

Ashby De La Zouche Neighbourhood Plan– Important Local Green Spaces Site Selection Criteria

1. Introduction and Policy Context

Ashby De La Zouche Town Council is leading on the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan through a Steering Group established for the purpose. One of the emerging priorities for the Neighbourhood Plan is to protect and enhance important local green spaces.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) introduced a new concept of a Local Green Space designation. This is a discretionary designation to be made by inclusion within a Local Development Plan or Neighbourhood Plan.

The NPPF states

“Local communities through local and neighbourhood plans should be able to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them. By designating land as Local Green Space, local communities will be able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances. Identifying land as Local Green Space should therefore be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or reviewed, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.

- The Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. The designation should only be used:
- where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a 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
- where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land”.

2. Ashby De La Zouche Site Selection Criteria

The NPPF requires that any Local Green Space designation must meet the specified criteria. The criteria contained in the NPPF tends to be general rather than specific – for example it states that it needs to be reasonably close to the community it serves but does not give set distances or areas. It is intended to act as guidance which should then be interpreted at a local level. To assist in the designation process a number of agencies have developed checklists that are consistent with and help develop the NPPF criteria, and against which potential local green space designations could be tested. The one below is drawn from the criteria developed by the Open Spaces Society and is specifically designed to assist in the Neighbourhood Plan process.

A scoring system, based on a Traffic Based RAG scores (i.e. Red, Amber, Green) has been adopted. This reflects good and common practice especially as it is easier to understand and use.

- Red was scored for a negative assessment where significant mitigation was required or there are more serious issues ;
- Amber was scored where mitigation might be required;
- Green was scored for a positive assessment.

Evidence for the RAG scoring was obtained from a range of sources, including emerging findings from community consultation undertaken as part of the development of the Neighbourhood Plan

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|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Name of Site | Ashby Allotments |
| Location of Site | The allotment gardens are situated on the western side of the Town, near the Cemetery on Moira Road and can be reached by road via Wilfred Gardens. They can also be reached by foot from Donnington Drive and also from Moira Road. |
| Description of Site | http://www.ashbyallotments.org.uk/index.html Open area of general allotment space owned by the town council but managed by the Allotments Association |

Criteria 1: Public Access (Some areas may already be available for public access, other land could be considered for designation even if there is no public access)

| Red | Amber | Green |
|-----|-------|-------|
| | | Yes |

Criteria 2: Reasonably close proximity to the community it serves (there is no definition of this in the NPPF and it will be up to individual planning authorities to define. This may vary depending on the size of the community to which the green space relates, the size of the green space or the value placed on it by the community. The land must not be isolated from the community and would normally be within easy walking distance of the community served. Some local planning authorities have introduced a maximum distance between the space and the community. For instance, Leicester has stated it must be within 400 metres)

| Red | Amber | Green |
|---------------|---------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Justification | Justification | The Association has been in existence since 1978 and is thriving and successful. It serves the area of Ashby de la Zouch in North-West Leicestershire and is a significant element in the local community. |

Criteria 3: Demonstrably special to a local community - Evidence must be provided of the land's value to and use by the local community to show the land holds a particular local significance. The land must fulfil one or more of the following criteria:

Criteria 3a: Beauty (This relates to the visual attractiveness of the site, and its contribution to landscape, character and or setting of the settlement. Local green spaces would need to contribute to local identity, character of the area and a sense of place, and make an important contribution to the physical form and layout of the settlement. It may link up with other open spaces and allow views through or beyond the settlement which are valued locally)

| Red | Amber | Green |
|-----|-------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | <p>This is an open green space which provides gardened within a large garden space. In addition it allows for members of the public to grow their own food .</p> <p>It is adjoined to the cemetery and so creates a swathe of green space within the centre of Ashby.</p> |

Criteria 3b: Historic significance (The land should provide a setting for, or allow views of, heritage assets or other locally-valued landmarks. It may be necessary to research historic records from the County Archaeologist or National or Local Records Office)

| Red | Amber | Green |
|------------|-------|-------|
| NONE KNOWN | | |

Criteria 3c: Recreational value (It must have local significance for recreation, perhaps through the variety of activities it supports, and be of value to the community)

| Red | Amber | Green |
|-----|-------|-------|
|-----|-------|-------|

| | | |
|--|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | <p>There are a wide spectrum of plot-holders from young families to the very mature, from the novice to the experienced, all working together for the benefit of eating your own produced food to enjoying the classic flowers of the seasons and sharing the challenges of the UK season's vagaries.</p> <p>Lots are available to Ashby residents and vary in size from 30 sq.yards to 500 sq.yards. There are currently around 100 plotholders and a waiting list of around 18.</p> <p>The Committee have for some time now been considering the establishment of a plot for the use of less able people as an extension of the role of the organisation in the community.</p> <p>http://www.ashbyallotments.org.uk/news.html#disabled</p> |
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Criteria 3d: Tranquillity (An oasis of calm and a space for quiet reflection)

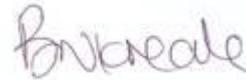
| Red | Amber | Green |
|-----|-------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | <p>The area provides a calm tranquil environment for its users . It is made up of various growing plots each managed by separate groups.</p> |

Criteria 3e: Richness of wildlife (This might include the value of its habitat, and priority areas may have been identified by the council. It may require some objective evidence, such as a designation, like a wildlife site or Local Nature Reserve)

| Red | Amber | Green |
|-----|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | Given the active management of the planting and the range of produce this is an excellent space for insect-life particularly bees.. |

Criteria 4: Local in character, not an extensive tract of land (The criteria may differ between settlements depending on their physical size and population. The areas would normally be fairly self-contained with clearly-defined edges. Blanket designation of open countryside adjacent to settlements will not be appropriate. There is a no minimum size limit for local green spaces)

| Red | Amber | Green |
|-----|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | As described above this is a well defined space in the central area of town. |

| Date | Name of Assessor (s) | Signature of Assessor (s) |
|----------|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 27-11-15 | KNEALE |  |

PLEASE REMEMBER IF UNDERTAKING A SITE ASSESMENT TO DO THIS IN A LOCATION THAT IS ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC AND IS SAFE INCLUDING BEING AWAY FROM THE ROAD AND OTHER POTENTIAL HAZARDS. DO NOT TRESPASS.

