

To: Cheltenham Borough Council

From: Swindon Parish Council

RE: Local Green Space revised application

In my judgement, the evidence suggests that the NPPF criteria are met and some LGS designation is justified. The JSC authorities are requested to consider indicative areas for LGS designation. Detailed boundaries are best left for the Cheltenham Borough Plan (Inspector Elizabeth Ord)

Following the *Inspector's Preliminary Findings on Green Belt Release, Spatial Strategy and Strategic Allocations* report, Swindon Parish Council would like put forward a new proposal for Local Green Space designation. The proposal follows the inspector's advice by significantly reducing the extent of the area proposed and placing the allotments and sports ground within the LGS area. The proposal (see map overleaf) includes the areas of green land that have been suggested by the developers Bloor and Persimmon, as well as some additional areas that are of central importance to the community and strongly meet the NPPF criteria for LGS.

The inspector notes that "There is scope for some LGS within the allocation that would be consistent with sustainable development, including areas of high landscape sensitivity close to the village and areas that form the setting of the Swindon Village Conservation Area." This document is designed to identify the most appropriate areas.

The new proposed area (see map overleaf) has been selected on the grounds of proximity to the community and conservation area, tranquillity, local significance, being demonstrably special to the community, recreational value, wildlife, and the identity of the village as a village. While Bloor and Persimmon propose small pockets of green space (see overleaf), the proposal from the Parish Council is for a joined up green area that goes around the village. This helps to preserve the character the village within its landscape and allows for maximum recreational use of the land .

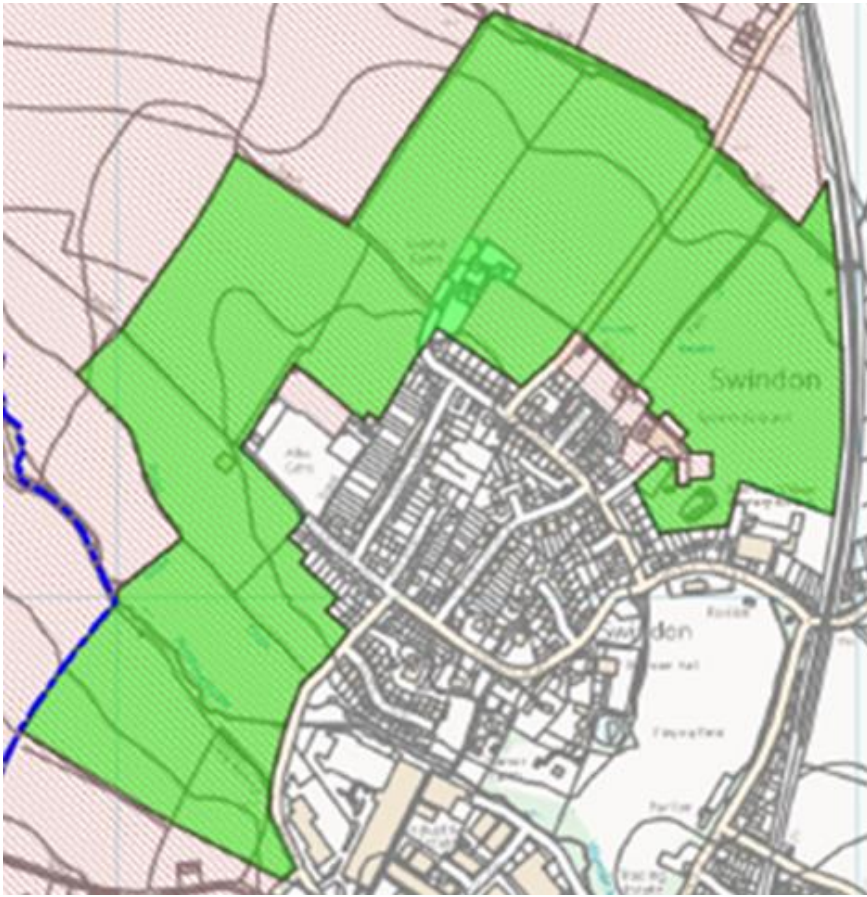
The area of Local Green Space that the Parish Council is proposing is modest, and far less than our original proposal, particularly since a large area (marked 'flood area' on map overleaf) is unsuitable for housing and is already earmarked for green space on Bloor and Persimmons Elms Park plan.

The inspector has ruled that the LGS should form part of the Cheltenham Local Plan. The Parish Council would therefore like to call on Cheltenham Borough Council to consult with stakeholders and designate the area proposed within the yellow line in the map overleaf as Local Green Space in the plan.

What the green space will be used for depends on agreements between the Parish Council, the Borough Council, and the developers who own the land. We imagine a mixture of nature reserves, community agriculture, fields for dog walking, or tenant farms, designed to maximise the benefit for both existing and future communities.

Details of the revised proposal can be found in the map overleaf.

Swindon Parish Council original LGS proposal



Bloor and Persimmon's proposed green space



Swindon Parish Council revised green space proposal



Relevant Sections from the *Inspector's Preliminary Findings on Green Belt Release, Spatial Strategy and Strategic Allocations*

99. Swindon Parish Council has put forward a proposal for LGS to be designated on this site¹⁰⁸. Both the Parish Council and the JCS authorities have requested that I make a finding on the soundness of such a designation. As with the Leckhampton LGS considered above, I have assessed the merits of this proposal against the NPPF.

100. I consider the original area put forward by the Parish Council, as referred to in the Local Green Space Study Report¹⁰⁹, to be too large (about 47 hectares) and to conflict in part with areas that are justified for development. Nonetheless, it is close to the local community and its designation is well supported by local people. There is scope for some LGS within the allocation that would be consistent with sustainable development, including areas of high landscape sensitivity close to the village and areas that form the setting of the Swindon Village Conservation Area.

101. In terms of merit, there are important views, including those that are significant to the character of the Conservation Area, and I understand that the land is used for recreation such as dog walking, ball games, and biking, amongst other things. Well used public footpaths and bridleways cross the area and its wildlife and tranquillity is important to the community

102. Swindon sports ground and the allotments are included in the land proposed to be taken out of the GB. Whilst development is not intended on these areas at present, and the Parish Council has not put forward the allotments as LGS, to protect both these areas from any future development, they could justifiably be designated as LGS.

103. In my judgement, the evidence suggests that the NPPF criteria are met and some LGS designation is justified. The JSC authorities are requested to consider indicative areas for LGS designation. Detailed boundaries are best left for the Cheltenham Borough Plan or to any Neighbourhood Plan that might come forward. This will be discussed further at the forthcoming hearings when I will invite input from relevant developers and Swindon Parish Council, limited to indicative areas for designation.