

APPENDIX 4

LOCAL GREEN SPACES EVIDENCE BASE

1. Policy context

Paragraph 106 of the current NPPF (December 2023) provides the following guidance on LGS designation:

The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:

- a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves*
- b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and*
- c) local in character and not an extensive tract of land.*

Additional guidance is provided in National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

Local Green Space designation is for use in Local Plans or Neighbourhood Plans. These plans can identify on a map ('designate') green areas for special protection. [Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 37-006-20140306]

The green area will need to meet the criteria set out in paragraph 100 [now 106; see above] of the National Planning Policy Framework. Whether to designate land is a matter for local discretion. [Paragraph: 013 Reference ID: 37-013-20140306]

Rugby Borough Council Local Plan 2011-2031 has no policy for Local Green Spaces.

2. Methodology: process for designation

A four-step approach for identification and selection of Local Green Spaces in the Neighbourhood Area was adopted by the original Steering Group in 2016-17, and the same process has been used to update and confirm the original ten LGS designations for this Neighbourhood Plan Review.

Step 1: Identification of potential sites

A long-list of potential sites was derived from two main sources:

- local knowledge, including site visits and recommendations from the members of the Environment theme group of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee and an independent consultant.
- the Open Space, Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Study (2015) undertaken by Rugby Borough Council.

Step 2: Assessment against NPPF criteria

These sites were then assessed for suitability/eligibility, using a proforma based on the criteria in the NPPF (paragraph 106) with additions to take account of local issues:

Site

Address/location

Description

Special to the Community:

Public Access

Is it in close proximity to the community it would serve? i.e. within 400m

Does the site have local significance?

Is it beautiful?

Does it have recreation value? including playing fields; formal/informal

Is it tranquil? Is it a peaceful place away from noise and bustle?

Is the site local in character? (i.e. serves local community and not extensive)

Environmental Significance:

Does it have historic significance?

Does the site have wildlife value? Biodiversity?

Other

This approach enabled a consistent, transparent methodology for identifying LGSs in the Neighbourhood Area and for producing an evidence-based set of designations. The Group, like others undertaking LGS analysis, faced challenges with the absence of a statutory or commonly-used definitions of these terms, particularly what constitutes 'close proximity' or comprises an 'extensive tract of land'. A commonsense approach was taken, while at the same time having regard to good practice and the experiences of LGS designations in Made Neighbourhood Plans elsewhere.

Step 3 Further review

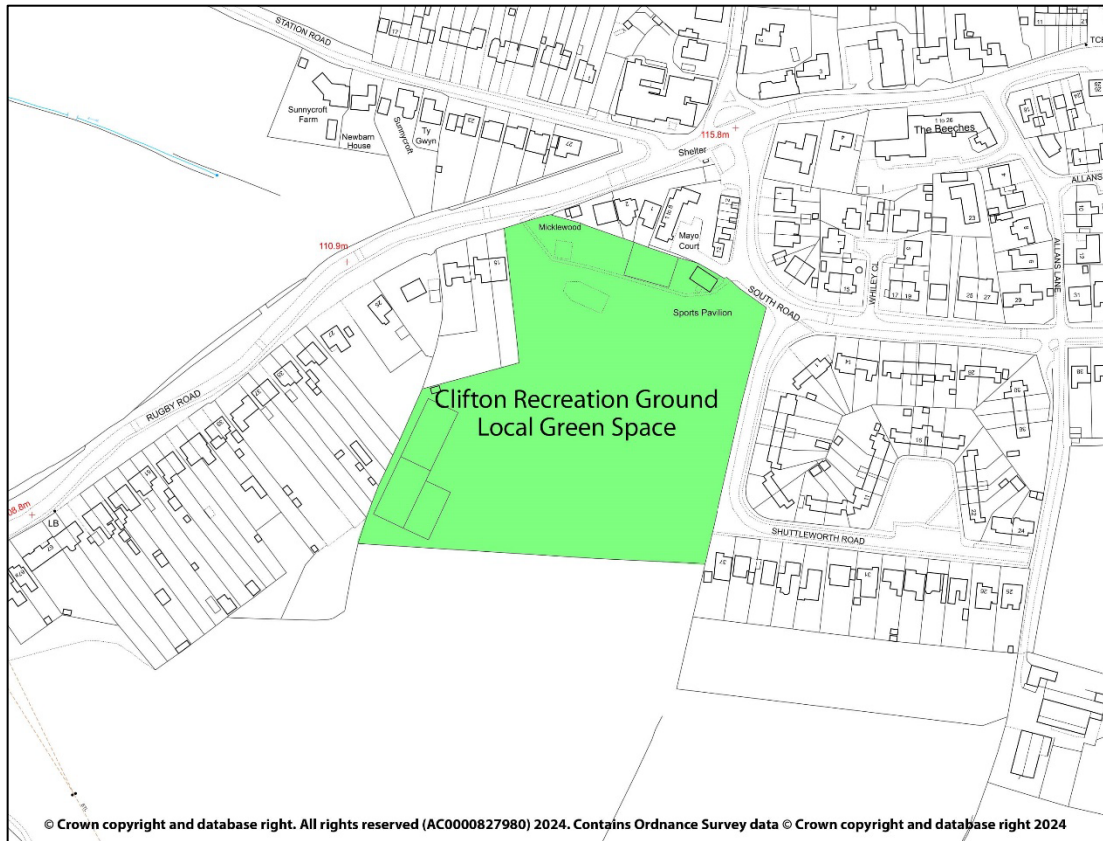
All the proposed sites were then reviewed for their appropriateness for designation as LGS by the independent consultant helping prepare the Neighbourhood Plan, acting in a 'critical friend' role.

Step 4 Consultation

Sites that met all or most of the criteria were then tested through the Plan's drafting and consultation process. The sites were set out for comment at a drop-in event **in 2024**, through the formal community/stakeholder consultation (Regulation 14), and subsequently as part of the Regulation 16 consultation conducted by RBC.

All the other open/green sites of types (other than Local Green Space) audited in 2023-4, and whose protection at the appropriate levels in the Planning system is supported by both evidence and community value, are now covered by other policies in the Review Plan.

4. Location maps



5. Evidence Base, 2023-24

Houlton Park

Description

Approximately 3 hectares in area.

Located close to the heart of Houlton housing development being close to the shops, restaurant, café, nursery and community centre. The main access is from Dollman Road, but there is an additional pedestrian access from Dollman Road near to the junction with Maine Street. There are several other pedestrian accesses from the surrounding residential areas by using the footways from Station Avenue, Park View and Warminster Close.

Houlton Park was originally part of Dollman Farm which dated back to the mid-late 19th century.

The well-equipped play area is very popular with local residents. In addition to the Play area there is a soccer pitch and some open green space with seating around and behind the pitch.

Houlton Park is surrounded by mature shrubs and some newly planted shrubs adjacent to the new allotments. There are a few mature trees between the play area and the soccer pitch. The park is generally quiet and peaceful being located away from any main roads. There is a secure pond near the mature trees and this attracts birds and amphibians.

Public access

Yes

Is it in close proximity to the community?

Yes

Does the site have local significance?

High, and increasing as Houlton is completed and the population (size and demographic spread) increases.

Is it beautiful?

Yes. Well landscaped, good native and ornamental planting, retained large trees, good



Location and boundaries



Entrance, retained farmhouse and notable tree



Playpark

signage and other furniture, appropriate and convenient walking routes, seating, surfacing etc.	
<u>Does it have historic significance?</u> Centred on the site of Dollman Farm, already in existence in 1899 (Ordnance Survey 25" map Northamptonshire XXXIX.5). Parts of the community hub buildings are on the footprints of original farm buildings, and large ornamental coniferous trees from mid-20th century have been retained.	Play/activity equipment, landscaping and ornamental planting
<u>Does it have recreational value (including playing fields, formal/informal)?</u> High, as above	
<u>Is it tranquil – a place away from noise and bustle?</u> Moderate. Its size means there are quiet areas as well as those used for sport, play, community events, socialising, etc.	Pitches, seating
<u>Does the site have wildlife value – biodiversity?</u> Moderate, developing	
<u>Is the site local in character? (i.e. serves local community; not extensive)</u> <u>Yes</u>	Retained trees, new hedge planting, biodiversity enhancement
<u>Other</u>	

Clifton upon Dunsmore recreation ground

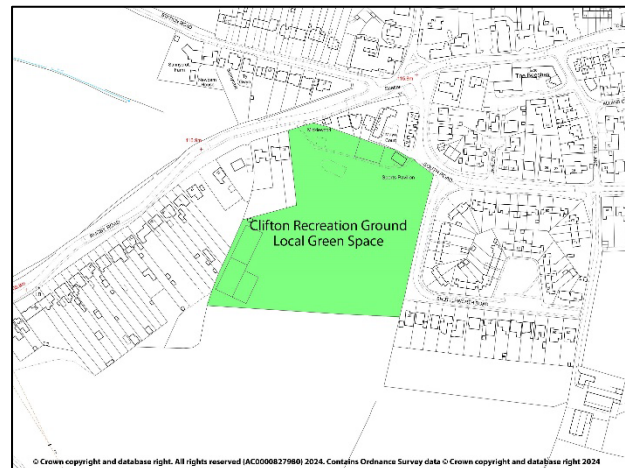
Description

Approximately 3.0 hectares in area
South Road, Clifton upon Dunsmore, Rugby
CV23 0DB

Clifton upon Dunsmore Playing Field is a village playing field located near the centre of the village. The main access is from South Road, with additional pedestrian gates on Rugby Road and Shuttleworth Road. It is within easy walking distance of all properties in the village and forms part of the heart of the community being used by local families for sport, picnics and local events such as a fete to celebrate the Queen's diamond jubilee.

The land was bought by Clifton Parish Council in 1957 from a local farmer who wanted the village to have its own playing field; the land is protected by covenant and can only be used for leisure purposes. The Parish Council has overall responsibility for managing the Playing Field which has; a pavilion, children's play area, skateboarding park, soccer pitch, exercise trail, pickle ball court, and an athletic track in the summer which is used mainly by the local primary school. The school also use the Playing Field for other events. There is also a tennis club with membership available to all village residents and others from the surrounding area.

The Playing Field is surrounded by trees and shrubs. It was enhanced some years ago by the planting of many saplings donated to the village. On the south side of the Playing Field are very pleasant views across arable fields towards Bluebell Woods. Despite it being close to the main road through the village it has a country feel about it with little noise and attracts wildlife. Newts, frogs, grass snakes and mice have been seen in and around the Playing Field. During times when the Playing Field is not busy various birds visit e.g. lapwings and gulls in addition to garden birds such as finches, wrens, blackbirds, pigeons, thrushes, tits and starlings. Red Kites are frequently seen circling over the Playing Field and the adjacent fields.



Location



From near entrance: mature boundary trees, pavilion, activity equipment, pitches and play area



Athletics track, tennis courts, mature hedgerows and trees on boundary

<u>Public access</u> Yes.	 View back toward the village over the recreation ground  Soccer pitch, pickleball court and open countryside view
<u>Is it in close proximity to the community?</u> Within the built-up area	
<u>Does the site have local significance?</u> Very high, historically and now	
<u>Is it beautiful?</u> Site is moderately beautiful, also good views from it providing context for the village	
<u>Does it have historic significance?</u> Yes, see above	
<u>Does it have recreational value (including playing fields, formal/informal)?</u> Very high	
<u>Is it tranquil – a place away from noise and bustle?</u> In parts: its size means there are tranquil parts as well as those used for recreation and socialising	
<u>Does the site have wildlife value – biodiversity?</u> Moderate	
<u>Is the site local in character? (i.e. serves local community; not extensive)</u> Yes	
<u>Other</u>	