



Where to build the houses Banbury needs?

A recent report called “Cherwell District Council Banbury Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment” came out on 25 March 2013. The report is very difficult to read, and is a huge 337 pages of typical planning piffle. But a brief summary can show which sites in the Local Plan 2013 are best for housing development, having Low Sensitivity and High Capacity to accept change.

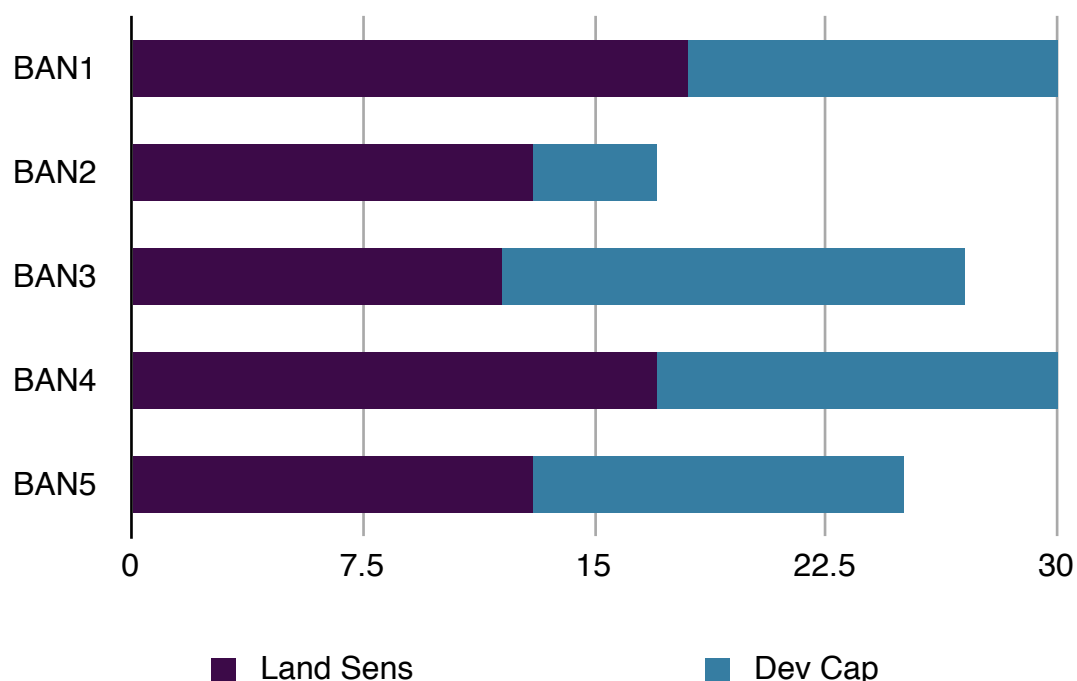
The report analyses eight areas all round Banbury. Parts of some of them cover the sites proposed in the Local Plan 2013 for house building. The report does not have any maps, and does not have any conclusions. But each of the Local Plan sites is mentioned and from the data it is possible to construct some reasoned conclusions.

These are shown on the next page as a table, with ranking and as a graph so it is easy to see our best choices.

Translating the reports “High”, Medium-High”, etc to numbers and listing the Sensitivity, Capacity and the totals, gives the data below. Higher numbers are better choices for building the houses we need. From the numbers a site ranking has been derived.

Location	Land Sensitivity	Development Capacity	TOTAL	RANKING
BAN1 Canalside	18	12	30	1
BAN2 Southam Rd	13	4	17	5
BAN3 W Bretch Hill	12	15	27	3
BAN4 Bankside 2	17	13	30	2
BAN5 N Hanwell	13	12	25	4
Bankside 1 Approved	-	-		First to build

The results confirm the views of Hanwell Fields Development Group (HFDAG) that the Local Plan should clearly state this priority with which land will be released and approved for house building.



HFDAG believes that the current total of number of houses Cherwell District Council targets, 6000 in 2006-2031, is much too high and anyway not in line with the targets required by the National Planning Policy Framework which calls for 5 and 15 year plans.

Anyway assuming the high figure of 6000 total, this means 240/yr build rate. Which in 5 years means 1200 houses and in 15 years 3600. Combining this with the best ranked sites listed above we see that the correct plan would be

Rank	Site	2012-2017	2018-2028	NPPF TOTAL
First	Bankside 1	855	237	1092
1	BAN1 Canalside	0	950	950
2	BAN4 Bankside 2	0	400	400
3	BAN3 W Bretch Hill	0	400	400
4	BAN5 N Hanwell	0	0	0
5	BAN2 Southam Rd	0	0	0
	W Warwick Rd	-	290	290
	Other	210	-	210
	Windfalls	135	177	312
	TOTAL	1200	2400	3600

What is clear is that the housing needs can be met without any building on the environmentally sensitive, agricultural land at North Hanwell and Southam Road. As you can see both these sites came lowest in the ranking.

It is our opinion that the application by Miller homes for the development at West Warwick Road is a better alternative to North Hanwell, and the figures for this have been included above. West Warwick Road was in the past considered as the 1st reserve site and part of BAN5, before being removed from the plan with no good reasons.

HFDAG hopes that Cherwell District Council is listening to reason and will take steps to remove North Hanwell and Southam Road sites from the Local Plan map, and make it clear to aggressive developers that permission will not be given and focus should be on getting building going at Bankside 1.

The full analysis spread sheet is below: for sensitivity and capacity the scores are 1 = Bad to 5 = Good. This clarifies the confusion in the Official Report which has the ranking of capacity up-side-down.

	E	B1	I1	F	J1
	Central BAN1	BAN2	BAN3	BAN4	BAN5
	Canalside	Southam Rd	W Bretch Hill	Bankside 2	(WR &)NH
Size Hectares	25			27	35
Nature	Rail, Canal, ind			Agri, Rugby, Spa	
Land Sens	5	4	2	4	2
Vis Sens	4	1	2	3	2
Land Char Sens	4	2	2	4	2
Land Val	4	2	3	5	3
Land Cap	1	4	3	1	4
TOTAL L = bad	18	13	12	17	13
Res Dev	3	1	2	1	5
Emp Dev	1	1	5	4	5
Rec Dev	4	1	4	3	1
Wood	4	1	4	5	1
TOTAL L = Bad	12	4	15	13	12

The reports can be found at [www.cherwell.gov.uk/LocalPlan 2013](http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/LocalPlan%202013)
and on the HFDAG web site.

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