEA theme	SEA objective
Landscape	Protect and enhance the character and quality of the immediate and surrounding landscape.

- 9.8 Supporting assessment questions include (will the option / proposal...):
- Protect and / or enhance local landscape character and quality of place?
  - Conserve and enhance local identity, diversity, and settlement character?
  - Identify and protect locally important viewpoints which contribute to character and sense of place?
  - Retain and enhance landscape features that contribute to the water setting, or rural setting, including trees and hedgerows?

# 10. Transportation and movement

10.1 This section seeks to summarise transport infrastructure, transport usage, traffic flows and congestion, accessibility, and public rights of way within and surrounding the neighbourhood area.

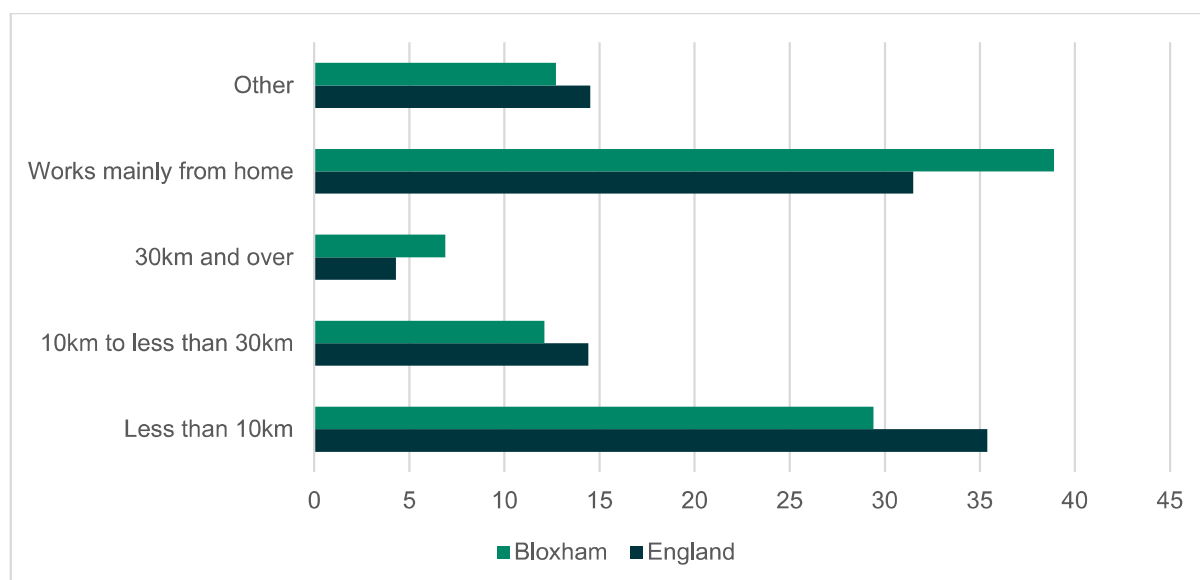
## Maps



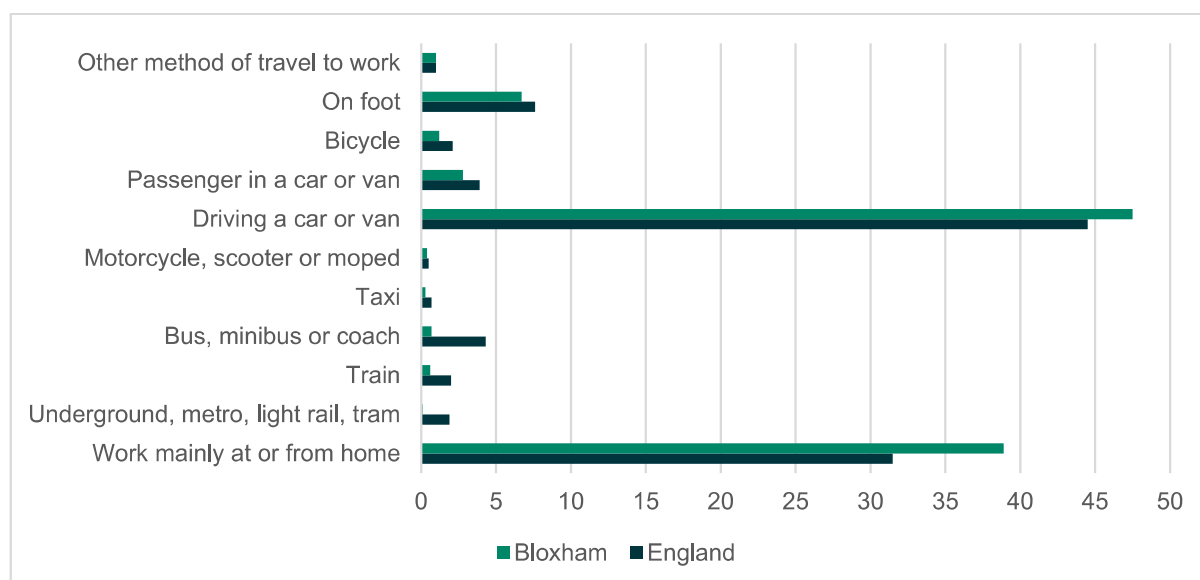
**Figure 10.1 Key transport infrastructure in the neighbourhood area**

## Key statistics

- A greater proportion of people aged 16 years and over in employment in Bloxham work mainly from home compared to the national averages.
- Of those in the neighbourhood area that do not work mainly from home, the most prevalent method of travel to the workplace is driving a car or van.
- The most common distance travelled to work is less than 10km in Bloxham, after those who are working mainly from home.



**Figure 10.2 Distance travelled to work in the neighbourhood area compared to the national average (Census 2021)**



**Figure 10.3 Method of travel to workplace in the neighbourhood area compared to the national average (Census 2021)**

## Key evidence sources

10.2 Evidence sources which have informed the development of key issues include:

- [Bustimes - Bloxham](#)
- [Stagecoach Oxfordshire – 488: Banbury Town Centre Bus Station \(Bay 7\) – Chipping Norton Churchill House](#)
- [Stagecoach Oxfordshire – 489: Banbury Town Centre Bus Station \(Bay](#)
- [Great Western Railway](#)
- [Chiltern Railways](#)
- [Cross Country Trains](#)
- [Google Maps](#)
- [Oxfordshire County Council – Countryside Access Map](#)
- [Office for National Statistics – Build a custom area profile \(Census 2021\)](#)

## Policy context

**Table 10.1 Additional plans and policies relating to transportation and movement**

Document title	Year of publication
<a href="#">Cherwell District Council - Transport Assessment</a>	2022
<a href="#">Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan</a>	2022
<a href="#">Cherwell District Council - Connecting People Transforming Journeys</a>	2021
<a href="#">Cherwell District Council - Oxfordshire Rail Corridor Strategy</a>	2021

## Commentary

10.3 There are no train stations within the neighbourhood area. However, Bloxham's nearest mainline station is Banbury, which is located approximately 3.2km from the neighbourhood area to the northeast. Run by a number of operators (Cross Country, Chiltern Railways, Great Western Railway), Banbury Station has good rail connections, with direct trains to London in around 50 minutes, as well as Oxford, Manchester, Birmingham, York, and Bournemouth, as well as a number of smaller stations.

10.4 Bloxham is served by two main bus services. The 488 runs daily once an hour, from Banbury through to Chipping Norton. The 499 serves the same route and runs once at the start of the day in the morning, and once at the end, either side of the 488 buses. Other buses include the MRT1 and MRT2, which are school buses, run from Banbury, through to Warriner School.

10.5 In terms of the strategic road network, there is one main road in the neighbourhood area (see **Figure 10.1** above). This is the A361, which runs from Taunton through to Banbury. It runs north to south through Bloxham village. This is the main traffic route in the neighbourhood area.

10.6 According to the digital map available on the Oxfordshire County Council website, there is a somewhat extensive Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network (comprised of footpaths, bridleways and byways) that allow for opportunities to engage in safe, active transportation and linking the neighbourhood area with surrounding villages, such as Adderbury, and Milcombe.

## Key issues

10.7 There are good opportunities to engage with sustainable and public transportation in the neighbourhood area, given the bus service provision and the proximity of train stations to the neighbourhood area. However, whilst these are likely to be used by residents in the neighbourhood area for some journeys, private vehicles are potentially relied upon more given they allow for easier and more convenient access to nearby settlements. It is therefore likely that new development will contribute additional private vehicles to the local road network. The Bloxham NP can help to mitigate this increase by encouraging development to come forward within proximity to active travel opportunities, including pavement and the PRoW network, to encourage an uptake in walking and cycling for access to nearby services and facilities.

10.8 Development should seek to connect with and where possible extend the existing PRoW network, thereby maximising pedestrian and cycling opportunities for leisure, working and shopping.

## SEA objective

10.9 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objective:

SEA theme	SEA objective
Transportation	Promote sustainable transport use and active travel opportunities and reduce the need to travel.

10.10 Supporting assessment questions include (will the option / proposal...):

- Support the objectives within the Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan to encourage the use of more sustainable transport modes?
- Encourage a shift to more sustainable forms of travel and enable sustainable transport infrastructure enhancements?
- Improve local connectivity and pedestrian and cyclist movement?
- Facilitate working from home to reduce the use of private vehicles to access workplaces outside of the neighbourhood area?
- Reduce the impact of the transport sector on climate change?
- Improve road safety and reduce pollution from vehicles?

# 11. Proposed SEA framework

- 11.1 The SEA framework has been established through the identification of key issues and environmental objectives as part of the scoping exercise. This draws upon the baseline position and policy context that has been explored for a range of SEA topics (as set out in **Chapters 3 to 10**).
- 11.2 The framework consists of a set of headline objectives and supporting assessment questions, which will be used to appraise the environmental effects of the draft Bloxham NP (and reasonable alternatives).
- 11.3 **Table 11.1** below outlines the proposed SEA framework, bringing together the objectives and assessment questions that have been set out at the end of each SEA topic.

**Table 11.1 The proposed SEA Framework**

SEA theme	SEA objective	Supporting assessment questions
Air quality	Support objectives to improve air quality within and surrounding the neighbourhood area and minimise impacts on nearby AQMAs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement measures (such as green infrastructure) which will help to support good air quality in the neighbourhood area?</li> <li>• Promote and encourage more sustainable transport options?</li> <li>• Encourage development which reduces the need to travel?</li> </ul>
Biodiversity and Geodiversity	Protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and enhance designated sites for biodiversity and priority habitats, supporting the integrity of ecological networks?</li> <li>• Achieve biodiversity and environmental net gains and support the delivery of ecosystem services and multifunctional green infrastructure networks?</li> <li>• Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the area to the effects of climate change, including through enhancements to ecological networks?</li> <li>• Support access to, interpretation of, and understanding of biodiversity?</li> </ul>
Climate change and flood risk	Reduce the contribution to climate change made by activities within the neighbourhood area and increase resilience to the potential effects of climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid vulnerable development in areas of elevated flood risk?</li> <li>• Promote the use of more sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling, public transport, and electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure?</li> </ul>



SEA theme	SEA objective	Supporting assessment questions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the number of new developments meeting or exceeding sustainable design criteria?</li> <li>• Generate energy from low or zero carbon sources, or reduce energy consumption from non-renewable resources?</li> <li>• Improve and extend green infrastructure networks in the neighbourhood area?</li> <li>• Sustainably manage water runoff, and reduce runoff where possible?</li> </ul>
Community wellbeing	Ensure growth in the neighbourhood area is aligned with the needs of all residents, improving accessibility, anticipating future needs and specialist requirements, and supporting cohesive and inclusive communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing?</li> <li>• Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes?</li> <li>• Meet the needs of all sectors of the community?</li> <li>• Provide flexible and adaptable homes that meet people's needs, particularly the needs of an ageing population?</li> <li>• Improve the availability and accessibility of key local facilities, including health infrastructure?</li> <li>• Encourage and promote social cohesion and active involvement of local people in community activities?</li> <li>• Facilitate green infrastructure enhancements, including improved access to open space?</li> <li>• Maintain or enhance the quality of life of existing residents?</li> </ul>
Historic environment	Protect, conserve, and enhance the historic environment within and surrounding the neighbourhood area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect the integrity of the historic setting of the Bloxham Conservation Area?</li> <li>• Conserve and enhance buildings and structures of architectural or historic interest, and their settings?</li> <li>• Conserve and enhance the special interest, character and appearance of locally important features and their settings?</li> <li>• Protect the integrity of the historic setting of key monuments of cultural</li> </ul>

SEA theme	SEA objective	Supporting assessment questions
		<p>heritage interest as listed in the Oxfordshire County Council Historic Environment Record (HER)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the undertaking of early archaeological investigations and, where appropriate, recommend mitigation strategies?</li> <li>• Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic evolution and character of the neighbourhood area?</li> </ul>
Land, soil, and water resources	Ensure the efficient and effective use of land, and protect and enhance water quality, using water resources in a sustainable manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the use of previously developed land wherever possible?</li> <li>• Identify and avoid the development of the BMV land?</li> <li>• Support the minimisation, reuse, and recycling of waste?</li> <li>• Avoid any negative impacts on water quality and support improvements to water quality?</li> <li>• Ensure appropriate drainage and mitigation is delivered alongside proposed development?</li> <li>• Protect waterbodies from pollution?</li> <li>• Maximise water efficiency and opportunities for water harvesting and/or water recycling?</li> <li>• Avoid any negative impacts on mineral and waste infrastructure?</li> </ul>
Landscape	Protect and enhance the character and quality of the immediate and surrounding landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and / or enhance local landscape character and quality of place?</li> <li>• Conserve and enhance local identity, diversity, and settlement character?</li> <li>• Identify and protect locally important viewpoints which contribute to character and sense of place?</li> <li>• Retain and enhance landscape features that contribute to the water setting, or rural setting, including trees and hedgerows?</li> </ul>
Transportation	Promote sustainable transport use and active travel opportunities and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the objectives within the Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan to encourage the use of more sustainable transport modes?</li> </ul>

SEA theme	SEA objective	Supporting assessment questions
	reduce the need to travel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Encourage a shift to more sustainable forms of travel and enable sustainable transport infrastructure enhancements?</li><li>• Improve local connectivity and pedestrian and cyclist movement?</li><li>• Facilitate working from home to reduce the use of private vehicles to access workplaces outside of the neighbourhood area?</li><li>• Reduce the impact of the transport sector on climate change?</li><li>• Improve road safety and reduce pollution from vehicles?</li></ul>

## 12. Future baseline

- 12.1 In the context of SEA, there is a need to consider the future baseline. The future baseline is the expected continuation and/or evolution of aspects of the baseline, based on what we know today. The future baseline is inevitably uncertain and unpredictable.
- 12.2 In the future, development (housing, employment, and wider infrastructure) will continue to come forward without a neighbourhood plan. This will either be allocated through the Local Plan, or speculatively through the planning system. In this respect a 'business as usual' approach means that development in line with Local Plan policies and the NPPF is likely to continue as a natural evolution of the baseline.
- 12.3 In accepting a 'business as usual' approach, we also accept that increases in absolute carbon emissions globally are likely to continue (in the absence of strategic, including global, action). A focus is therefore paid to per capita emissions, whereby planning can influence root behaviours and support lifestyle changes which have a recognisable and measurable localised impact.
- 12.4 It is assumed that development would be delivered alongside suitable, and widely accepted, mitigation in line with Local Plan and national policies. This would include sustainable drainage systems, efficiency standards, sequential and exception testing etc. More recently, it is recognised that a biodiversity net gain standard (10%) is being embedded in development standards nationally.
- 12.5 Furthermore, it is recognised that assets are afforded a level of protection, according to their significance, through the planning system (with internationally and nationally designated features afforded greater weight in planning decisions). It is assumed that existing national and local planning and policy protections will remain in the future as a key consideration for the development management process.
- 12.6 These assumptions will be considered throughout the assessment process, whilst recognising that uncertainty remains, and a precautionary principle will still be required.

## 13. Next steps

### Subsequent stages for the SEA process

13.1 Scoping (the current stage) is the second stage of the SEA process:

- Screening.
- Scoping.
- Assess reasonable alternatives (to inform preparation of the draft plan); and
- Prepare the Environmental Report (to inform consultation and plan finalisation).

13.2 The next stage will involve appraising reasonable alternatives for the Bloxham NP. The findings of the appraisal of these alternatives will be fed back to the Bloxham Parish Council so that they might be considered when preparing the draft Bloxham NP.

13.3 Once the draft ('pre-submission version') plan has been prepared, it will be subjected to SEA, and the prepared Environmental Report will go out to consultation alongside it.

13.4 Following consultation on the draft Bloxham NP and the Environmental Report, the Bloxham NP will be finalised and submitted to CDC for Independent Examination.

### Consultation on the Scoping Report

13.5 At this scoping stage, the SEA Regulations require consultation with statutory consultation bodies. The statutory consultation bodies are the Environment Agency, Historic England, and Natural England. Consultees are invited to comment on the need for SEA, as well as the content of this Scoping Report; in particular, the evidence base for the SEA, the identified key issues, and the proposed SEA framework.

13.6 The consultation period runs from XXXX to XXXX. Comments on the Scoping Report should be sent to:

Olivia Marter, AECOM

Email address: [olivia.marter@aecom.com](mailto:olivia.marter@aecom.com)

13.7 All comments received on the Scoping Report will be reviewed and will influence the development of the SEA where appropriate.

