

ABINGDON-ON-THAMES NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2041



Appendix 1 Designated Local Green Spaces (Draft)

Protections Offered by Local Green Space Designation in a Neighbourhood Plan

The designation of an open space as a Local Green Space (LGS) within the Abingdon Neighbourhood Plan affords it significant protections under national planning policy. This designation recognises the particular importance of such spaces to local communities due to their beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity, or richness of wildlife. As a result, it provides robust safeguards against development, akin to the protections offered to Green Belts.

Once designated, LGSs are subject to the following key protections:

1. Firstly, the designation ensures that development proposals on these spaces are managed with a presumption against development, except in very special circumstances. This means that any proposed development must demonstrate overriding public benefits that significantly outweigh the harm to the protected space.
2. Secondly, the LGS designation requires that the open space be kept permanently open and free from inappropriate development. This protection is crucial for maintaining the space's existing character and usage, whether for recreation, wildlife conservation, or as a visual amenity.
3. Thirdly, any planning application affecting a designated LGS must carefully consider the impact on the community's enjoyment and use of the space. Proposals that could lead to the loss or significant detriment of the space's features or functions are typically resisted.
4. Finally, the LGS designation supports the retention and enhancement of the space's environmental and community value. It encourages the preservation of natural habitats, supports biodiversity, and fosters community engagement with and stewardship of the local environment.

Summary

The LGS designation within a neighbourhood plan provides stringent protections for designated open spaces, ensuring their preservation for future generations and maintaining their integral role within the community's environmental and social fabric. This designation represents a powerful tool for safeguarding valued local spaces against unsuitable development, thereby contributing to sustainable and resilient community planning.

Designated Local Green Spaces (Table)

Ref. No.	Name	Criteria					Description
		Beauty	History	Recreation	Tranquillity	Wildlife	
1	Welford Gardens Green	X			X	X	Welford Gardens green space is located at the northern end, and is a calming, beautiful community area, consisting of a significant grassed area with ten large trees, supporting an abundance of plant and animal life, as well as enhancing the lives and wellbeing of residents and visitors. Since being created ca.1952, the green area has been enjoyed for general recreation by local families, and in community celebrations. Mature trees are prominent on the green space and include, notably, an approximately 125 year old oak – predating the building of the estate on common land, but also sycamore, beech, horse chestnut, Douglas fir, and other trees. These are an outstanding integral feature, of the Green. Both resident birds and visiting species rely on the native trees, particularly the oak which is a vital biodiverse habitat. The trees with the surrounding space are fundamental to the character of the area, and also maintain the original identity of the AERA estate as designed. Periodically, between scheduled grass mowing, the area briefly displays something of its meadow potential.
2	Green space contained by Northcourt Rd, Oxford Rd and		X	X		X	The land is surrounded on all sides by the community it serves. It is currently used by several local community teams as a football pitch, with practice pitches alongside. In addition, local residents

Ref. No.	Name	Criteria					Description
		Beauty	History	Recreation	Tranquility	Wildlife	
	Northcourt Lane						enjoy the views onto open green space in an otherwise built-up area. The land forms part of the Northcourt Conservation Area.
3	Land at Long Furlong	X		X	X	X	A swathe of heavily treed green space with a wooded feel. The land bisects two residential areas forming part of Long Furlong. A stream runs along the southern border of the site which then runs south. Public footpaths run through the area. A play park and community centre sit to the north of the site and footpaths run the length of the site west to east. A local asset for recreation which could benefit from more diverse planting.
4	Land between Mons Way to the east and west of Copenhagen Drive	X				X	A long strip of land spanning the length of Mons Way, adjacent to housing development on the western edge of Abingdon. Land consists of a strip of grass and a heavily treed strip which runs adjacent to Copenhagen Drive. Potential for additional tree planting or wildflower verges if grass was unmown. Some further mature trees in the back gardens of houses backing onto Copenhagen Drive provide a further green feel to the strip.
5	Land between Appleford Drive and Compton Drive					X	A small neighbourhood green space set either side of the junction of two residential roads. The area is covered by well-maintained grass and the western section comprises three mature trees. There is potential for further tree cover.
6	Land at Larkhill Stream			X	X	X	This strip of land is heavily treed and runs through two neighbourhoods from south-west to north-east. Larkhill Stream runs along the land and a footpath also spans the majority of the stretch linking two residential areas.

Ref. No.	Name	Criteria					Description
		Beauty	History	Recreation	Tranquility	Wildlife	
7	Land at Borough Walk			X	X	X	This site forms a neighbourhood green space near to a few local services, set either side of Wootton Road. The grassy space is well maintained and contains a variety of types of mature trees and hedges however could benefit from additional tree planting to form a denser tree covering. Alternatively, potential for wildflower verges if grass was unmown.
8	Land north of Heron's Walk			X	X	X	An informal grassy recreation area which lies at the heart of a residential area. Some mature trees lie on the edges of the site with potential for further planting. A small car parking area lies to the south.
9	Land at Abbey Fishponds Nature Reserve	X		X	X	X	A heavily treed and biodiverse nature reserve which bisects two residential areas to the south east of the settlement. A stream runs through from north-west to south-east and footpaths run throughout. Identified as a site of ecological interest.
10	Land at Boxhill Wood	X		X		X	A piece of land at the heart of a residential area comprising a more heavily wooded area and two informal recreation spaces. Multiple footpaths run through the site. The site is identified as an area of ecological interest however potential for biodiversity enhancement across the site with the parts not used for recreation being left unmown.
11	Land at Barton Fields				X	X	A designated Jubilee Wildlife Site managed by a group of volunteers for the benefit of wildlife, flora and general ecological value. Bordered by the Thames/Thrupp Water (a stream), Thames Path to the south and the Sustrans Path to the north, the site is enclosed by mature trees on all sides.

Ref. No.	Name	Criteria					Description
		Beauty	History	Recreation	Tranquility	Wildlife	
							The main area comprises a variety of grassland types and a wetland area all with shrub vegetation scattered throughout. The entire site is identified as a site of ecological interest.
12	Land at Ock Valley Walk	X		X	X	X	A dense wooded area situated on the western edge of the settlement adjacent to residential development. The River Ock and a tributary run through the site from west to east alongside a public footpath. The site is identified as a site of ecological interest.
13	Elizabeth Avenue Play Area			X			A recreational, grassed area with mature trees between Elizabeth Avenue and Stockey End and Northbrook Close. Children's play park at west end with basketball net. Surrounded by local housing.
14	Land south of Masefield Crescent	X		X			An informal recreation area to the south west of Abingdon, with long ranging views of the Vale and Berkshire Downs. The site is bordered by mature trees and comprises a play park and sports pitches. Accessible from Masefield Crescent however could be made more accessible and increase publicity through signs from Drayton Road and Masefield Crescent.
15	Abingdon Marina Park	X	X	X	X	X	A green space lying adjacent to the Thames and Marina to the south-east of the settlement which is widely used for recreation. The majority of the site is covered by mature trees which a circular walk runs through.
16	Margaret Brown Gardens on north bank of river at	X	X	X	X	X	A picturesque riverside park located along the River Thames. Named after Margaret Brown, a local councillor from 1972 to 1981, the gardens are dedicated to the people of Abingdon.

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		Beauty	History	Recreation	Tranquillity	Wildlife	
	junction with Wilsham Road and St Helen's Wharf						The gardens offer a tranquil escape with beautiful views of the river, framed by the weeping willow trees. Visitors can enjoy a peaceful walk along the riverbank, take in the scenic views, and relax on the benches provided. The gardens are also a popular spot for evening walks, with the serene atmosphere and picturesque surroundings making it an ideal place to unwind.
17	Peachcroft Park Play Area			X	X	X	A recreation area lying between Lindsay Drive, Kennet Road and Appleford Drive. A grassed area with a children's play area and to the West over the other side of the Radley Brook there is a fenced basketball and football tarmac court. A number of mature trees border the site.

Designated Local Green Spaces (Maps)



Overview map of all 17 LGS sites



1. Welford Gardens Green



2. Green space contained by Northcourt Rd, Oxford Rd and Northcourt Lane



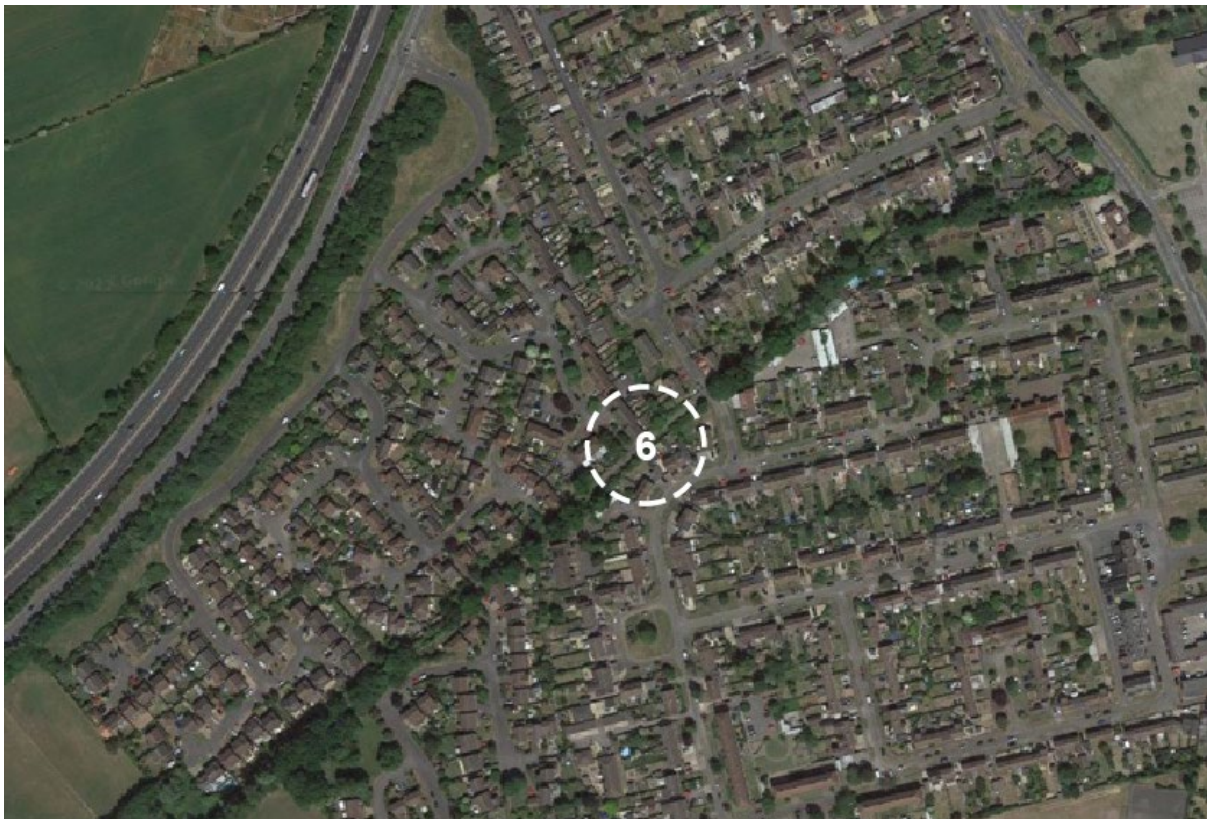
3. Land at Long Furlong



4. Land between Mons Way to the east and west of Copenhagen Drive



5. Land between Appleford Drive and Compton Drive (approx. location)



6. Land at Larkhill Stream (approx. location)



7. Land at Borough Walk



8. Land north of Heron's Walk



9. Land at Abbey Fishponds Nature Reserve



10. Land at Boxhill Wood



11. Land at Barton Fields



12. Land at Ock Valley Walk



13. Elizabeth Avenue Play Area



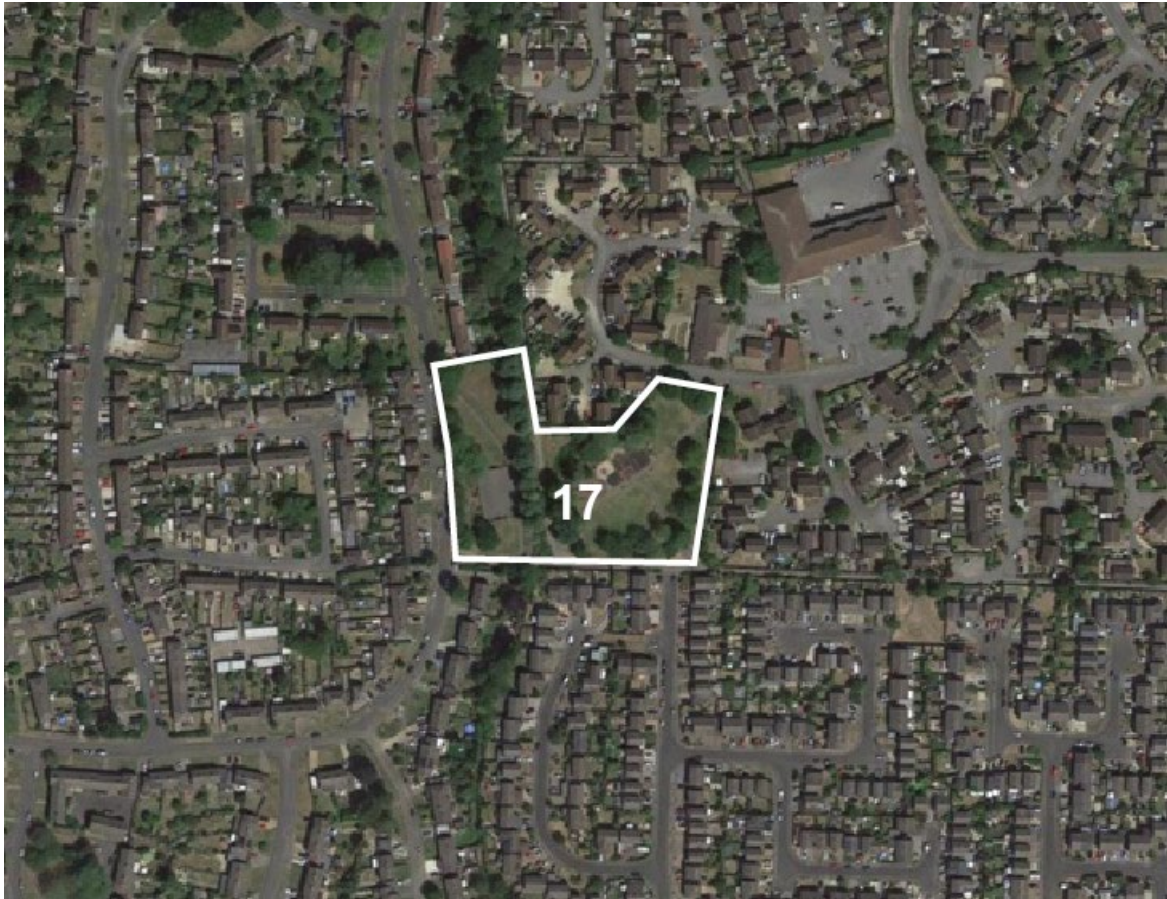
14. Land south of Masefield Crescent



15. Abingdon Marina Park



16. Margaret Brown Gardens



17. Peachcroft Park Play Area

Next Steps

Invitation to Comment on the Local Green Spaces in this Appendix

- Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council is pleased to announce the publication of the Pre-Submission (Reg 14) Abingdon Neighbourhood Plan, of which this appendix is a part, for review and comment.
- The draft proposals for the protection of several green spaces within our Abingdon are included in this Appendix. These green spaces have been nominated by the local community due to their significant historic, wildlife, recreational, aesthetic and tranquillity value. To ensure the accuracy and comprehensiveness of these proposals, we seek the invaluable input and local knowledge of local residents, business owners, and stakeholders.
- We invite you to review the draft sites nominated for designation and provide your comments, insights, and feedback. Your local knowledge and observations are crucial in identifying any aspects that may have been overlooked and in enhancing the proposals' relevance and effectiveness. Comments may include details about the ecological importance, historical significance, community usage, and unique features of the nominated green spaces.
- Your participation is vital in preserving the green spaces that contribute to the quality of life and environmental health of Abingdon. By sharing your insights, you will help us ensure that these valuable areas are protected for current and future generations.