

MODIFIED BLOXHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2024 - 2042

BASIC CONDITIONS STATEMENT

OCTOBER 2025

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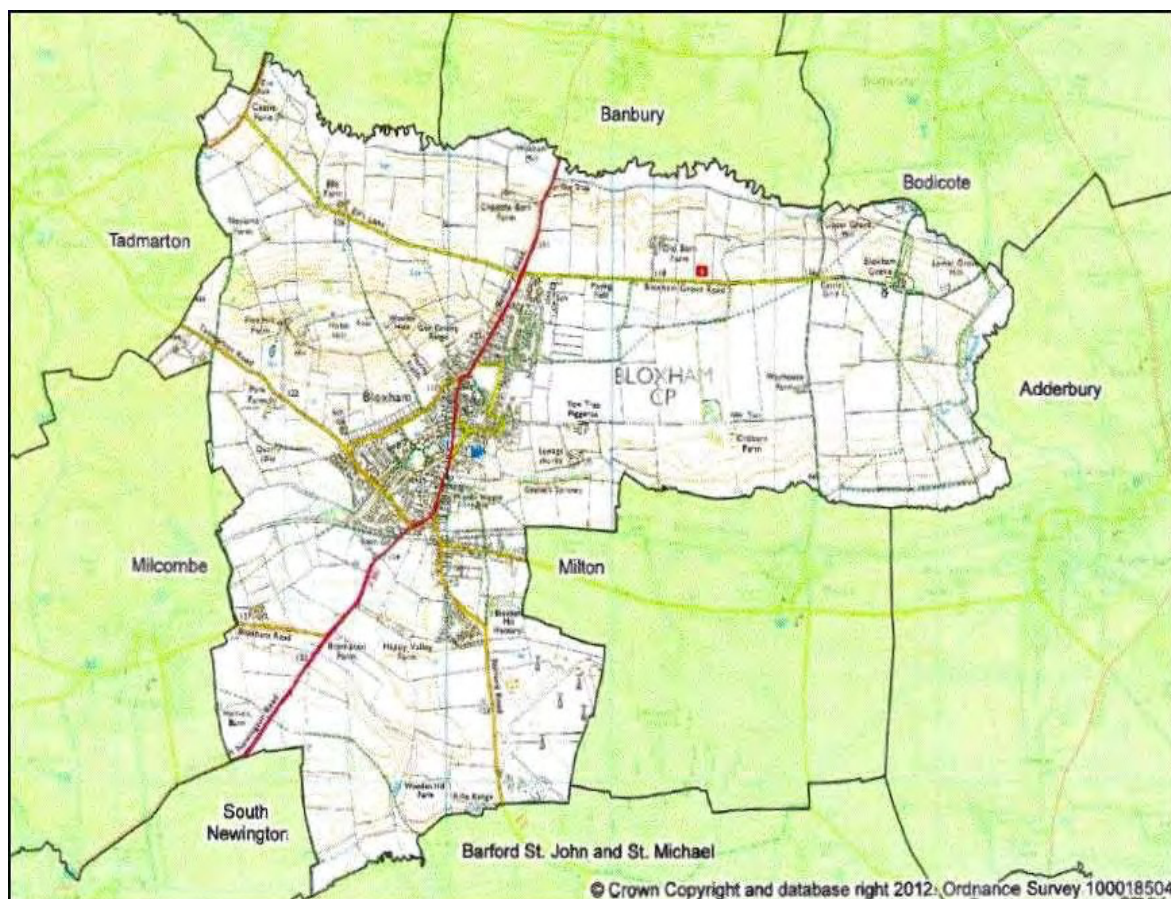
1.INTRODUCTION

The Neighbourhood Plan

1.1 This Statement has been prepared by ONH on behalf of Bloxham Parish Council (BPC) to accompany its submission of the Modified Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan (NP2) to the local planning authority, Cherwell District Council (CDC), under Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (“the Regulations”).

1.2 The NP2 is a modified version of the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan (NP1) which was made by CDC in December 2016. NP2 has been prepared by BPC, the ‘Qualifying Body’, for the same Neighbourhood Area (“the Area”) as NP1, shown on Plan A below. The Area was originally designated by CDC in 2013. NP2 will cover the period from 2024 to 2042 to align with the emerging Cherwell Local Plan (eCLP).

1.3 ONH has provided the professional planning advice and support to BPC throughout the project, alongside advice from CDC officers.



Plan A: Bloxham Designated Neighbourhood Area

1.4 NP2 contains 15 land use policies, which are defined on the Policies Map & Inset where they apply to a specific part of the Area. The policies described in NP2 relate to the development and use of land in the designated Area. They do not relate to ‘excluded development’, as defined by the Regulations.

1.5 The Plan has deliberately avoided containing policies that needlessly duplicate adopted development plan policies or national policies that are already or will be used to determine planning applications. However, some restate strategic or national policy where BPC knows that the local community are especially interested in that policy matter being covered in the plan. In this small number of instances, care has been taken to avoid confusion in applying them alongside their development plan equivalent.

1.6 NP2 includes a short Modification Statement in its Appendix C to explain how and why BPC considers it contains some modifications that are so significant or substantial they change the nature of NP1 (per Regulation 15(1)(f) of the Regulations). The Statement comprises a table showing how the NP1 policies have been transferred into NP2, with some deletions, replacements and additions. CDC officers have agreed with BPC that the modifications change the nature of NP1 but BPC wants NP2 to be subject to a referendum in any event.

1.7 In respect of testing the basic conditions, BPC has focused its attention in this statement on those policies that are new, that have replaced NP1 policies or that have been the subject of major, material modifications. For ease of reference, the modification schedule in §2.9 below highlights these policies. It is assumed that those NP1 policies that have only been modified in a minor way, and where there has been no significant change to their strategic or national policy context, will continue to meet the basic conditions.

The Basic Conditions

1.8 The statement addresses each of the four 'Basic Conditions', which are relevant to this plan, required of the Regulations and explains how the submitted Neighbourhood Plan meets the requirements of paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act.

1.9 The Regulations state that a Neighbourhood Plan will be considered to have met the Conditions if:

- A. Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the Neighbourhood Development Plan;
- D. The making of the Neighbourhood Development Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- E. The making of the Neighbourhood Development Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area); and
- F. The making of the Neighbourhood Development Plan does not breach and is otherwise compatible with EU obligations.

1.10 It is noted that the Levelling Up & Regeneration Act 2023 has made provision for Condition E to be amended by replacing the current requirement with a narrower condition in respect of not undermining the housing site allocation provisions in an adopted Local Plan. However, at the time of the expected examination of the Neighbourhood Plan, the regulations enabling that part of the Act have not been made.

2.BACKGROUND

2.1 The decision to proceed with a review of NP1 was made by the Parish Council in 2023, mindful that the plan had lost some of its currency in decision making as it got older and especially in relation to managing future housing proposals. NP1 was considered a success in managing development but more speculative proposals were being made as the status of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan (CLP) declined and local housing supply position became more tenuous.

2.2 A steering group was formed comprising BPC representatives and some residents. The group was delegated authority by BPC to review and update its evidence base. In late 2024 and early 2025 the project gathered pace as it became clear that CDC was struggling to management housing development proposals and had been slower than expected to submit the eCLP. In the meantime, the new Government had changed national policy, especially in respect of planning for future housing supply but also in simplifying the provisions of §14 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

2.3 The Pre-Submission NP2, and a Draft Environmental Report (Strategic Environment Assessment), were consulted on for a total nine-week period per the respective regulations across July – September 2025. BPC commenced that period with the NP2 and then published the Draft SEA Report, the final production of which had been delayed. In publishing NP2 BPC made consultees aware of the later publication of the SEA and then made sure the SEA report was made available to all for the minimum six week period. The earlier start to the NP2 consultation allowed BPC to use pre-booked community engagement events (see the Consultation Statement) and allowed for a longer period to respond given the summer holidays.

2.4 BPC and ONH reviewed the comments made on the draft NP2 and the BPC meeting in October 2025 approved the main modifications to be made to the final version of the plan. CDC will screen for Habitats Regulations Assessment but is likely to screen out the potential for likely effects of NP2 on international habitats.

3. CONDITION A: REGARD TO NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

3.1 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared with full regard to national policies as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) of December 2024. BPC has also taken into account the online Planning Practice Guidance in respect of formulating Neighbourhood Plans. In overall terms, there are four NPPF paragraphs that provide general guidance on neighbourhood planning, to which the Neighbourhood Plan has directly responded:

General Paragraphs

3.2 BPC believes NP2 continues to “support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans ... and ... to shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies” (§13). It considers the NP2 contains only non-strategic policy proposals or proposals that refine strategic policy to fit the circumstances of the Area without undermining the purpose and intent of those strategic policies (§18). It also considers that NP2 sets out more “detailed policies for specific areas” including “the provision of infrastructure and community facilities at a local level, establishing design principles, conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment and setting out other development management policies” (§29).

3.3 BPC considers that NP2 has again provided the community with the power to develop a new shared vision for the Area, and especially Bloxham village, that will shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. NP2 contains a site allocation to deliver approx. 125 new homes and a range of new community and other local infrastructure, which exceeds the expectation of emerging strategic policy but is consistent with the position of the village in the settlement hierarchy of the adopted and emerging Local Plans (§30 and §69). The Plan is underpinned by relevant and up-to-date evidence. This is considered to be adequate and proportionate, focused tightly on supporting and justifying the policies concerned (§32).

Specific Paragraphs

3.4 Each policy engages one or more specific paragraphs of the NPPF. Those that are considered to be of the most relevance and substance are identified in Table A below.

Table A: Neighbourhood Plan & NPPF Regard Summary

Policy No.	Policy Title	Commentary
BL1	A Spatial Plan for Bloxham	<p>This policy promotes balanced housing and business growth while protecting Bloxham's countryside and ensuring sustainability in alignment with strategic policy. This policy seeks to balance economic, social and environmental objectives and to pursue them in mutually supportive ways (§8). The policy takes forward the opportunity for the village to grow and thrive, especially as this will support local services (§83).</p> <p>Emerging strategic policies have set out a housing requirement for Bloxham which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development (§69). The policy exceeds the requirement (75 homes) in the eCLP but not to the extent that undermines the status of the village as the fourth largest settlement in the District or prejudices future strategic policy. It also anticipates that strategic policy will require an early review in respect of meeting local housing needs to give NP2 a longer shelf life than may otherwise be the case.</p>
BL2	Land East of Tadmarton Road ('Painters Farm')	<p>This policy supports the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes (§61). The SEA and technical evidence base demonstrate that the land use and development/design principles have had proper regard to a range of policies on land use (§125a), housing mix (§63/§129a), landscape (§187), design (§135), flooding (§164/§172/§175), heritage (§208), traffic (§111), green infrastructure (§103/§192), community facilities (§96/§98), notably future education provision (§100), and viability (§51).</p>
BL3	Connectivity	<p>This policy identifies and pursues opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use (§109e). It also provides for attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks with supporting facilities such as secure cycle parking (§111d).</p>
BL4	Parking	<p>This policy sets local parking standards for residential development by taking into account: the type and mix of development; the limited availability of and opportunities for public transport; and high local car ownership levels (§112).</p>

BL5	Housing Mix	This policy uses its evidence base to establish the need, size and type of housing needed for different groups in the community (§63).
BL6	Adapting Homes to meet Demographic Change	
BL7	Residential Amenity	This policy seeks to create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users (§136f).
BL8	Local Infrastructure	This policy supports measures to ensure the future health and resilience of the community and village infrastructure to climate change impacts (§162) and promotes a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to meet the development needs of the village and align that growth and with local infrastructure improvement (§11a). As a non-strategic policy, it sets out more detailed proposals for the village, including allocating land for the provision of infrastructure (§29).
BL9	General Design Guidance	This policy sets out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable (§132).
BL10	Design in the Conservation Area	This policy (and the Conservation Area Appraisal it combines with) sets out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the village's historic environment. It takes into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of the Conservation Area (§203).
BL11	Key Streetscenes & Views	This policy sets out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable (§132).
BL12	Employment Land	This policy promotes rural economic development in a way that is flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan, and allow for new and flexible working practices and spaces to enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances (§86e). It enables the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in this rural area (§88a).
BL13	Village Centre	This policy seeks the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops and meeting places in the village centre (§88d).
BL14	Broadband & Mobile Communications	This policy supports the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G) and full fibre broadband connections in the village (§119)>

BL15	Local Green Spaces & Other Amenity Spaces	This policy uses the Local Green Space designation only for green spaces that are: in reasonably close proximity to the community they serve; demonstrably special to the local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of their beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of their wildlife; and are local in character and is not extensive tracts of land (§107). The other amenity spaces are part of the network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for activity that is important for the health and well-being of the community (§103).
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3.5 In summary therefore it is considered NP2 has had regard to national policy.

4. CONDITION D: CONTRIBUTING TO ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

4.1 The scope of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of NP2 is sufficiently broad to encompass social and economic metrics. In which case, this basic condition is met as the SEA report concludes that the potential for adverse sustainability effects has been satisfactorily avoided or mitigated and that there will be significant social, economic and net environmental benefits, primarily arising from the BL2 Painters Farm proposal.

4.2 The NP2 will therefore contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Further information is contained in the separate Draft SEA Report and SEA Addendum.

5. CONDITION E: GENERAL CONFORMITY WITH THE STRATEGIC POLICIES OF THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

5.1 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to ensure its general conformity with the adopted development plan, that is the CLP adopted in 2015. Most of those policies are considered to be of a strategic nature (as per Planning Practice Guidance (§41-076), which has been a helpful guide.

5.2 As noted in the NP2, the CLP (Policy Villages 1) classifies Bloxham village as a Category A Service Village which are considered to be suitable for minor residential development in addition to infilling and conversions within the built-up limits of villages.

5.3 CDC submitted the eCLP in July 2025. Although it will not be examined against this new plan, NP2 has been prepared to take into account its reasoning and evidence to ensure it will have a longer shelf life without being superseded by it, per Planning Practice Guidance (§ 41-009).

5.4 The timing of the eCLP and that of NP2, alongside changes to the NPPF and CDC's position in determining housing development proposals, has presented BPC with a challenge. The proposed HRF of 75 homes as already been exceeded as the village has faced a steady stream of unplanned housing proposals, many of which have been determined under the NPPF §11 'tilted balance'. In these circumstances, and with the eCLP perhaps still two years away from adoption and needing a speedy replacement, BPC wishes to have the most effect it can with NP2 maintaining the plan-led system.

5.5 There remain some saved policies of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996. However, they are not deemed strategic for the purpose of meeting this basic condition.

5.6 An assessment of the general conformity of each policy, and its relationship with emerging policy where relevant, is contained in Table B below.

Table B: Neighbourhood Plan & Development Plan Conformity Summary

No.	Policy Title & Refs	Commentary
BL1	A Spatial Plan for Bloxham	The policy is consistent with the status of Bloxham as one of the largest Service Villages in the District (Villages 1). See Table A for information on how the policy relates to the eCLP in terms of planning for the indicative housing requirement.
BL2	Land East of Tadmarton Road ('Painters Farm')	<p>The policy has taken into account the criteria in Policy Villages 2 for neighbourhood plans to allocate land where: significant adverse impact on heritage or wildlife assets could be avoided; development would contribute in enhancing the built environment; best and most versatile agricultural land could be avoided; significant adverse landscape and impacts could be avoided; satisfactory vehicular and pedestrian access/egress could be provided; the site is well located to services and facilities; necessary infrastructure could be provided; the land is deliverable now or there is a reasonable prospect that it could be developed within the plan period; and the development would not have an adverse impact on flood risk.</p> <p>In addition, the policy plans for the provision of school facilities (BSC7) and seeks to ensure that the proposal contributes to open space and recreation provision (BSC10) that exceed the need generated by the proposals in agreement with the land interest.</p>
BL3	Connectivity	The policy facilitates the use of sustainable modes of transport to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling (SLE4). It also promotes permeable, accessible and easily understandable places by creating spaces that connect with each other (ESD15).
BL4	Parking	The policy supports the development of streets and places that promotes pedestrian movement and integrates different modes of transport, parking and servicing (ESD15).
BL5	Housing Mix	The policy requires new residential development to provide a mix of homes to meet current and expected future requirements in the interests of meeting housing need and creating socially mixed and inclusive communities using the most up-to-date evidence on housing need (BCS4).
BL6	Adapting Homes to meet Demographic Change	

BL7	Residential Amenity	The policy requires proposals to consider the amenity of both existing and future development, including matters of privacy, outlook, natural lighting, ventilation, and indoor and outdoor space (ESD15).
BL8	Local Infrastructure	The policy support proposals which involve new or improvements to public services/utilities if they are required to enable the successful delivery of sites (BSC9).
BL9	General Design Guidance	The policy makes specific provisions to respect the traditional pattern of routes, spaces, blocks, plots, enclosures and the form, scale and massing of buildings in the village (ESD15).
BL10	Design in the Conservation Area	The policy acknowledges that successful design is founded upon an understanding and respect for an area's unique built, natural and cultural context. New development will be expected to complement and enhance the character of its context through sensitive siting, layout and high quality design (ESD15).
BL11	Key Streetscenes & Views	
BL12	Employment Land	The policy is more restrictive than CLP Policy SLE1 (and eCLP Policy LEC3) which allows for employment development in the rural areas to be located within or on the edge of those villages in Category A. The policy considers the growth of the recent rapid and significant outward growth of the village with residential development has made allowing for further expansion to accommodate employment uses untenable in landscape and traffic terms. The SLE1 caveat that such schemes should be of a small scale will not overcome the likely significant adverse impacts on the character of the village and its surrounding environment. It is also considered that the LEC3 criteria cannot be met for proposals outside the Settlement Boundary. However, existing employment sites – including the largest employers and traffic generators, which are the three schools but also Bloxham Mill – all have the opportunity to expand within the Settlement Boundary. A future review of NP2 may consider whether or not there may be an opportunity to allocate land for a Class E employment use in a suitable location that may complement and not compete with the Village Centre and be of a community benefit.
BL13	Village Centre	The CLP makes no provision for 'local centres' though saved policies SLE2 and S29 relate to protecting local shops and services in rural areas, with which this policy is consistent.
BL14	Broadband & Mobile Communications	The policy supports proposals which involve new or improvements to public services/utilities if they are required to enable the successful delivery of sites and all new developments will be expected to include provision for connection to Superfast Broadband (BSC9).
BL15	Local Green Spaces & Other Amenity Spaces	The policy seeks to ensure that sufficient quantity and quality of, and convenient access to open space provision is secured by protecting existing sites (BSC10).

5.7 In summary therefore it is considered NP2 is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan as a whole.

6. CONDITION F: COMPATABILITY WITH EU-DERIVED OBLIGATIONS

6.1 A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has been carried out in accordance with Regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessments of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended). CDC confirmed by email on 22 October 2024 that an SEA would be required for NP2 given the intention to allocate land for development. The statutory bodies were consulted on a draft SEA scoping report for the required five week period in March – April 2025 and the Draft SEA Report was published alongside the NP2 for a six week period in August – September 2025. An SEA Addendum has been produced to that Report for submission and examination. Each of those reports is published separately in the submission documentation.

6.2 NP2 must also meet its obligations in relation to the habitats provisions (HRA) of EU Directive 92/43/EEC incorporated into the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)). CDC will complete its screening of NP2 once it has been submitted per s106(1) of those Regulations. However, it is anticipated that its screening will draw the same conclusion as that for the eCLP which is that NP2 will not have an adverse effect on any European sites either in its own right or in combination with other plans and projects.

6.3 BPC has been mindful of the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights in process of preparing the NP2 and considers that it complies with the Human Rights Act. The separate Consultation Statement demonstrates that NP2 has been subject to extensive engagement with those people local to the area who could be affected by its policies and their views have been taken into account in finalising its content.

6.4 In respect of Directive 2008/98/EC – the Waste Framework Directive – NP2 does not include any policies in relation to the management of waste, nor does the area include a waste management site that would be affected by its policies. In respect of Directive 2008/50/EC – the Air Quality Directive – NP2 does not include policies that are directly relevant to Air Quality.

6.5 In summary therefore it is considered NP2 is compatible with all EU-derived obligations.