

# Mansfield District Council

## Local Plan (2013-2033)

### Designating local green space – 2018 addendum



September 2018

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**Mansfield**  
District Council





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# 1 Introduction

**1.1** This paper is an update to the Designation Local Green Space Technical Paper (2015). It assesses two further sites for designation based on previously defined criteria and methodology.



## 1.1 What is a local green space designation

**1.2** *Local green space* is a special designation that recognises the importance of key green and open spaces where it has been demonstrated that they hold a special community value. Local green space (LGS) designation is not appropriate for most green areas and open spaces. In essence, they must be unique in the benefits they provide to local communities.

**1.3** Policy wording in the emerging Mansfield District Council Local Plan (2013-2033) will help protect designated local green space from development where it might undermine their importance. Although this is a special form of protection, it does allow for development where it protects and contributes to the character of the green space.

**1.4** Broad guidance for identifying sites worthy of LGS designation is provided in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 (paragraphs 76-78). The NPPF sets out national policy for England to help inform local plan and neighbourhood plan preparation and decisions taken with planning applications. A local green space can only be designated whilst a local plan or neighbourhood plan is being prepared.



**1.5** In 2014-2015 the planning policy team developed local criteria in line with national planning practice guidance and published this in the Designating local green space technical paper (2015). This provided a platform for recommending local green spaces for designation to take forward for inclusion in Mansfield District Local Plan (2013- 2033).

**1.6** In summary, to be considered for local green space designation, a green space needs to meet the following criteria:

- hold special significance for local communities in relation to at least one of the following areas of significance: beauty (i.e. aesthetic, character and place shaping qualities); support a richness of wildlife; have historic significance; is tranquil; and provide unique recreational value
- is **not** an extensive tract of land
- needs to be within a reasonable distance to the community (or communities) it serves
- needn't have full public access but should be fully publicly visible so that it can be enjoyed by the community it serves (an exception to this are green spaces with recreational value which do need to be publicly accessible) and
- its value / significance should be capable of enduring beyond the local plan or neighbourhood plan period.

It is important that the designation of local green spaces doesn't already have planning permission or prevent or undermine the planning for new development. Therefore designation should be based on a balanced approach. The designation of local green space is intended to complement the range of social, economic and environmental needs of existing and future communities - not to restrict decisions to allocate areas for suitable, sustainable development in the local plan.

In very rare cases designation may be afforded to sites that already hold special designation (e.g. local nature reserve), where the LGS designation would add meaningful value. Those with special legal protection (e.g. Town and Village Green, Fields in Trust) are already considered adequately protected and are therefore not considered for LGS designation.

## 1.2 What has been done so far

### Seeking and assessing nominations for local green space

**1.7** Planning practice guidance (PPG) for the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that local communities should nominate sites during the preparation of local plans and neighbourhood plans to help identify areas for local green space protection (PPG Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 37-006-20140306).



**1.8** Mansfield District Council consulted the public in March-April 2014 to seek nominations for local green space. Members of the public were asked to nominate sites based on one or more of the five key significance areas including: beauty, tranquility, recreational value, historic significance, and richness of wildlife. They were also asked to provide further information to justify their nominations and were asked to describe which community(ies) the sites benefited.

**1.9** A total of 21 green spaces were nominated. These were assessed based on key criteria in keeping with national planning policy guidance (see Designating Local Green Space Technical Paper 2015). As a result, 14 green spaces were recommended for designation. These sites were spread out across the district from Market Warsop to the southern part of Mansfield.

## **Local plan consultation**

**1.10** A local green space policy (draft policy NE5) and the draft local green space designations were included in the Local Plan Consultation Draft (2015). Comments were sought and received, including comments in relation to local green space. Comments received included those of general support, minor amendments to text, policy amendment recommendations and additional nomination considerations.

**1.11** In 2017, a Preferred Options consultation on the local plan took place. Additional comments regarding local green space were also received at this time.

## **1.3 Updating the evidence**

**1.12** This paper is an update to the 2015 local green space evidence paper for the Mansfield District Council Local Plan (2013-2033). It applies the same criteria to inform decisions on additional nominations received in 2015 and 2017. As a result, two green spaces were assessed to determine if they should be designated as *local green space*.

**1.13** Additionally, revised policy wording is included in the Mansfield District Council Publication Draft Local Plan (2013-2033):

### **Policy IN6 - Designated local green spaces**

- Other than in very special circumstances, proposals will only be supported for development on a site designated as local green space, as shown on the Policies Map, where the development would clearly enhance or be ancillary to the reason/s why it was designated.*
- Development proposed within close proximity to a local green space will only be supported where it can be clearly and satisfactorily demonstrated that the development would not significantly harm the purpose/s for which the local green space was designated.*



## 2 Further nominations

**2.1** Based on consultation comments received, two additional green spaces were nominated for local green space designations. These included:

1. Forest Road recreation ground located between Forest Road and Berry Hill Lane and
2. Quarry Lane Local Nature Reserve (LNR).

### Forest Road Recreation Ground

**2.2** This green space was nominated previously in 2014. At the time, the decision was taken to designate a portion of this site as local green space, based on its unique features that add aesthetic and place shaping value (i.e. beauty significance) and its value in supporting wildlife (i.e. richness of wildlife significance). The rest of the site, whilst supporting recreation through a play area, pathways and informal sports pitches, was not considered 'demonstrably special' as these features were also found on nearby open spaces that serve similar local communities. It wasn't considered especially tranquil as it is overlooked by nearby development and it has no special historic ties (e.g. no connection could be found between the recreation ground and the Rock Houses).

**2.3** Comments and evidence received during the 2015 Local Plan Consultation Draft highlighted the creation of a new community orchard (over 200 trees) and wildflower meadow (over 6,000 bulbs) in 2015, and active Friends group involvement (e.g. community events especially related to the new orchard and wildflower meadow). These were established after this green space was assessed for designation in 2014.

**2.4** Since the time of the original LGS assessment and consultation comments were received in 2015, the Forest Road Recreation Ground has been awarded Fields in Trust status (2017) which affords it a special legal protection that protects this park into perpetuity.

### Quarry Lane Local Nature Reserve (LNR)

**2.5** A large area of green space stretching from Kings Mill Reservoir to Tichfield Park, including Quarry Lane LNR, was nominated for local green space designation in 2014. This wider area was considered too large to be considered for designation as the national planning practice guidance (PPG Paragraph: 015 Reference ID: 37-015-20140306) and the national planning policy framework (paragraph 77) make it clear that it shouldn't be an extensive tract of land.

**2.6** The size threshold for a local green space in the PPG and NPPF aren't specifically defined and this is left for defining within the local plan context. This criterion was interpreted to mean that local green space was generally meant to apply to areas such as parks and village greens, and not to extensive areas of open

countryside or green corridors. It was considered that these sites would be more appropriately protected in the Mansfield District Council Local Plan (2013-2033) by, for example, development in the countryside and green infrastructure related policies.

**2.7** Additionally, the NPPF and PPG (Paragraph: 011 Reference ID: 37-011-20140306) cautions that careful consideration should be given when considering areas for local green space designation that already have legal or statutory protection through another designation or protected status. Rather, consideration should be given to whether any additional local benefit would be gained by designation as local green space. It was considered that the whole of the Quarry Lane LNR would not be appropriate for designation as the local nature reserve designation offers adequate protection in the local plan.

**2.8** On balance, Titchfield Park and a portion of the Quarry Lane LNR (The Scrape) were considered for LGS designation (2014-2015) as they were considered distinct areas in their own right and of unique community value.

**2.9** In 2017, comments were received to extend The Scrape local green space designation to the whole of the Quarry Lane LNR. Comments were provided to support the nomination of this green space based on the following areas of significance:

- **beauty** - It is a *hidden gem* close to the town centre along the River Maun. It is a unique woodland and wetland setting along the Timberland Trail green corridor, contributing to the Sherwood landscape area.
- **recreational value** - It provides a unique outdoor classroom and training area for local school groups and cadets. Community conservation days also take place. It includes fishing platforms, a pond dipping/educational area, and walking and cycling trails.
- **historic significance** - It is part of the district's limestone gorge valley along the River Maun where white "Freestone" rock quarried from this area was used in many prominent buildings including Mansfield Town Hall, Southwell Minster and the Houses of Parliament. It includes a Grade II listed structure and offers visitors an opportunity to learn more about the district's industrial heritage. It has interpretation signs.
- **richness of wildlife** - It is a local wildlife site and local nature reserve that supports rare wildlife, some of which are listed on the Joint Nature Conservation Committee birds of conservation concern red or amber lists. It also offers an important link to the wider woodland network and the river corridor.

It was commented that the LNR serves the community of southwest Mansfield and is also used by a wide range of local community groups, including local schools and nurseries. It is owned by Mansfield District Council and is also supported and managed by an active Friends group.





### 3 Assessing nominations

**3.1** The two nominations were assessed as follows.

#### Forest Road Recreation Ground

**3.2** As this recreation ground has now been afforded Fields in Trust legal protection (September 2017), the local green space designation covering the local wildlife site area will remain and not be extended to the whole of the open space.

#### Quarry Lane Local Nature Reserve

**3.3** This green space is unique and fits all of the criteria relating to its special significance and value (historic, recreation, richness of wildlife, beauty). It is also council owned and supported by an active and dedicated Friends group, therefore its special significance is likely to be maintained over the life time of the local plan.

**3.4** The criteria developed in assessing a nominated site for local green space (LGS) designation, makes clear that sites already designated under another protection designation (e.g. local nature reserve, special site of scientific interest, etc.) were not considered for an additional Local Green Space designation, unless this would bring further benefits. It was therefore considered that the LGS designation couldn't be extended to the whole of the Quarry Lane LNR, but rather the LGS designation of The Scrape could be extended to include an additional area containing a picnic and interpretation area within the LNR. It is seen as an unique pocket within the Quarry Lane LNR. Recognition as a designated local green space would protect this as a local resource for residents, school groups and other interest groups for its unique beauty, historic significance, richness of wildlife and recreational value.

#### List of nominated sites and reasons for decision (in brief)

ID	Nominated site	Suitable for designation	Alternative consideration suitable for designation	Special Role				
				Beauty	Historic importance	Recreational value	Tranquility	Richness of Wildlife
1	Forest Road recreation ground	No - already afforded legal protection (Fields in Trust)	Yes - existing local green space designation boundary located along the eastern edge	Yes	X	X	X	Yes
2	Quarry Lane local nature reserve	No - already afforded protection as a local nature reserve	Yes - The Scrape and nearby picnic and interpretation area	Yes	Yes	Yes	X	Yes

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## 4 Summary

**4.1** The two sites nominated for local green space (LGS) designation, as assessed in this evidence document, are included in the Mansfield District Council Publication Draft Local Plan (2013-2033) and policies map.

**4.2** Following consultation, the local plan will be submitted to the Government for independent examination. The local plan examination considers whether the council's local plan proposals are sound. Subject to considering recommendations of a planning inspector, the council will then adopt the Mansfield District Council Local Plan (2013-2033), including the final policy for protecting the designated local green space sites.

**4.3** A finalised list and map of local green spaces will then be formalised through the formal adoption of the Mansfield Local Plan (up to 2033).

**4.4** After adoption, any new nominations for local green space designation can only be considered when the plan undergoes a review in the future.



## 5 Appendix A - Individual site maps and key recommendation summaries

**5.1** The maps and tables below summarise the key criteria considered for local green space designation.

# Forest Road Recreation Ground







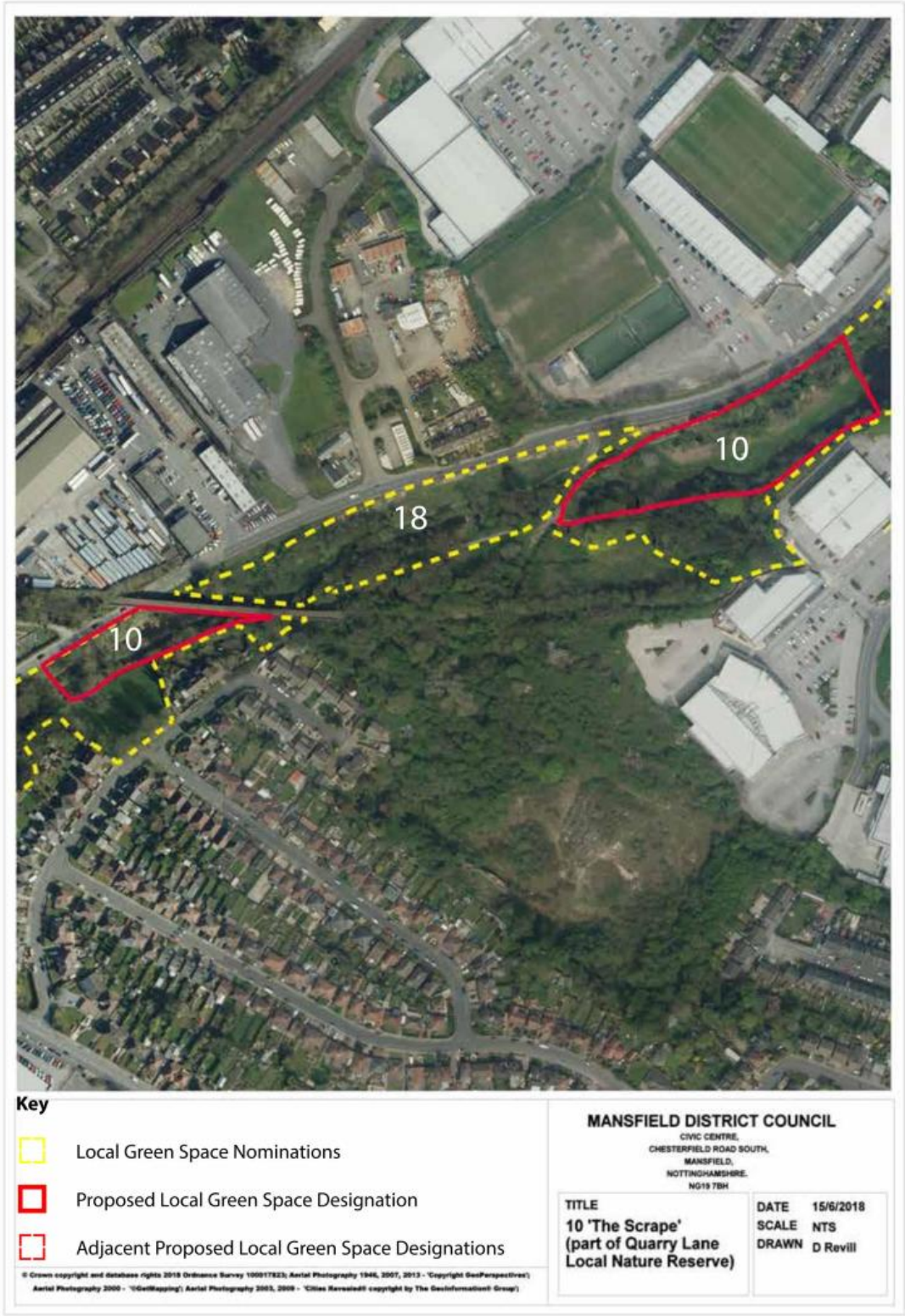
Suitable for designation?	Reason for decision
In Part	Whilst the area, including the community orchard and wildflower meadow holds special significance for its recreational value and richness of wildlife, this open space is already afforded legal protection as a Fields in Trust site (September 2017), the previous decision (2015) on the area designated as local green space remains the same.
Alternative site for designation - Local Wildlife Site within the nominated site's boundary	This area designated as a local wildlife site is demonstrably special for its beauty and wildlife value. As such, the information provided below only relates to this smaller, suitable area.
Number of nominations received	5 (2014) and 2 comments received as part of the 2015 Local Plan Consultation Draft public consultation.
Is the site already protected by policy or legislation e.g. SSSI, LNR, Town & Village Green?	Yes - Fields in Trust legal protection (September 2017)
Does the site have planning permission?	No
Is the site allocated for development in the Local Plan?	No
Is the nominated site a large area (tract) of land?	No
Is there a smaller area that could be considered for designation?	No
Is the site reasonably close to the community (ies) it serves?	Yes
Which community does the green space serve?	Local residents living nearby and the Forest Road Friends group
Particular Beauty	Yes - the banks surrounding the recreation ground are appropriate for designation as the wooded edge/cliff represents a unique feature, provides place shaping qualities.
Historic Significance	No - none identified of unique significance.
Regular/ Important events that occur on site, of which would be difficult to replace in the local vicinity	No - none identified.
Recreational value	No - the local wildlife site is inaccessible as it is a sensitive area.
Tanquil	No - the recreation ground and former cricket pitch are surrounded by development which detracts from the site's overall tranquility value.
Richness of wildlife	Yes - the local wildlife site section of this site is considered notable for designation. This is a difficult habitat to replace or replicate elsewhere and it is of at least county significance.
Site ownership	Public (Mansfield District Council)
How will the site be sustained so that it's value and features are maintained and enjoyed now and in the future? Evidence of management plans, etc.	Owned by Mansfield District Council and managed with support from the parks friends group.



Suitable for designation?	Reason for decision
Existing protection designations in 1998 Local Plan	LT1
Other appropriate protection brought forward in the new Local Plan (2011-2031)	Green infrastructure and community open space policies



Quarry Lane Local Nature Reserve



Five: Appendix A - Individual site maps and key recommendation summaries

Suitable for designation?	Reason for designation
In Part	Whilst the Quarry Lane Local Nature Reserve (ref 18) on map) is of significant historic, recreation, beauty and wildlife value. It is already protected by a statutory designation which will afford it a high level of protection in the local plan.
Alternative site for designation - Local Wildlife Site within the nominated site's boundary	On balance, a smaller portion of the LNR (ref 10) was considered for local green space designation. The LGS will afford added value to a portion of the site. This portion includes <i>The Scrape</i> and an adjacent picnic and interpretation area. This is a unique area within the Mansfield urban area and also unique to this specific LNR in relation to all the other LNRs in the district. As such, the information provided below only relates to this smaller, suitable area.
Number of nominations received	1 for <i>The Scrape</i> and 2 for a wider area stretching from Titchfield Park to Kings Mill Reservoir (2014). One comment was received as part of the 2017 Local Plan preferred Options public consultation.
Is the site already protected by policy or legislation e.g. SSSI, LNR, Town & Village Green?	Yes - local nature reserve designation
Does the site have planning permission?	No
Is the site allocated for development in the Local Plan?	No
Is the nominated site a large area (tract) of land?	No
Is there a smaller area that could be considered for designation?	N/A
Is the site reasonably close to the community (ies) it serves?	Yes
Which community does the green space serve?	Local residents living nearby, local primary and nursery schools, cadets, ramblers groups, Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust Wildlife Watch group, the Maun Valley Conservation Friends group and other community groups.
Particular Beauty	Yes - The area, as a whole, has a special beauty along the river and adjacent to the viaduct. It positively contributes to the wider Sherwood landscape character area.
Historic Significance	Yes - Although the site is located adjacent to a historical landmark (Grade II listed Mansfield railway viaduct). Locally quarried stone was once used to supply the Mansfield Town Hall, Southwell Minster and the Houses of Parliament. It includes interpretation panels about the historic value.
Regular/ Important events that occur on site, of which would be difficult to replace in the local vicinity	Yes - The site provides an unique site for pond dipping and school group visits, that would be difficult to take place or be replaced on another site in the local area. As such, it holds local historic significance.
Recreational value	Yes - It is recognised that the area offers opportunity for pond dipping and quiet contemplation of which couldn't be created elsewhere within the river corridor. The site is unique as it also is wheel chair accessible. It would be difficult to replicate this elsewhere due to unsuitable, heavily silted conditions along this stretch of the River Maun. The existing fishing platform at Field Mill Pond is not safe for pond dipping. The picnic area and interpretation area provide an unique place for school trips and family outings within a heavily built up area surrounding the LNR.
Tranquil	No - Although it is located within a wooded river valley, it is next to a busy road and overlooked from the viaduct.
Richness of wildlife	Yes - The site supports a wide variety of birds and other animals. It is designated as a local nature reserve and local wildlife site.



Suitable for designation?	Reason for designation
Site ownership	Public (Mansfield District Council)
How will the site be sustained so that it's value and features are maintained and enjoyed now and in the future? Evidence of management plans, etc.	Owned by Mansfield District Council and managed with support from the Maun Conservation friends group.
Existing protection designations in 1998 Local Plan or other relevant statutory designations	LNR
Other appropriate protection brought forward in the new Local Plan (2011-2031)	Green infrastructure, protected network of ecological sites, and flood risk policies.