

Local Green Space Toolkit Application

Site 6

Hardwick Campus/Marsh Lane

1	General Information	Tick if relevant evidence provided
1.1	Name and address of site <i>Some sites have several names and all known names should be given</i>	
	Hardwick Campus Green Space, AKA The Marsh. Located at Marsh Lane/St Pauls Road, Cheltenham.	
1.2	Site location plan <i>The plan can be at any scale, but must show the location and boundaries of the site. Please indicate the scale.</i>	
	<i>Insert here or attach separately</i> See APPENDIX A	✓
1.3	Organisation or individual proposing site for designation <i>This will normally be a Town or Parish Council or a recognised community group</i>	
	Elmfield Neighbourhood Coordination Group	
1.4	Ownership of site if known <i>Information on land ownership can be obtained from the Land Registry. Some land parcels are not registered however local people may know the owner.</i>	
	Church of England, Training Colleges Trust / Diocese of Gloucester. The current proprietor is the University of Gloucestershire. Two PDF files attached outline the planning applications in 1992 and 2011 for developing the site. Residents believe that these indicate that agreement to develop would be required from more than one agency.	
1.5	Is the owner of the site aware of the potential designation? Do they support the designation? (Sites may be designated as Local Green Spaces, even if there are objections from the site owners)	
	Unknown, but it is believed that proprietors are aware. It is unknown as to whether they support the application. APPENDIX D shows a response to community attempts to designate it as a green space as part of queens jubilee. Email from Sir Henry Elwes.	✓
1.6	Photographs of site	

	<i>Insert here or attach separately</i> See APPENDIX B	✓
1.7	Community served by the potential Local Green Space <i>i.e. does the site serve the whole village/town or a particular geographic area or group of people?</i>	
	Residents of part of St Pauls, St Peters, Elmfield, including the immediate local area, Gas Green and Students of Hardwick Campus.	
2	Planning History	
2.1	Is there currently a planning application for this site? If permitted, could part of the overall site still be used as a Green Open Space? for further information please contact Cheltenham Borough Council Planning Applications team	
	No	
2.2	Is the site allocated for development in the existing Development Plan, emerging Joint Core Strategy, Cheltenham Plan or a Neighbourhood Plan? If allocated, could part of the overall site still be used as a Green Open Space? For further information please contact Cheltenham Borough Council Planning Policy team	
	No	
3	Size, scale and “local nature” of proposed Local Green Space	
3.1	Area of proposed site	
	0.9 of a Hectare	
3.2	Is the site an “extensive tract of land”? <i>(Extensive tracts of land cannot be designated as Local Green Space) e.g. how large is it in comparison to other fields; groups of fields; areas of land in the vicinity etc.? Does the site “feel” extensive or more local in scale?</i>	
	No	
3.3	Is the proposed site “local in character”? <i>e.g. does the site feel as though it is part of the local area? And why? How does it connect physically, visually and socially to the local area? What is your evidence?</i>	
	Yes. It is used by local people for dog walking/training, casual ball games, socialising during the warmer months. The fact that it has 1.2metre perimeter railings, which are ornate in character, with small access gates and is overlooked by the households of Marsh Lane, some Swindon Road addresses and Hardwick’s Halls of Residence makes this a reasonably safe environment for local people to use. It is situated in an area that contains a considerable amount of terraced housing, some of which have little or no gardens. It is also very close to the lower end of the town centre. It contributes greatly to the local townscape.	✓

	A group of residents, supported by local councillors and community organisations is in the process of consulting with all residents to assess how this space could be improved for community use. The university is aware of this and is supportive of the space being used for e.g a community garden, bee-keeping, informal sports space, or used for occasional markets/craft fairs.	
4	Need for Local Green Space	
4.1	Is there a need for a local green space in this location? <i>e.g. is there a shortage of accessible greenspace in the area? Is there a village needs survey or parish plan that provides evidence of that need.</i> <i>Further information – Natural England (Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard)</i>	
	Yes, it is the only green space in the St Pauls ward.	
5	Evidence to show that “the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves” <i>Please indicate what evidence you have provided against each point.</i>	
5.1	How far is the site from the community it serves? Is the site within 2km of the local community? <i>Possible evidence – a map to show that distance</i>	
	The site is central to the community it serves. In fact it is only the width of a single track (2 lanes) road away from the nearest 75 houses in its proximity that overlook the field. There are then hundreds of houses immediately beyond those, within 500 metres. This site serves at least 2,000 local people. The local animal shelter use this space to exercise and train rescue dogs. In the summer it is used by the Cubs and Brownies who meet at Gas Green Community Centre for informal sports. The map at APPENDIX A shows the proximity of a heavily built up area made up of housing.	
5.2	Are there any barriers to the local community accessing the site from their homes? <i>e.g. railway line; main road</i> <i>Possible evidence – a map to show any potential barriers and how those can be overcome.</i>	
	NO	
6	Evidence to show that the green area is “demonstrably special to a local community” <i>Please indicate what evidence you have provided against each point.</i>	
6.1	Evidence of support from Parish or Town Council <i>e.g. letter of support; Council minutes</i>	
	Letter from local councillors Andrew Lansley and John Walklett. APPENDIX F	✓

6.2	Evidence of support from other local community groups or individuals. <i>e.g. letters of support; petitions; surveys etc.</i>	
6.3	Evidence of support from community leaders <i>e.g. letters of support from Ward Members; County Councillors; MP etc.</i> <i>Further information on these contact details – Cheltenham Borough Council, Gloucestershire County Council, House of Commons</i>	
	Letter of support from Martin Horwood(MP)	✓
6.4	Evidence of support from other groups <i>e.g. letters of support from organisations such as Campaign to Protect Rural England; local amenity societies; local schools etc.</i>	
7	Evidence to show that the green area “holds a particular local significance, for example because of its <u>beauty</u>,” (if applicable) <i>Please indicate what evidence you have provided against each point.</i>	
7.1	Is this criteria relevant to this site ?	
	NO	
7.2	Describe why the community feels that the site has a particular local significance for its beauty.	
7.3	Site visibility <i>e.g. is it easy to see the site from a public place? Are there long-distance views of the site? Are there views of the site from any key locations?</i>	
	It is highly visible from passing traffic and pedestrians,	
7.4	Is the site covered by any landscape or similar designations? <i>e.g. Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; Conservation Area; Special Landscape Area</i> <i>Further information – Cheltenham Borough Council; Natural England;</i>	
	No	
7.5	Is the site (or the type of site) specifically mentioned in any relevant landscape character assessments or similar documents? <i>e.g. Cotswolds AONB landscape character assessment. Further information – Cheltenham Borough Council; Natural England; Cotswolds Conservation Board</i>	
	It was mentioned in Cheltenham Borough Councils Green Space Audit. Believed to be in 2010	
7.6	Does the site contribute to the setting of a historic building or other special feature?	

	No	
7.7	Is the site highlighted in literature or art? <i>e.g. is the site mentioned in a well-known poem or shown in a famous painting?</i>	
	No	
8	Evidence to show that the green area “holds a particular local significance for example because of its <u>historic significance</u>” (if applicable) <i>Please indicate what evidence you have provided against each point.</i>	✓
8.1	Is this criteria relevant to this site ?	
	YES See APPENDIX C	
8.2	Are there any historic buildings or remains on the site? <i>e.g. listed buildings; scheduled ancient monuments ; registered parks and gardens; war memorials; other historic remains or structures.</i> <i>Further information – Cheltenham Borough Council; English Heritage; Gloucestershire Historic Environment Record; Gloucestershire Archives; local history society;</i>	
	No	
8.3	Are there any important historic landscape features on the site? <i>e.g. old hedgerows; ancient trees; historic ponds or historic garden features</i> <i>Further information – Cheltenham Borough Council; English Heritage; Gloucestershire Historic Environment Record; local history society</i>	
	No	
8.4	Did the site play an important role in the historic development of the village or town? <i>e.g. the old site of the town railway station; the old garden for the manor house etc.</i>	
	The site was once owned by “The Elms” (the local workhouse) until the early 20 th century. It contained allotments which helped feed the residents of the workhouse. It was once part of Marsh Common. See APPENDIX C	✓
8.5	Did any important historic events take place on the site?	
	It is believed that the gallows were here at some stage	
8.6	Do any historic rituals take place on the site? <i>e.g. well-dressing; maypole dancing etc.</i>	

9	Evidence to show that the green area “holds a particular local significance, for example because of its <u>recreational value</u> (including as a playing field)”, (if applicable) <i>Please indicate what evidence you have provided against each point.</i>	
9.1	Is this criteria relevant to this site ?	
	YES	
9.2	Is the site used for playing sport? <i>If so what sport? How long has it been used for sports provision? Is this sports provision free or is a club membership required? Further information – Sport England</i>	
	Casual sport (no fees or membership required) played by local people with their children and students. Football, cricket, rounders etc. It has been used in this way since it ceased to be allotments,(late 1960s).	
9.3	Are the public able to physically access the site? <i>e.g. are there any public rights of way across the site? Or adjacent to the site? Has access been allowed on a discretionary basis? Is there public access to the whole site or only part? Is there good disabled access to the site? (A site can still be designated even if there is no public access.) Further information – Gloucestershire County Council</i>	
	Yes it is easily accessible to all, including disabled people. It is a flat piece of land with level paths on the highway surrounding it on the two sides adjacent to the road. It has three single width access gates. The whole site is accessible to all on an “as of right” basis.	
9.4	Is the site used by the local community for informal recreation? And since when? <i>e.g. dog walking; sledging; ball games etc</i>	
	Yes, and with significant increase in numbers during the last 3 years.	
10	Evidence to show that the green area “holds a particular local significance, for example because of its <u>tranquillity</u>” (if applicable) <i>Please indicate what evidence you have provided against each point.</i>	
10.1	Is this criteria relevant to this site ?	
	NO	
10.2	Do you consider the site to be tranquil? <i>e.g. are there are any roads or busy areas close by?</i>	
	Not exceptionally Tranquil.	
10.3	Is the site within a recognised tranquil area? <i>e.g. within the Campaign to Protect Rural England’s tranquillity maps</i>	
	No	

11	Evidence to show that the green area “holds a particular local significance, for example because of the <u>richness of its wildlife</u>”; (if applicable) <i>Please indicate what evidence you have provided against each point.</i>	
11.1	Is this criteria relevant to this site ?	
	NO	
11.2	Is the site formally designated for its wildlife value? <i>e.g. as a site of special scientific interest; a key wildlife site etc</i> <i>Further information - Natural England; Gloucestershire Centre for Environmental Records</i>	
	No	
11.3	Are any important habitats or species found on the site? <i>e.g. habitats and species listed in the UK priority habitats and species lists or Gloucestershire Biodiversity Action Plans or protected species or on the red/amber lists of birds of conservation concern.</i> <i>Further information - Natural England; Gloucestershire Centre for Environmental Records; National Biodiversity Network; RSPB</i>	
11.4	What other wildlife of interest has been found on the site? <i>Further information - Natural England; Gloucestershire Centre for Environmental Records; National Biodiversity Network;</i>	
11.5	Is the site part of a long term study of wildlife by members of the local community? <i>e.g. long-term monitoring of breeding birds.</i>	
	No	
12	Evidence to show that the green area “holds a particular local significance, for <u>any other reason</u>”; (if applicable) <i>Please indicate what evidence you have provided against each point.</i>	
12.1	Is this criteria relevant to this site ?	
	YES	
12.2	Are there any other reasons why the site has a particular local significance for the local community?	
	It is used as a walking route for local people. This is particularly useful for parents and children who are able to walk to school / work using a route that reduces the need to walk along and cross busy roads.	

APPENDIX A

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
Site NRU13 Hardwick site, St Paul's Road



APPENDIX B



APPENDIX C

History of site

In the 19th century it is shown on local maps (1847) as burgage allotments for work house, which was based a few hundred yards away on what is now Cheltenham Maternity Hospital. I believe that the land may have been bequeathed by Admiral Sir Robert Tristram Ricketts (1777 – 1842) a significant local benefactor whose will was contested, which I am researching. Certainly, Sir Robert owned a substantial house close by upon which now stands sheltered housing for the elderly (Popes Close).

When the workhouse closed at the start of the 20th century the site became allotments for the local community. There is a photograph in the Borough Council offices showing as such dated 1965. Indeed, one of the surviving residents of Marsh Lane worked an allotment with her late husband until this date.

In 1965 the land (approximately 2 acres) was sold by the Minister of Health to The Council of The Church of England Training Colleges at Cheltenham. This was effectively St Pauls College, a male teacher training college specialising in physical education whose main site was, and remains a quarter of a mile away at Francis Close Hall, a Grade II listed church college and chapel with no outside recreational facilities.

The site was re named Hardwick from The Marsh after Charles Hardwick, a prominent theologian of the 19th century and a contemporary of Francis Close and Francis Fullwood, after whom The Park site was named on the other side of town. The Park was the female teacher training college called St Marys and is now also part of the University of Gloucestershire.

My belief is that the land was sold for a peppercorn amount as St Pauls had no money to speak of (both Francis Close Hall and The Park were bequeaths) for the purpose of teacher training, specifically physical education, and the land was designated for education and recreation purposes. The site map held by the council still has a hockey pitch marked on it.

In 1970 St Pauls College obtained permission to build an indoor swimming pool, a three classroom size single storey administration/teaching block and a discreet (in one corner of the site, accommodation for the chaplain and warden. This required the approval of the Secretary of State for Education, which they had to wait some time for. The swimming pool etc were eventually built in 1974.

In 1978 St Paul's College merged with St Mary's to become the The St Paul and St Mary College of Higher Education to obtain degree status ratified by Bristol University.

In early 1990s this entity merged with other local tertiary education institutions (Art College, Technical Colleges) to become The Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education.

In 2001, after several unsuccessful attempts, university status was approved and all the previously mentioned institutions became part of the University of Gloucestershire.

In 1986 they successfully applied to build a sports hall on an isolated patch of green land between the existing administration block, the existing small car park and the disused railway line.

In 1988 they unsuccessfully applied to construct an all weather floodlit practice pitch on the green space

In 1992 they successfully applied to build three halls of residence (122 rooms) infilling around the existing structures, bringing about one half of the land now developed but leaving a significant (0.9 acre) and green space between the buildings and the public road fronting the houses to Marsh Lane.

On the 19th February 1993 there was an agreement between (1) The Trustees of Cheltenham and Gloucester Higher Education Trust, (2) The Official Custodian for Charities and (3) Cheltenham Borough Council pursuant to Section 106 of Town and Country Planning Act 1990 containing restrictive conditions.

Details of these have been obtained from the council under the Freedom of Information Act.

To summarise thus far, there has been creeping development over the last couple of decades or so, albeit contained to one half of the site, the furthest away from residences, and not encroaching on the green space used for recreation.

However, in 2011 they applied to convert the existing sports hall to an arts and photographic complex (extending upwards), the addition of an extra 40 or so car parking spaces by encroaching onto the green space and erecting a six foot steel spiked pallisade fence around the whole perimeter of the site, thus preventing the local community accessing the green space that they have done so without harm for decades.

The local community fought the latter two developments – losing on the car park (which has been built) but winning, for the main part, on the fence aspect. The compromise reached by the council was the steel fence would only be erected around the existing developed area leaving the (reduced) green space for unofficial community use managed by the University. There was supposed to be some landscaping to make it more formal and inviting but very little has been done. Students now do not have access to the green space unless they enter through gaps in old fences (pre war railings) along the boundary with Marsh Lane. This is how the community gain access to the green space.

We believed that is was an attempt to break the continuous unofficial use of the site by the community in order to prime the land for development in the future, either by the University themselves or to sell the whole site for housing development in the future.

However, having recently obtained the Title Deed from Land Registry it appears that the University is The Proprietor and the actual owner is the Church of England with the land being held in a charitable trust or have charity status.

St Pauls is a conservation area but this site lies outside the old ward boundary and is not included. It is now within the new ward boundary but the conservation area has not be reviewed for a few years. The houses along Marsh Lane pre date much, if not all, of those within the conservation area. This is the only green space within the ward although there are green spaces just outside the ward.

July 2012 – Under pressure from local residents and a local councillor to fulfil their planning permission conditions, the University have replaced the pre war railings (and a stretch of high

timber fencing) with bow top (1.2m) railings around the one half of the perimeter of the site bordering the residential streets. Included in this were three access gates. Though there are no signs to the effect it is clearly a tacit statement that the open green space may be used. The numbers of residents, including children, now using the site on a daily basis has grown exponentially. Many for the first time and not seen to do so before.

Town Green Application

As a result of the on going development and the attempt to change the usage, the local community are united in protecting the green space for future generations.

We believe that the green space meets most, if not all, the criteria laid out for such applications

The green space has always been used informally by students and local residents (without implied permission) for recreational purposes and no one has ever been stopped from using the land, or be told to vacate it, despite it being known to be private land. Several local residents (double figures) will give statements to continual usage for at least 20 years (some stretching back 50 years).

APPENDIX D

email from Sir Henry Elwes with reference to green space designation

----- Original Message -----

From: Henry Elwes

To: *name supplied*

Sent: Wednesday, January 09, 2013 1:09 PM

Subject: Hardwicke Campus Cheltenham - Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge

Dear Mr Moss

Thank you for your letter about the possibility of naming the playing area close to Hardwicke Campus as a Queen Elizabeth Field.

As Pro-Chancellor I am only deputy to the Chancellor, Baroness Rennie Fritchie DBE, and, as you say, we hold an ambassadorial role but I must let you know that we do not have any executive powers and do not attend University Council meetings.

I have not heard anything about the open space but will make enquiries about the reasons for the University not wishing to respond favourably to your proposal. It might be that the

University or the Church wish to keep options open for developing additional space for the University in a rather crowded area of the town.

As President of the Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association for almost 20 years until recently, I strongly support the provision of sports and play areas but I cannot promise that I have any powers to intervene on this issue. In the meantime, perhaps you could let me know who you represent in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Sir Henry Elwes KCVO

APPENDIX E

Letter to editor of Gloucestershire Echo from Martin Harwood MP 4th December 2014

Where he puts the case for defending green belt land and talks about urban areas where green space should be defended such as that at Hardwick Campus/Marsh Lane

Dear Sir

Kit Brauholtz lays down the challenge to local politicians to explain what they mean by defending the Green Belt (Letters, 4 December) and I'm happy to pick up the gauntlet, especially as there has been so much use of the term by my Conservative opponent and his recent guest Mr Pickles, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

Kit's letter rightly identifies the problem: Green Belt actually no confers no particular protection on areas valued by communities for their intrinsic environmental or community value. It is strictly for the defined purposes he describes in his letter such as keeping towns apart and preventing urban sprawl. The land itself may not even be accessible to the public. Now I'm all for preventing urban sprawl and keeping some green breathing space between Cheltenham and Gloucester **but areas like the green fields in Leckhampton, or other urban green spaces like Weaver's Field in Warden Hill, or next to Marsh Lane in St.Paul's**, are not Green Belt and are never likely to qualify as Green Belt, being largely or completely surrounded by development already. A recent Green Belt review for local councils suggested 'other policies' would be needed in cases like these.

But what other policies? Sites of Special Scientific Interest and the Birds and Habitats Directive protect land important to rare spearwort or dark green fritillary butterflies. National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty cover our most scenic landscapes like the Costwold Hills. There was no policy for accessible urban green spaces that are simply important to local people. But they have value too: they provide us with food, and absorb our pollution, and give us space to walk and breathe, and improve our mental and physical health, and allow our children to muck about somewhere muddy or meet pigs or watch out for bats.

That's why, when the LibDems were in opposition, I proposed a policy of designating local green spaces special to urban communities. Somewhat to my surprise, it ended up in the LibDem manifesto and slipped into the coalition agreement and then into a government white paper and finally into the National Planning Policy Framework. All credit to the Tory planning minister at the time, Greg Clark

(sadly replaced shortly afterwards by someone more developer-friendly).

There was a condition though. The new designation couldn't be used ad hoc to prevent whatever planning application for housing came along. It had to be part of the local plan-making process.

Frustratingly, our principal local plan-making process, the Joint Core Strategy, completely ignored the new designation. Luckily, Cheltenham's LibDem Borough Council has initiated a review of where it could be used, at least within Cheltenham's borders. Ironically, the only Conservative-led council to do likewise is the overwhelmingly rural Cotswold District which already enjoys extensive AONB protection, not our two JCS partners Tewkesbury and Gloucester who appear to want nothing to do with it. Their loss. **I hope at least our green spaces at Leckhampton, Marsh Lane and elsewhere in Cheltenham are protected as a result.**

But I'm afraid Mr Pickles' noisy declarations about Green Belt won't help these areas at all.

Martin Horwood MP

Liberal Democrat Member of Parliament for Cheltenham

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APPENDIX F

Letters of support from local councillors.

From: cllr.jon.walklett@cheltenham.gov.uk [mailto:cllr.jon.walklett@cheltenham.gov.uk]

Sent: 13 January 2015 14:06

To: Bernice Thomson

Cc: Andrew.Lansley@cheltenham.gov.uk; tess.beck@gmail.com

Subject: Re: Hardwick green space

Letter of support-

The Hardwick/Marsh Lane green space has enabled generations of local residents together with students to utilise an attractive well used and locally valued amenity. Meeting the needs of the

community and enhancing biodiversity, uses range from play, exercising, and studying to enjoying the view whilst picnicking.

Cheltenham has often been described as a "town within a park" and as well as the larger better known Pittville, Montpellier, Imperial and Hatherley parks and gardens there exists quite a number of smaller areas worthy of "green space" status which in itself serves to promote and protect peoples right to enjoy open space close to their homes.

I therefore fully support the action taken by the local community and local residents committee in pursuing the preservation of the Hardwick/Marsh Lane amenity.

Jon

Cllr Jon Walklett
(St Paul's ward)
(Cabinet member for Corporate Services)

Cllr Andrew Lansley

Hardwick Green Space

FAO Cheltenham Borough Council & Gloucestershire Rural Community Council

I am writing to you in my capacity as councillor for St Paul's to support our neighbours and residents in designating this area for special protection under the Cheltenham plan.

I have met with members of the community in Marsh Lane and Marsh Gardens as well as estates staff at the University of Gloucestershire – all of who are keen to see this area protected for use by the community.

The area is in constant use by the community: early morning dog walkers, families and children throughout the day and children and young people in the evening.

Following meetings with Stuart Dove and Nigel Wichall, steps were taken to improve the area following the Hardwick campus development, including the planting of trees on the boundary to go along with the new fences and gated access for the local community to use.

St Paul's is one of the most densely populated areas of the town and despite being close to Aggs Field has very little green space of it's own. I believe protection of this

space is critical and any future loss would have a detrimental effect on the community.

I would be happy to meet and discuss this issue in further detail with anyone who is willing to help our community protect such a valuable space and offer my support unreservedly.

Kindest regards,

Cllr Andrew Lansley