

Wraxall & Failand Parish Council

Local Green Space Assessment

May 2023

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

2022 – 2038

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1 Introduction

Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The Local Green Space Assessment had been prepared by Polden Planning Ltd. on behalf of the Wraxall & Failand Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and forms part of the evidence base for the Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan (the “Neighbourhood Plan”).
- 1.2 The Steering Group recognises the important role green spaces have in supporting the physical and mental health and wellbeing of people living in or near the Neighbourhood Plan Area. To protect areas that are considered particularly special to the local community, the Neighbourhood Plan will seek to designate Local Green Spaces, where such areas are assessed as being consistent with the definition in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 1.3 The purpose of this document is to set out an assessment of candidate Local Green Space Designations in line with criteria set out in the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). As part of this process the assessment also takes into account feedback received in relation to potential Local Green Space designations during community engagement and consultation undertaken to date, including comments most recently received through the latest draft plan consultation (Regulation 14).
- 1.4 The recommendations of this report will be taken into account in further refinement of the identification and extent of Local Green Space designations set out in the draft Neighbourhood Plan.

What Are Local Green Space Designations?

- 1.5 Local Green Space designations are a way to provide special protection for green areas of particular importance to local communities. It was first introduced in the NPPF in 2012 and the policy remains in the most recent NPPF revisions.
- 1.6 Local Green Space designations can be made through either Local Plans or Neighbourhood Plans. Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belt (NPPF paragraph 103), albeit the purpose and objectives of Local Green Space designations can be wider than those for Green Belts, with NPPF paragraph 102 citing “*beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity or richness of wildlife*” as examples why the land may be considered to be special to, or hold particular significance for, the local community to which it serves.
- 1.7 There are specific planning policy tests that candidate Local Green Space designations must meet to be included within a Neighbourhood Plan policy and these are explained in detail within Section 2.

- 1.8 Currently, there is one Local Green Space designated within the Neighbourhood Plan Area within North Somerset Council's Sites and Policies Plan Part 2 (Policy SA7: Land north of Vowles Close, bordering north east edge of Nailsea).
- 1.9 Local Green Spaces have been also designated within a made Neighbourhood Plan for the adjoining Long Ashton Parish, including a 298ha at Ashton Court Estate (Policy LC3: Land north-east of Long Ashton).

2 Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.1 Paragraphs 101 – 103 of the NPPF set out the following in terms of the role and purpose of Local Green Space:

101. The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Designating land as Local Green Space should 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 updated, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.

102. 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 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

c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

103. Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts.

National Planning Practice Guidance

- 2.2 The NPPG provides further guidance on the interpretation of the NPPF paragraphs (NPPG reference ID: 37-005-20140306 onwards). A short summary of key paragraphs is set out below:

Paragraph 007 sets out that the plan should identify land to meet developments needs and Local Green Spaces designations should not be used to undermine this aim of plan making.

Paragraph 008 states that designations will rarely be appropriate where land has planning permission for development.

Paragraph 010 advises that if land is already protected by Green Belt policy then consideration should be given to whether any additional benefit would be gained by designation as Local Green Spaces.

Paragraph 011 similarly sets out that if land is already protected by other designations (e.g. National Parks, AONB) then consideration should be given to whether any additional local benefit would be gained by designation as Local Green Spaces.

Paragraph 012 sets out that Local Green Spaces designations can be applied to new green areas planned as part of new development, provided that they are demonstrably special.

Paragraph 013 reaffirms that whilst the national criteria need to be satisfied, the decision as to whether to designate particular area(s) is a matter for local discretion.

Paragraph 014 states that Local Green Spaces should be in reasonable proximity to the community it services, but any judgement on this is dependent on local circumstances.

Paragraph 015 sets out that whilst designations should not be extensive tracts of land, there are no hard and fast rules on size because places are different, and a degree of judgment will be needed.

Paragraph 017 clarifies that designation as Local Green Spaces does not confer any rights of public access.

Paragraph 018 states that areas being considered may be crossed by public rights of way, but there is no need to designate linear corridors simply to protect rights of way, which is covered by other legislation.

Paragraph 019 sets out that Local Green Spaces does not need to be in public ownership.

Paragraph 020 confirms that, other than the policy implications of the designation, there are no new restrictions or obligations on landowners.

Other Relevant Documents

Locality Guidance

- 2.3 In addition to national government policy and guidance Locality have also released a Local Green Spaces Toolkit (Neighbourhood Planning Local Green Spaces: A toolkit for neighbourhood planners). This is helpful to inform the approach to engagement, identification and assessment of candidate Local Green Spaces Designations. The site assessment template developed for this Local Green Space Assessment is intended to mirror the assessment tool set out in the Locality guidance.

North Somerset Council LGS Background Paper (2016)

- 2.4 In preparing the evidence base for North Somerset's Local Green Spaces Designations within its Sites and Policies Plan Part 2 (Policy SA7), North Somerset Council prepared a background paper in 2016 setting out their justification for the identification of sites. This has been a useful reference document for this assessment in understanding the designation of existing Local Green Spaces Designations within the Neighbourhood Plan Area through the North Somerset Development Plan and in considering candidate sites to be potentially included within the Neighbourhood Plan.

3 Assessment Methodology

Principle of Identifying Local Green Space Sites

- 3.1 Early consultation responses in relation to the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan indicated that it was important to consider the principle of identifying further Local Green Space designations within the Neighbourhood Plan Area through the Neighbourhood Plan. As set out within the Consultation Statement, the provision and maintenance of open space, the rural character of the countryside and access to the countryside were by far the issues considered most important by respondents. 88%, 89% and 92% respectively of respondents considered these issues to be “very important”.
- 3.2 In considering the potential to designate Local Green Spaces, it was important to have regard to PPG paragraph 10 which advises that if land is already protected by Green Belt policy then consideration should be given to whether any additional benefit would be gained by designation as Local Green Spaces. All of the Neighbourhood Plan Area is washed over with Green Belt with the exception of the built up area of The Elms to the far west. Within the emerging North Somerset Local Plan 2038, North Somerset Council consulted on a proposal to further inset Failand Triangle from the Green Belt, albeit work on the draft plan is at an early stage and has been paused pending publication of a revised NPPF. No weight is therefore given at the stage to the proposals for Green Belt revisions in North Somerset Council’s emerging Local Plan 2038.
- 3.3 Whilst afforded a similar level of policy protection, Green Belt and Local Green Space designations are ultimately identified for different policy purposes and at different spatial scales. The former is focused on preventing urban sprawl and coalescence of settlements (NPPF paragraph 138) and does not specifically consider community and recreational value, whilst the latter identifies areas of special local significance and importance to the local community.
- 3.4 Given the significant extent of Green Belt it was considered that identification of Local Green Space Designations was important to help differentiate areas that are of particular importance to the local community for reasons other than those associated with the Green Belt.
- 3.5 Identification and designation of Local Green Spaces where appropriate was therefore considered to be an important role for the Neighbourhood Plan; providing locally specific policies for sites that differentiate it from the wider Bristol Green Belt. This approach is considered consistent with North Somerset’s adopted Local Plan, which already identifies a number of Local Green Space designations within the Green Belt.

Identification of Candidate Sites

- 3.6 Given its rural nature, much of the Neighbourhood Plan Area could be considered ‘open space’ or ‘Countryside’. From an early stage the Steering Group was therefore

keen to focus on areas or spaces that are perceived to be of most value to the local community and met the NPPF tests. The identification of candidate sites took into account the following:

- Relevant North Somerset Local Plan evidence base (e.g. Local Green Space Background Paper, Landscape Sensitivity Assessment).
- Key GIS datasets, including parks and garden, habitat designations, and Sites of Nature Conservation Importance, Public Rights of Way.
- Sites proposed by the community through early consultation, including the 2021 community survey, and 2022 public consultation events and feedback forms.
- Local knowledge from members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

Stage 1 – Desktop Assessment and Initial Sifting

3.7 All sites put forward were subject to initial desk top assessment and discussion through steering group meetings. This included understanding existing designations on sites and focused on whether they would be likely to satisfy the NPPF criteria for Local Green Space.

3.8 Where it was clear from the outset that NPPF criteria would not be satisfied then sites were not progressed for detailed review. This led to a number of sites being discounted at an early stage based on being clearly in conflict with meeting NPPF criteria. This included:

- An initial consideration from the steering group to identify all Site of Nature Conservation Interest and wooded area as Local Green Space, based on their wildlife value. This more 'blanket' approach was however discounted given the number of sites that could not be reasonably judged to be in close proximity to communities.
- The early community engagement during 2021 and 2022 resulted in requests from local residents for a number of fields around Failand Triangle to be designated as Local Green Space. Whilst proximity was not an issue in this instance, the lack of public access and enjoyment of this land and its severance from local communities by significant and busy strategic roads meant that it was difficult to objectively differentiate these fields from any other within the Neighbourhood Plan Area. The designation of such land as Local Green Space would therefore essentially be putting a blanket designation on open countryside, as discouraged by NPPG paragraph 15. Such sites were already afforded protection as Green Belt and their consideration as Local Green Space was therefore discounted at an early stage and did not progress to detailed evaluation. The one exception to this is Wraxall Piece which was progressed to detailed assessment given its public access and demonstrably importance to the health and wellbeing of the local community.

- Land to the west of Long Ashton Road including the Ashton Hill Plantation was regularly cited by local residents and stakeholders for Local Green Space designation, however it is outside of the Neighbourhood Plan Area and therefore must be discounted because policies cannot relate to land outside of the Neighbourhood Plan Area.
- The Bristol and Clifton Golf Club was considered as a Local Green Space designation. However, it was considered that this land is not within close proximity to the local community, being severed by the Clevedon Road, and is accessed by membership only, meaning it is unlikely to be demonstrably special to the wider community who do not benefit from membership.

Stage 2 – Detailed Assessment

- 3.9 Following initial sifting, remaining sites were subject to detailed evaluation. This included an assessment of key characteristics of each site, including site size, defining features and consideration against key NPPF criteria. Given neither the NPPF or PPG set no hard and fast rules regarding the criteria, site visits were undertaken to inform consideration and final judgement of sites against the criteria.
- 3.10 The detailed evaluation process was iterative, with comments made from subsequent consultation (e.g. Regulation 14) feeding back into the assessment process before being finalised. Hence, the Local Green Space Assessment could not be finalised until all consultation had concluded prior to the draft Neighbourhood Plan being submitted under Regulation 15. Draft outputs of the assessment, and in particular, the assessment summaries included later in this document, were circulated where it aided discussions with landowners.

NPPF Assessment Criteria

- 3.11 The detailed assessment of sites took into account the below criteria, consist with government policy and Locality guidance. A commentary on how each criteria was considered by the Steering Group is summarised below.

Proximity to community it serves

- 3.12 There is no clear guidance on what constitutes 'close proximity to the community', with the NPPG clear that this depends on local circumstances. As a general rule however, sites were considered to be in close proximity if they are within an easy walking distance of the community it serves. If a site was considered to be of such significance as to also attract cycling and/or car borne trips from the wider parish community, this was also taken into consideration through the assessment process.

Demonstrably special to the local community

- 3.13 Again, whilst examples are provided in the NPPF (e.g. beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity, wildlife), PPG paragraph 013 is clear that whether to designate is a matter for local discretion. The NPPF examples were therefore important considerations, but also significant reference was made to consultation survey results

and the local knowledge of the Steering Group in forming a judgement on how different sites were valued in the local community.

Local in character and not an extensive tract of land

- 3.14 With the PPG being clear there is no hard and fast rule on what constitutes an 'extensive tract of land', the detailed assessment took into account the character, appearance and setting of each specific sites, informed by site visits. Consideration was also given to whether the sites had clear physical boundaries that differentiated it from adjacent parcels of land. Clearly defined boundaries, consultation feedback and ease of access were considered to be a better indicator of this criteria than a specific assessment of land parcel size. The parcel size of each candidate site in hectare is however listed on each site assessment for completeness.

Other NPPG Considerations

- 3.15 The following considerations referenced in the PPG have also been captured through the assessment process.

Existing Planning Permission and Future Development Potential

- 3.16 NPPG sets out that sites with planning permission for development would rarely be appropriate for designation unless the use is compatible with the reasons for designation, or the planning permission is no longer capable of being implemented.
- 3.17 Furthermore, the PPG sets out that LGS designations should not be used in a way that undermines plan-making and the need for plans to need identified development needs. Site that have been promoted for development (e.g. through a SHLAA, or other means) and the status of both the adopted and emerging Development Plan will therefore need to be particularly carefully considered against the assessment criteria. As with sites benefitting with planning permission, sites that are allocated for development or proposed to be allocated are unlikely to be appropriate of LGS designation.

Other Designations

- 3.18 PPG sets out that different types of designations are intended to achieve different purposes. If land is already protected by designation, and this does not just include Green Belt, then consideration should be given to whether any additional local benefit would be gained by designation as Local Green Space.

Stage 3 – Landowner Engagement

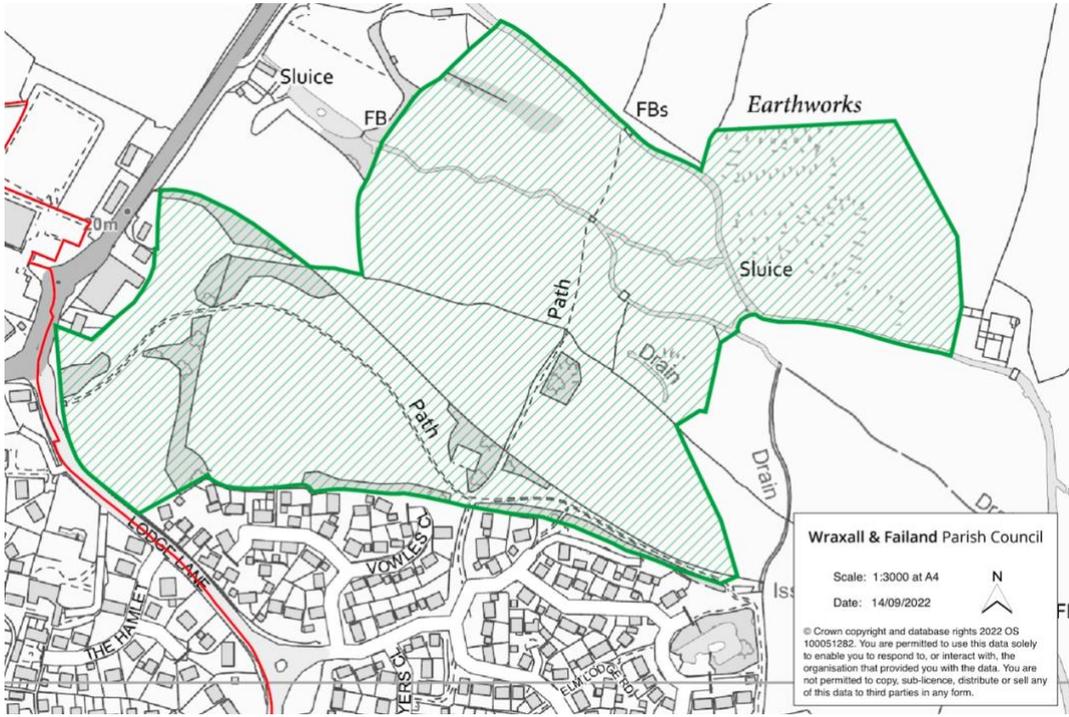
- 3.19 Whilst designation can be applied regardless of landownership, the PPG is clear that qualifying bodies should contact landowners about proposals to designate any part of their land. Following substantive public consultation and the initial sifting process, a land registry search was therefore undertaken for all sites intending to be specifically assessed for designation. Each landowner, or some cases representatives of the landowner where representations had been received on their behalf, were written to directly regarding the proposals. Where requested, meetings and sites visits were held

to discuss the proposals in more details. Feedback received was then used to further refine and re-consider the site assessment work in light of this.

4 Site Assessments

- 4.1 The following pages set out the finalised site assessment information for each candidate designation, taking into account the methodology set out in section 3 and feedback received from public engagement, including the the latest Regulation 14 consultation.
- 4.2 Conclusions, recommendations and justification for each site are provided to inform designations in the final submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan. It is intended that the designations and justification will be inserted as a schedule into the Neighbourhood Plan and the associated Policies Map.

Wraxall & Failand Neighbourhood Plan – Local Green Space Assessment

| | | |
|---|---|---------------------|
| Site Ref: WF0001 | Site Name: The Elms Open Space | NGR: ST 48454 71304 |
|  <p>The map shows a large area of open land outlined in green with diagonal hatching. Key features labeled include 'Sluice', 'FB', 'FBs', 'Earthworks', 'Path', and 'Drain'. A red line indicates 'LODE LANE'. The map is bounded by a residential area to the south and west. A scale of 1:3000 at A4 and a date of 14/09/2022 are provided. A north arrow is also present. Copyright information for Wraxall & Failand Parish Council is included.</p> | | |
| Site Description | <p>Area of approximately 16ha comprising open land north of The Elms at the western edge of the Neighbourhood Plan Area. Public footpaths from The Elms and following the River Land Yeo provide public access through centre of proposed local green space. Following features of note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children’s play area within the southern part of the land • Scheduled Ancient Monument is located within the east and within setting of Grade II Listed Wraxall House (which itself is outside of proposed local green space designation) • Local Wildlife Site and Site of Conservation Interest straddles eastern boundary • Network of Public Rights of Way criss-crosses the land | |
| Site Allocations / Planning History | <p>3354/78: Full planning permission for a surface water balancing reservoir in connection with residential development at Pat O.S. Plot 669, south east of Wraxall House, off Lode Lane, Wraxall (February 1979)</p> <p>2899/89: Outline planning permission for residential and ancillary development including the provision of sites for a primary school, local shopping, church, provision of public open space and construction of first section of Wraxall By-Pass at Land at Elm Farm (June 1995)</p> <p>98/0231: Reserved Matters Approval for the provision of public open space and separate highways works at Land at Elm Farm (June 1998)</p> | |

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| | <p>No site allocations within the adopted or emerging Development Plans.</p> <p>Representations submitted on behalf of landowner for residential allocation on land within the green space designation and north of the River Land Yeo.</p> |
| Statutory Designations | <p>Aerodrome Safeguarding Area, Article 4 Direction (ADT16) Green Belt, Scheduled Ancient Monument, Lodge Lane SCNI, Lodge Lane Local Wildlife Site, Tree Preservation Orders, North Somerset and Mendip Bat SAC Consultation Zone, Public Rights of Way, Flood Zone 3, The Elms Local Green Space</p> |
| NPPF Assessment Criteria | |
| a) Proximity to community it serves | <p>The proposed local green space is adjacent to a large existing population at The Elms and is readily accessed by these residents and those further afield in Nailsea from footpaths which arrive into the space from The Elms, north of Coates Estate to the west, the River Land Yeo from the south east and from Wraxall to the north east. The land proposed to be designated lies wholly within 200-400m walking distance from existing populations using a network of Public Rights of Way, which reduce in terms of formality and accessibility as users travel north.</p> |
| b) Demonstrably special to local community | <p>NSC's Landscape sensitivity assessment states: <i>"Land to the north and north-east (of Nailsea) is sloping and vegetation in the field boundaries is generally limited. Consequently, this land is visually prominent. Owing to this there is some visual coalescence between the settlement edge and residential development to the north and north-east. Development in this area could exacerbate this visual coalescence. Owing to the above, this land is of high sensitivity.</i></p> <p><i>Land to the east of The Elms has a moderate, and therefore lower, landscape sensitivity within the assessment."</i></p> <p>65% of respondents to the 2021 community survey identified The Elms Playground as important or very important. 97% consider the rural character of the Parish to be important or very important.</p> <p>Around 45% of feedback forms received supported the protection and enhancement of this area during summer 2022 consultation activities. Those in support generally grouped together The Elms Playground, Pastures Pond and Land between Nailsea and Wraxall (south of the Bristol Road) as all being special to them, suggesting that these areas are used in combination for recreational activities. Pastures Pond is currently located outside of the proposed designation.</p> <p>One objection to the proposed designation has been received from Blue Fox Planning on behalf of Wain Homes which has an option to purchase land within the proposed designation. Representations by the same party have been submitted in support of a residential allocation as part of the North Somerset Council Local Plan 2038 Preferred Options consultation. At the time of writing, the land has been discounted for development allocation by North Somerset Council.</p> |

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| | <p>A lack of physical features in this location and the land’s role in avoiding encroachment out into the open countryside is also noted within NSC’s Green Belt Review.</p> <p>The consultation feedback indicates that the land is special to the community which would like to see it protected and enhanced through Neighbourhood Plan policies. It is clear from site visits and NP Steering Group member local knowledge that the designated Public Rights of Way are well used on a frequent basis at least as far as the River Land Yeo.</p> <p>The area immediately north of Vowles Close, The Elms is reasonably formal in nature, comprising a play area, recent planting and maintained grassland. As users travel northwards towards the River Land Yeo, the area becomes more rural and less formal, although the footpaths remain clearly defined and frequently travelled. North of the River Land Yeo, the land becomes further from the local communities which it serves and more akin to the wider countryside, becoming arguably less demonstrably special to the local community and seen as part of the wider countryside. A judgement is required to be made as to where this differentiation is to be drawn.</p> <p>It is considered that the inclusion of land between The Elms and the River Land Yeo would protect land that includes a diversity of formal and informal green spaces and is readily accessible to wider residential populations reflective of its existing, recognised and important role and function as a green “lung” to The Elms and this part of Nailsea which makes this area demonstrably special to the community. As a result, it is recommended that the proposed designation does not include land north of the River Land Yeo.</p> <p>An extension to the candidate designation within the south eastern corner to incorporate Pastures Pond, associated footpaths and extend the designation to the drain to the east (a definitive physical boundary) is also recommended based on the consultation responses received.</p> <p>The land’s special recreational characteristics are underpinned by its importance within an area of high landscape sensitivity and role within the Green Belt which make it demonstrably special to the local community which use it.</p> |
| <p>c) Local in character and not extensive tract</p> | <p>The proposed local green space is adjacent to a large existing population at The Elms and is readily accessed by these residents. It is also accessed from those further afield in Nailsea via footpaths which arrive into the space from The Elms, the industrial estate to the west, the River Land Yeo from the south east and from Wraxall to the north east. The land proposed to be designated lies wholly within 200-400m walking distance from existing populations. It serves hundreds of homes in The Elms alongside residents using routes from Wraxall to the east and Nailsea to the west via direct Public Rights of Way. It is considered therefore that its size at 16ha is suitably justified in terms of providing a suitable level of both formal and informal local green space for such populations and the area should not be regarded as an extensive tract of land on this basis. It is considered that the area proposed to be designated as Local Green Space is appropriate to protect the area’s landscape beauty and tranquillity on the edge of the urban area of Nailsea to the south west; a</p> |

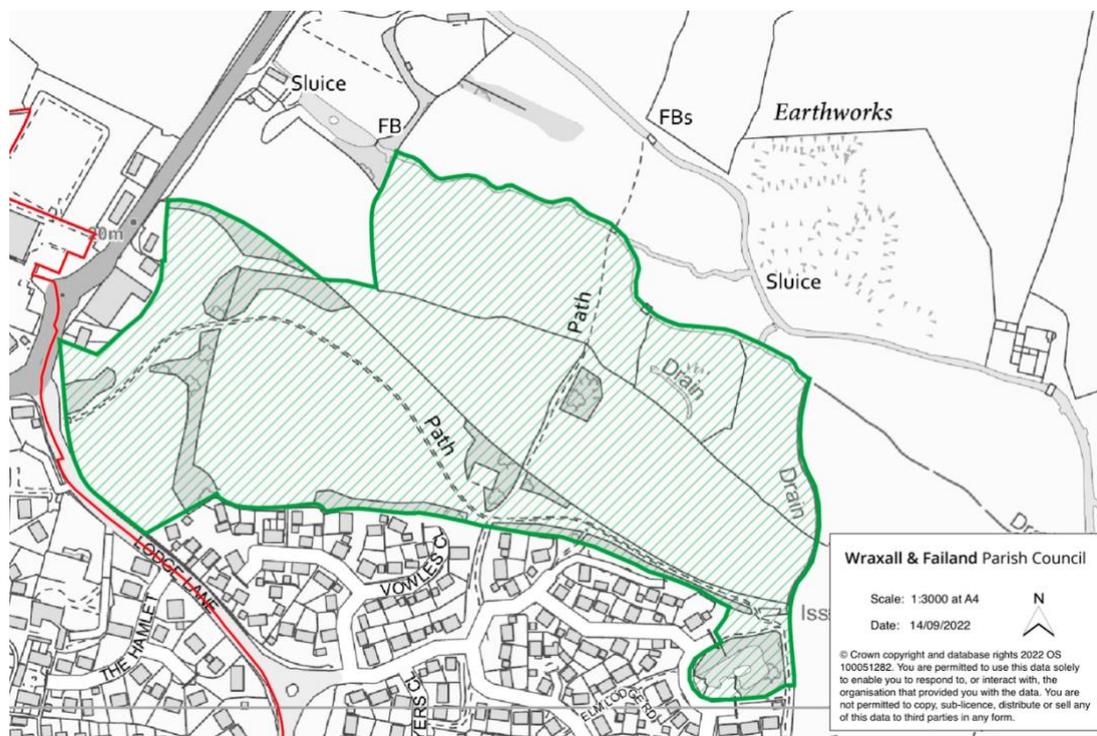
reduced area would not meet these aims and would not provide protection of the informal and formal recreation areas that are of value to the local community.

Recommendation

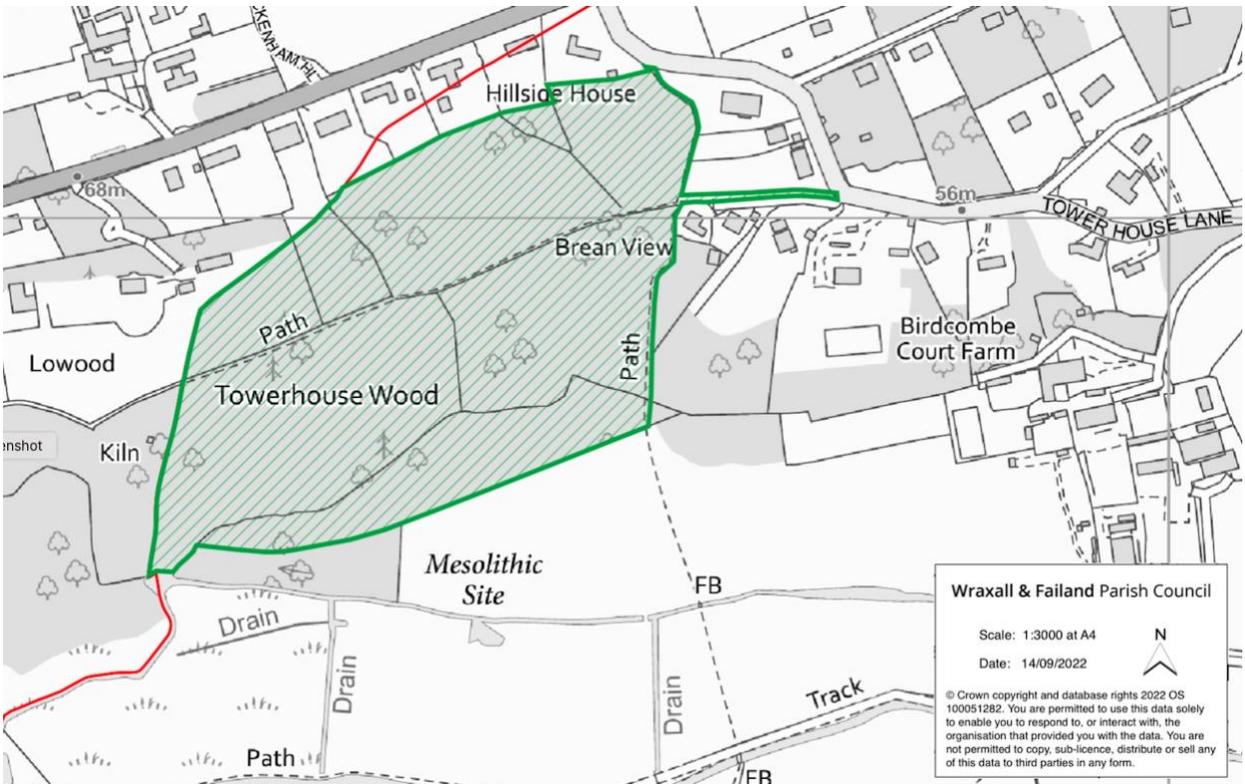
The land is a well-used area for local communities at The Elms, north of Nailsea (Coates Estate) and Wraxall to the east with a good mix of formal and informal spaces for recreation, physical exercise and social interaction. The proposed designation should be reviewed to ensure that it is well defined by physical features and that all areas meet the criteria within NPPF paragraph 102. Specifically, the following amendments are recommended:

- Remove Scheduled Ancient Monument from the proposed designation – this land is clearly special but benefits from statutory heritage designations which capture this value including the protection of its setting and significance. It is not considered that this specific area is special in terms of providing a local green space because it is not within very close proximity to existing populations or as frequently used for recreation based on site visits and local knowledge, including that provided by the landowner's representatives. Whilst this land can be viewed from public footpaths, it does not benefit from direct public access.
- Extend proposed local green space to include land east of Green Pastures Road to include well used footpath route and Green Pastures Pond.
- There may be some justification for extending the proposed local green space to the east of The Elms which also benefits from extensive Public Rights of Way. Land east of The Elms is identified as being of moderate, and therefore lower, landscape sensitivity. It is considered that the current designation proposal is of an appropriate size to meet the NPPF tests in relation to local green space designations and represents a well-defined area which is of most value and popularity for the purposes of green space designation based on consultation comments, site visits and local knowledge within the Steering Group.

It is recommended that the following land is taken forward for Local Green Space designation within the Neighbourhood Plan under Policy WF2:



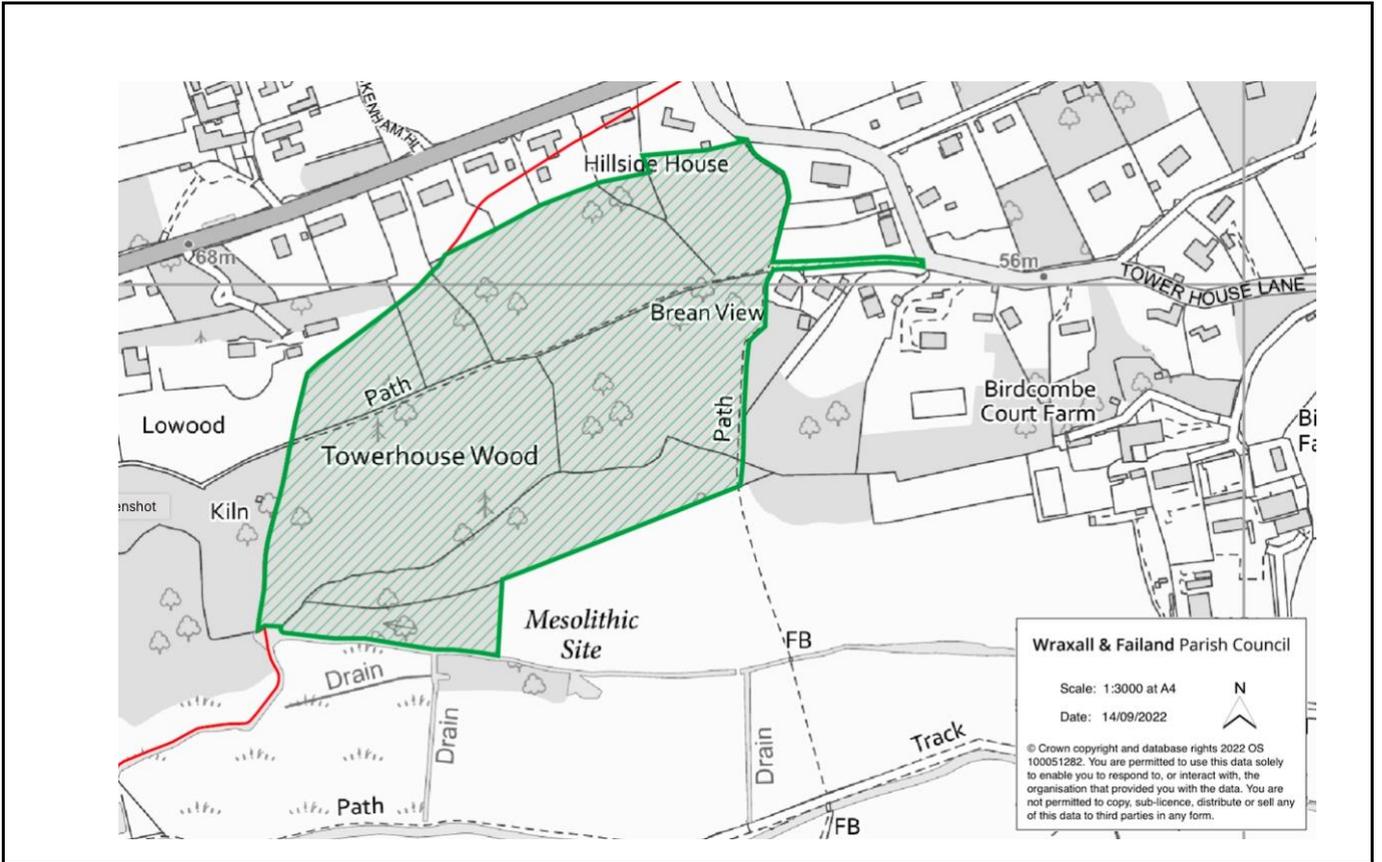
Wraxall & Failand Neighbourhood Plan – Local Green Space Assessment

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|---|--|----------------------------|
| <p>Site Ref: WF0002</p> | <p>Site Name: Tower House Woods (west of Tower House Lane)</p> | <p>NGR: ST 48454 71304</p> |
|  | | |
| <p>Site Description</p> | <p>The land proposed for local green space designation comprises a well-defined area of woodland which slopes steeply from Tickenham Hill in the north down to agricultural grazing fields in the south. The area is criss-crossed by well-used footpaths which benefit from public signage and information boards. Along the footpaths are individually made stones and sculptures with animal and bird engravings, placed carefully for users to find as part of the "Tithe Sculpture Trail". The proposed local green space includes parts of private domestic curtilage at "Woodleigh" and "Spindles" along the northern boundary. Along the southern boundary, but outside of the proposed designation, is the "bubbling pond" which is of interest to Bath University for occasional sampling. There is a historic lime kiln located directly west but outside of the proposed designation.</p> <p>The proposed local green space designation is bounded by the Neighbourhood Plan Area boundary and private domestic curtilages to the west and north respectively, and by private domestic curtilages behind a close boarded fence to the east. To the south the proposed local green space designation boundary generally follows the tree line before the land use and character changes to agricultural farmland.</p> | |
| <p>Site Allocations / Planning History</p> | <p>There is no planning history or site allocations affecting the land proposed to be designated as local green space.</p> | |

Wraxall & Failand Neighbourhood Plan – Local Green Space Assessment

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| Statutory Designations | Aerodrome Safeguarding Area, Green Belt, Site of Nature Conservation Interest, Ancient Woodland, Local Wildlife Site North Somerset and Mendip SAC Bat Consultation Zone, Public Rights of Way ,Flood Zone 3 |
| NPPF Assessment Criteria | |
| a) Proximity to community it serves | The land is well connected by the wider Public Rights of Way network to existing populations at Towerhouse Lane and Wraxall. Users from further afield use the car parking facilities at Jackland Fishing Lakes located immediately southwest of the proposed local green space. |
| b) Demonstrably special to local community | Around 35% of respondents via feedback confirmed that they would support policies to protect and enhance this land. The presence of local information boards and signage along with the Tithes Sculpture Trail suggests that the land is special to the local community for physical exercise, recreation and access to the countryside. A site visit and local knowledge from both the Steering Group and the landowner at Woodleigh all confirmed that the area is popular with local walkers. Online reviews of Tower House Woods and the use of Jackland Fishing Lakes parking suggest that its community value may extend wider than the surrounding houses and local dog walking. |
| c) Local in character and not extensive tract | The land proposed to be designated is well-defined by the woodland cover, Neighbourhood Plan Area boundary and private domestic curtilages. |
| Conclusion | |
| <p>The land meets all of the tests to be designated as local green space. The following comments are noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The residential curtilages of Woodleigh and Spindles should be retained following a site visit with the owners of Woodleigh who do not object to the designation, with no specific representations from The Spindles. These curtilages, whilst in private ownership, still contribute to the overall character of the proposed local green space designation. • The southern boundary of the proposed designation is not as well defined as other boundaries and does not correlate with routes used within the land or the tree cover before the land changes to agricultural uses. This could be improved by extending the proposed designation slightly within the southwestern corner to incorporate all of the woodland cover and the part of the bubbling pond which is within the Neighbourhood Plan Area. This amendment would better reflect the physical land uses and public access to the area. <p>It is recommended that the following land is taken forward for Local Green Space designation within the Neighbourhood Plan under Policy WF2:</p> | |

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| | | |
|--|---|---------------------|
| Site Ref: WF0003 | Site Name: Wraxall Primary School Playing Fields | NGR: ST 48454 71304 |
|  <p>Wraxall & Failand Parish Council Scale: 1:1500 at A4 Date: 14/09/2022 © Crown copyright and database rights 2022 OS 100051282. You are permitted to use this data solely to enable you to respond to, or interact with, the organisation that provided you with the data. You are not permitted to copy, sub-licence, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.</p> | | |
| Site Description | <p>Small area of land immediately south of Wraxall Primary School and its playing field, bounded along the eastern side by public footpath. The land is within private ownership.</p> <p>During Regulation 14 consultation, the landowner suggested that the designation had been incorrectly plotted. This is true, and the land intended to be designated actually relates to the existing playing fields which are immediately south of Wraxall Primary School, to the northwest of the land outlined in green above.</p> <p>This being the case, an updated assessment based upon the correct parcel of land is set out below, alongside an updated candidate designation map in the recommendations.</p> | |
| Site Allocations / Planning History | <p>There is no planning history or site allocations affecting the land proposed to be designated as local green space.</p> | |
| Statutory Designations | <p>Aerodrome Safeguarding Zone, Green Belt, North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC Consultation Zone</p> | |
| NPPF Assessment Criteria | | |
| a) Proximity to community it serves | <p>The land is adjacent to Wraxall Primary School and within walking distance (via a signalled pedestrian crossing) from Wraxall Viillage. There is a recently installed footpath connecting the site with The Grove, Wraxall.</p> | |
| b) Demonstrably special to local community | <p>Approximately 45% of those who returned consultation feedback forms confirmed that they would like to see Neighbourhood Plan policies to protect and enhance this land.</p> | |

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| | <p>It is not publicly accessible on a daily basis and is unlikely to support any wildlife value. However, it is special to the community being associated with the Grade II Listed Primary School itself and used by many residents whose children attend the school. It is understood that the land is used for one-off and annual events associated with the school where the general public is invited. Within the 2021 community survey 71% of the respondents identified Wraxall Primary School as important or very important.</p> |
| <p>c) Local in character and not extensive tract</p> | <p>The land is not extensive by any measurement and is associated with Wraxall Primary School and its wider community. It is associated with the existing local facilities of Wraxall Primary School and is therefore local in character.</p> |

Conclusion/Justification

The land outlined green below meets all of the tests for local green space designation and is recommended to be taken forward for Local Green Space designation within the Neighbourhood Plan under Policy WF2:



Wraxall & Failand Neighbourhood Plan – Local Green Space Assessment

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| Site Ref: WF0004 | Site Name: Millennium Green | NGR: ST 49386 71334 |
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| Site Description | <p>The land is currently used as a children’s play area and field with play equipment and facilities on site. It is accessed via The Grove to the north. A new footpath was constructed and opened in October 2022 linking the area with Wraxall Primary School and Wraxall village to the west.</p> | |
| Site Allocations / Planning History | <p>99/0392/CLE: Certificate of Existing Lawful Use for use as a children’s playing field (July 1999). There are no site allocations affecting the proposed local green space designation.</p> | |
| Statutory Designations | <p>Aerodrome Safeguarding Zone, Green Belt, North Somerset and Mendip SAC Bat Consultation Zone</p> | |
| <p>NPPF Assessment Criteria</p> | | |
| a) Proximity to community it serves | <p>The land is sited adjacent to existing residential properties at The Grove and is well connected to Wraxall village via the newly installed footpath to the west.</p> | |
| b) Demonstrably special to local community | <p>Millennium Ground is one of only two equipped children’s play area in the Neighbourhood Plan Area, the other being located north of The Elms. There is a new play area being installed at Failand Village Hall in 2023 aimed at young child provision.</p> <p>Anecdotal evidence from face-to-face consultation events suggests that it is used not only by residents at The Grove but also by the wider community. It is a facility which is clearly demonstrably special to the local community for these reasons.</p> <p>73% of respondents to the 2021 community survey stated that this land is important or very important. Of the consultation feedback forms completed in summer 2022,</p> | |

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| | <p>approximately 35% agreed that policies should be included in the Neighbourhood Plan to protect and enhance this area.</p> |
| <p>c) Local in character and not extensive tract</p> | <p>The land is local in nature, being adjacent to residential properties and recognised as a local children’s play area. By any definition, the land does not comprise an extensive tract.</p> |
| <p>Conclusion</p> | |
| <p>The land outlined within the above map meets all of the tests for local green space designation and is recommended to be taken forward for Local Green Space designation within the Neighbourhood Plan under Policy WF2 without further amendment.</p> | |

Wraxall & Failand Neighbourhood Plan – Local Green Space Assessment

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| Site Ref: WF0005 | Site Name: Gable Wood and Bathing Pond | NGR: ST 50569 70278 |
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| Site Description | <p>The area proposed to be designated comprises two, physically separate parcels of land that are connected in terms of forming one, single Local Wildlife Site and SCNI. The Bathing Pond is Grade II Listed, constructed by Lord Wraxall of Tynesfield Park and a rare example of a Victorian country house open-air bathing pond that remains completely intact. Gable Woods is similarly historically associated with the Tynesfield Estate and comprising ancient woodland. Both sites are now owned by the North Somerset Agricultural Society.</p> | |
| Site Allocations / Planning History | <p>06/P/3038/ADV: Advertisement Consent for the display of 32 wooden signs (retrospective) at Bathing Pond Fields, Wraxall (February 2007).</p> <p>There are no site allocations affecting the land proposed to be designated as local green space.</p> | |
| Statutory Designations | <p>Aerodrome Safeguarding Zone, Green Belt, Site of Conservation Nature Interest, Ancient Woodland, Tree Preservation Orders, Local Wildlife Site, North Somerset and Mendip SAC Bat Consultation Zone, Flood Zone 3, River Land Yeo (Main River)</p> | |
| NPPF Assessment Criteria | | |
| a) Proximity to community it serves | <p>The land is at least 1km from the communities found within the Neighbourhood Plan Area. It is much closer to the village of Flax Bourton which is south of, and outside, the Neighbourhood Plan Area. There are footpaths running south and north of</p> | |

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| | <p>Gable Woods and the Bathing Pond to and from Flax Bourton although there is no public access within the land itself.</p> |
| <p>b) Demonstrably special to local community</p> | <p>This land does not feature in the 2021 community survey or summer 2022 feedback form questions. It was added due to comments within the summer 2022 where local residents commented on the omission of this site. This in itself suggests that the area is demonstrably special to the local community.</p> <p>Gable Woods and the Bathing Pond are clearly important from a heritage and (associated) cultural perspective. The sites are a notable feature within the wider historic setting. The land's rural, dark and tranquil nature and the presence of water and tree cover means that its wildlife value is likely to be higher than the wider landscape area. It is considered that these attributes justify a designation for Local Green Space in this location.</p> <p>It's value in terms of scenic beauty and recreation opportunities is less because there is no formal public access available.</p> |
| <p>c) Local in character and not extensive tract</p> | <p>By any definition, the land does not comprise an extensive tract. It is local in character, albeit not publicly accessible within the site, to Flax Bourton.</p> |
| <p>Conclusion</p> | |
| <p>Whilst there is little doubt that the sites have local value in terms of heritage importance and setting, biodiversity and local interest, the land is not local in character or in close proximity to the communities. It is therefore recommended that this area is not taken forward within the Neighbourhood Plan for Local Green Space designation because it does not meet the required tests within the NPPF.</p> <p>It is important to note that the designated heritage asset status of Gable Woods and the Bathing Pond will provide for a level of protection and enhancement in respect of historic environment value into the future.</p> | |

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| <p>Site Ref: WF0006</p> | <p>Site Name: Wraxall Piece (north-east of Failand Triangle)</p> | <p>NGR: ST 52546 71732</p> |
| <p>The map shows the Wraxall Piece site, a large green area with diagonal hatching, bounded by a green line. It is situated between Failand Triangle to the south and the Bristol and Clifton Golf Course to the north. Access is from Beggar Bush Lane to the east. The map includes labels for 'GREEN LANE', 'Track', 'Wraxall Piece', 'Longwood Orchard', and 'Long Wood'. Distances of 136m and 144m are marked. A yellow box labeled 'WF2: Wraxall Piece' points to the site. A scale of 1:3000 at A4 and a date of 14/09/2022 are provided. Copyright information for Wraxall & Failand Parish Council is also present.</p> | | |
| <p>Site Description</p> | <p>The site totals approximately 13ha and is owned by the Forestry Commission. It is open all year round for walkers and recreation, advertised on its website for members of the public to use. It is situated between Failand Triangle to the south and the Bristol and Clifton Golf Course to the north. Access is from Beggar Bush Lane to the east. There is a designated car park within the north east corner of the land. A public bridleway runs along the northern boundary.</p> | |
| <p>Site Allocations / Planning History</p> | <p>There is no planning history or site allocations affecting the land which is proposed to be designated as local green space.</p> | |
| <p>Statutory Designations</p> | <p>Aerodrome Safeguarding Zone, Green Belt, North Somerset and Mendip SAC Bat Consultation Zone</p> | |
| <p>NPPF Assessment Criteria</p> | | |
| <p>a) Proximity to community it serves</p> | <p>The land is located across the road from the local community of Failand Triangle. It is connected to the wider locality through local footpath and bridleway connections. On site car parking makes the land accessible from further afield. The land is within close proximity to the community that it serves.</p> | |

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| <p>b) Demonstrably special to local community</p> | <p>This land does not feature in the 2021 community survey or summer 2022 feedback form questions. It was added due to comments within the summer 2022 where local residents commented on the omission of this site which has been used for public access for at least the last 20 years, being purchased by the Forestry Commission in 2000.</p> <p>The land's role as a publicly accessible green space, managed and operated as such within close proximity to local communities and with facilities to encourage outdoor pursuits makes it a special area for the local community to promote health and well-being.</p> |
| <p>c) Local in character and not extensive tract</p> | <p>The land is local to Failand Triangle and Lower Failand. It is clearly defined through landownership, its tree coverage which covers a distinct area and its physical boundaries which are defined by roads and bridleways. For these reasons, it is considered that the land is well-defined and not extensive in nature.</p> |
| <p>Conclusion</p> | |
| <p>The land outlined green within the above map meets all of the tests for local green space designation and is recommended to be taken forward for Local Green Space designation within the Neighbourhood Plan under Policy WF2 without further amendment.</p> | |

5 Summary and Conclusions

Summary

- 5.1 The Local Green Space Assessment had been prepared by Polden Planning Ltd. on behalf of the Wraxall & Failand Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and forms part of the evidence base for the Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan (the “Neighbourhood Plan”).
- 5.2 The assessment provides an overview of the role of Local Green Space designations, their policy context and the methodology applied to identify candidate designations and carry out an objective assessment of each.
- 5.3 A site-specific assessment of all identified candidate site is included based on the agreed methodology, with recommendations and, where appropriate, justification for Local Green Space designation based on this assessment.

Conclusions

- 5.4 The identification and designation of Local Green Spaces is considered to be an important role for the Neighbourhood Plan to provide a locally specific policy for the protection of areas that are demonstrably special to the local community within the wider Bristol Green Belt.
- 5.5 A summary of the conclusions of the Local Green Space Assessment are set out within **Table 1** below. It is intended that sites identified for designation will be included as a schedule within the Neighbourhood Plan. Designation extents will also be shown on the Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map.

| Candidate Site: | Recommended For Designation (Yes/No): | Justification: |
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| WF0001: Land to the north of Vowles Close | Yes – subject to addition of Pastures Pond, associated footpath and extending to drain along eastern boundary and removal of land north of the River Land Yeo as explained and shown within the site assessment. | Demonstrably special to the community of The Elms, Wraxall (via public footpaths) and Nailsea for formal and informal recreation, tranquillity, richness of wildlife and high landscape value. Within close proximity to community and local in character. |
| WF0002: Tower House | Yes – subject to minor extension to the southwestern corner as | Demonstrably special to the community of Tower House |

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| Woods (west of Tower House Lane) | explained and shown within the site assessment. | Woods, Wraxall village and beyond for informal recreation, tranquillity and richness of wildlife. Within close proximity to community and local in character. |
| WF0003: Wraxall Primary School Playing Fields | Yes – subject to recommended extent amendments as explained and shown within the site assessment. | Demonstrably special to the community of Wraxall for recreational activity and events, local in character and within close proximity to Wraxall Primary School and village. |
| WF0004: Millennium Green | Yes | Demonstrably special to the community of Wraxall and the wider Parish for formal and informal recreational activity, local in character and within close proximity to The Grove and Wraxall village (via newly installed footpath). |
| WF0005: Gable Wood and Bathing Pond | No | The land is not local in character or in close proximity to the communities. |
| WF0006: Wraxall Piece (north-east of Failand Triangle) | Yes | Demonstrably special to the community of Failand Triangle, the wider Parish and beyond for informal recreation, richness of wildlife and tranquillity. Local in character and within close proximity to Failand Triangle. |

Table 1 – Summary of Assessment