

Central Lincolnshire Local Plan 2012-2036 Examination

**MATTER 15: Green Wedges and Open Space (LP22,  
LP23 and LP24)**

Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee  
Hearing Statement

October 2016



**MATTER 15: Green Wedges and Open Space (LP22, LP23 and LP24)****Issue 15A - Green Wedges Policy LP22**

***Q 1. How were the 'Green Wedges' identified on the Policies Map and what process was followed? What evidence-based documents were used to inform this process?***

Green Wedges are a planning policy tool that have been used in Central Lincolnshire for 20 years. The adopted City of Lincoln, North Kesteven and West Lindsey Local Plans set out Green Wedge policy and designations that focus around Lincoln. Additionally, the West Lindsey Local Plan designates Settlement Breaks (which are very similar in intent to Green Wedges) between identified settlements. These existing Green Wedge designations were the starting point for the consideration of Green Wedges in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan.

The Central Lincolnshire Green Wedge and Settlement Breaks Review (**PS.EVR22 and PS.EVR22 Appendix**) sets out the process that was followed to inform the identification of the Green Wedges shown on the Central Lincolnshire Policies Map. This Review was first prepared to support the publication of the Further Draft Local Plan (**LP02**) and was later updated in April 2016 in light of responses received to the Further Draft Local Plan consultation, to support the publication of the Proposed Submission Local Plan (**LP03**). In summary, the approach was to review existing Green Wedges and Settlement Breaks in the adopted Local Plans, as well as any proposals for new Green Wedges put forward at public consultation on the Further Draft Local Plan, via an assessment of whether they met the criteria to be designated as a Green Wedge as set out on page 8 of **PS.EVR22 Appendix**.

***Q2. Are the Green Wedge designations justified, effective and consistent with national policy? Are there any significant factors that indicate that any sites should not have been designated?***

Yes the Committee believes the Green Wedge designations are justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

They are based on a robust analysis and assessment of whether they meet the criteria for designation as Green Wedges. They have been subject to public consultation during the preparation of the Plan, which demonstrated strong local support for the Green Wedge approach and preventing the coalescence of settlements.

The NPPF does not contain a specific reference to Green Wedges, however their designation is considered to be consistent with national policy, including para 109 of the NPPF "...protecting and enhancing valued landscapes..." and para 114, which requires Local Planning Authorities to set out a strategic approach to planning for networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure.

The Committee are of the view that there are no significant factors that indicate the Green Wedges as shown on the Policies Map should not have been designated.

**Q3. Are there any areas where evidence-based documents recommended inclusion within a Green Wedge that were not taken forward into the Local Plan? If not, why not? Is this justified?**

The following table sets out those areas the Central Lincolnshire Green Wedge and Settlement Break Review recommended were included within a Green Wedge but which were not taken forward into the submitted Local Plan. The reasoned justification is in the last column.

<b>Name of area and Green Wedge</b>	<b>Existing Green Wedge in Adopted Local Plans?</b>	<b>Outcome in the Local Plan</b>	<b>Reasoned Justification</b>
Land north of Honeyholes Lane (CL4084), Welton/Dunholme Green Wedge	Yes. Welton/Dunholme Settlement Break	Residential Allocation	Planning permission has been granted for this site
Land south of Cherry Willingham at Eastfield Rise Farm, Canwick to Washinborough Green Wedge	No. Part of an extension to the Canwick to Washingborough proposed by the Green Wedge Review.	No allocation or designation	Planning permission has been granted for a marina and associated leisure and tourism uses which would be in conflict with the role and function of the Green Wedge
Land off Millbeck Drive, Lincoln (CL1882)	Yes. Burton to Nettleham Green Wedge	Residential Allocation	This site lies south of the A46 adjacent to the built up area of Lincoln. The Green wedge Review didn't specifically identify this area as no longer meeting the Green Wedge criteria, however, it did recommend that an alternative southern boundary to the Green wedge would be to stop at the A46 (section 5, para 5.3, p9).
Land off Wolsey Way, Lincoln (CL1687)	Yes. Burton to Nettleham Green Wedge	Residential Allocation	Planning permission has been granted for site
Land off Lincoln Road, Skellingthorpe (CL1208)	Yes. Skellingthorpe Green Wedge	Residential Allocation	The Green Wedge Review didn't specifically identify this area as no longer meeting the Green Wedge criteria however, it did identify that this part of the Green Wedge could potentially accommodate some development adjacent

			to the built up area of Skellingthorpe (section 5, para 5.63)
Land at Grange Farm, South West Quadrant (CL4668)	Yes. Witham Valley Green Wedge	Sustainable Urban Extension Allocation	The Green Wedge Review didn't specifically identify this area as no longer meeting the Green Wedge criteria however, it did identify that this part of the Green Wedge has the most scope to accommodate some development due to its width (section 5, para 5.105 and 5.120, p32 and p34).
Land off Mendip Avenue, North Hykeham (CL920)	Yes. Witham Valley Green Wedge	Residential Allocation	Planning permission has been granted for site
Land to the north of Station Road (CL1068)	Yes. Waddington to Bracebridge	Residential Allocation	Planning permission has been granted for site

**Q4. What is the justification for the Green Wedges identified on the Policies Map (Inset Map 1 – Lincoln) including Anglian Water's Recycling Centres at Lincoln, Waddington and South Hykeham? How does Policy LP22 respond and relate to existing, established premises? Does it allow for the sustainable consolidation or expansion of such operations? Is it effective in this regard?**

Anglian Water's Recycling Centres (WRCs) at Washingborough Road, Canwick, Brant Road, Waddington and South Hykeham lie within existing Green Wedges designated in the adopted Local Plans for the City of Lincoln or North Kesteven which are now shown on the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan Policies Map.

Existing utilities infrastructure, including WRCs, are an acceptable land use within Green Wedges. There are various 'non open space' uses within the Green Wedges shown on the Policies Map, especially in those parts of the Green Wedge close to the urban area. Such existing land uses include limited residential uses, commercial and leisure uses.

Whilst the intent of the Green Wedge policy is to protect the open and undeveloped character of areas within them to prevent the physical merging of settlements, it is not intended that Green Wedges should operate as an absolute restriction on all development proposals. Certain types of development may be acceptable, so long as they do not have a detrimental impact on the role and function of Green Wedge within which they are situated. The policy does not specify what type of development is considered acceptable in a Green Wedge as it was felt that this approach would make the policy excessively prescriptive.

Having carefully considered Anglian Water's representations and following subsequent liaison with Anglian Water, the Committee suggests that policy LP22 would benefit from additional supporting text to provide clarity as to how the policy relates to proposals for existing development within a

Green Wedge (suggested modification Main/SC/29). The Committee has email confirmation (dated 7/10/16) from Anglian Water confirming this meets its concern.

Add new paragraph after 5.7.3:

**“5.7.4 There are various existing ‘non-open space’ uses within the Green Wedges. Such uses should not develop in a way which harms the role and function of the Green Wedge within which they are situated. Acceptable development proposals within a Green Wedge may include agricultural and forestry related development, green space, sport and recreation land uses, re-use of rural buildings and minor extensions or alterations to existing dwellings, provided they do not adversely affect the overall character of the Green Wedge and meet the terms of other relevant Local Plan policies. Essential development, such as required by a public or private utility to fulfil their statutory obligations, or the provision of strategic transport infrastructure, will be acceptable provided other relevant Local Plan policies are satisfied”.**

***Q5. What is the justification for including land between Welton and Dunholme, to include site CL1187, within a Green Wedge?***

Land between Welton and Dunholme is an existing Settlement Break designation in the adopted West Lindsey Local Plan (**CLP3**, p47 and **CLP3D**). This designation was reassessed in the Central Lincolnshire Green Wedge and Settlement Breaks Review (pages 55-57). The Review found that the existing Settlement Break boundaries were strong and defensible, following distinctive features, such as roads and field boundaries. The Review also identified that the existing Settlement Break has and continues to experience significant development pressure. New development would be highly visible and undermine the visual separation of the two settlements through significant narrowing of the break.

The purpose of the Green Wedge in this location is to provide both physical and visual separation in order to maintain settlement identity and prevent the merging of Welton and Dunholme. Land along Rylands Road and including CL1187, makes a significant contribution to this aim by providing a clear visual break (para 6.8, p56 of **PS.EVR22 Appendix**).

***Q6. What is the justification for including land at Urban Street, Bracebridge Heath (site CL416) within a Green Wedge?***

Land at Urban Street, Bracebridge Heath forms part of an existing Green Wedge designation in the adopted North Kesteven Local Plan (**CLP2**, p101 and **CLP2A**, Inset 9). This designation was reassessed in the Central Lincolnshire Green Wedge and Settlement Breaks Review (pages 38-42). Land at Urban Street falls within landscape zone C2. The Review found that the existing Green Wedge boundaries within this landscape zone were strong and defensible, generally following the existing built up area of Lincoln to the north and west and Bracebridge Heath to the east. Zone C2 contributes to the role of this Green Wedge as a green lung into the urban area of Lincoln by providing a continuous link from the built up area of Lincoln to the open countryside to the south of Station Road. Zone C2 also provides strategic landscape and wildlife links from east to west, by adjoining the adjacent Canwick to Washingborough Green Wedge to the north east. There are striking, open views from this location towards the Lincoln cliff limestone scarp, an important landscape feature that contributes to the setting and character of Lincoln and the

surrounding villages. This landscape zone also offers informal recreation opportunities via a number of linked footpaths and bridleways.

The Review identified that the existing Waddington to Bracebridge Green Wedge has and continues to experience significant development pressure, and concluded that there was limited scope to accommodate future development within landscape zone C2 due to sensitivity of the landscape to change (para 5.139, p40, **PS.EVR22 Appendix**).

***Q7. What is the justification for including land at the University of Lincoln's Riseholme Campus within a Green Wedge? Is it necessary or appropriate given the existing use of the site and existing designations?***

Land at Riseholme Campus is an existing Green Wedge designation in the adopted West Lindsey Local Plan (**CLP3**, p47 and **CLP3D**). This designation was reassessed in the Central Lincolnshire Green Wedge and Settlement Breaks Review (pages 9-13). The Review recommended that the existing Green Wedge to the north of Riseholme Campus (landscape zone I2) could be considered for removal from the Green Wedge designation as it did not meet the criteria for designation (section 5, para 5.20, p11, **PS.EVR22 Appendix**). This recommendation was followed through onto the Central Lincolnshire Policies Map and therefore the northern boundary of the Burton to Nettleham Green Wedge had to be redrawn. The northern boundary of the Riseholme Campus was felt to be a logical and defensible boundary. The Review concluded that this part of the Green Wedge continued to meet the criteria for designation.

The Committee considers that it is both necessary and appropriate for a Green Wedge in this location. As explained in response to Q4, there are various existing 'non open space' uses within the Green Wedges. These are appropriate so long as they do not conflict with the role and function of the Green Wedge in which they are located.

The majority of Riseholme Campus is designated as a Registered Historic Park and Garden for its special historic interest. The Green Wedge designation in this location serves a much wider purpose, principally protecting the setting and character of Lincoln and its relationship with the surrounding countryside and, as a recreational resource, with informal opportunities for residents of Riseholme, Nettleham and Lincoln to access the countryside close to where they live via a network of public rights of way.

**Issue 15b – Local Green Space and Other Important Open Space Policy LP23****Q8. How are the designations of Local Green Space within the Plan consistent with paragraphs 76-77 of the Framework? Does Policy LP23 meet the tests in national policy?**

Yes the Committee believes that the Local Green Space designations within the Plan are consistent with national policy and in particular, paragraphs 76 and 77 of the NPPF.

Paragraph 76 enables local communities through Local Plans or Neighbourhood Plans to identify, for special protection, areas that are of particular importance to them and that Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or reviewed. Nominations for sites to be considered for designation as Local Green Space in the Local Plan were sought very early in the development of the Local Plan at the Preliminary Draft Plan stage. Local communities were given a further opportunity to identify sites at the Further Draft Plan stage and comment on those sites already submitted that were proposed for designation as Local Green Spaces. The designations of Local Green Space in the Plan are therefore those that have been put forward during the preparation of the Local Plan and identified by local communities, not the Committee.

Paragraph 77 is clear that a 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;
- 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.

Each site designated on the Policies Map and all other candidate sites were assessed against the tests set out in paragraph 77 and only sites that met these tests are designated on the Policies Map as Local Green Space. The evidence which demonstrates that this assessment has taken place is contained within the Evidence Report for LP23: Local Green Space and other Important Open Space, April 2016 (**PS.EVR23**). Table 2-1 and supporting text, (p2-4) of Appendix 1 of **PS.EVR23** explains how the criteria in paragraph 77 has been interpreted and applied in Central Lincolnshire.

Paragraph 1 of Policy LP23 reflects paragraph 78 of the NPPF, which rule out development on Local Green Space other than in very special circumstances.

**Q9. How were areas of Local Green Space identified on the Policies Map and what process was followed? What evidence –based documents were used to inform this process?**

The methodology and rationale for the identification of Local Green Space on the Policies Map is clearly set out in the Evidence Report for LP23: Local Green Space and other Important Open Space, April 2016 (**PS.EVR23**) see sections 3, 4 and 5 in particular (p3 to 5), and Appendix 1, section 2, (p1).

In summary, there were a number of stages to the assessment of nominated sites for designation as Local Green Spaces. In submitting sites for consideration, local communities were asked to provide a map of the site, set out why they thought the site was important and how the site met the criteria for designation as set out in paragraph 77 of the NPPF. Sites submitted without a map or where it was not possible to identify the location from the submission, were removed from the

assessment process. A further site sieve was undertaken for those sites that were considered to be an extensive tract of land, not in close proximity to the community they serve or linear corridors protected under other legislation. For the remaining sites, information was obtained on planning history and existing permissions, environmental designations and the status of the site in relation to other emerging allocations in the Local Plan. Each site was then visited by a Planning Officer to check site boundaries on the ground and to record observations against the NPPF criteria. A detailed database record for each site was created to record information obtained from each Local Plan stage consultation and site visits. A list of sites suitable for designation was drawn from these detailed records and a justification provided as to why a site was suitable for designation or why it had been rejected. Where there were objections at the Further Draft Plan stage to any site proposed for designation as a Local Green Space, or to sites that had not been designated, these sites were reconsidered.

The key pieces of evidence that were used to inform the selection process included; the site nominations made by local communities, site visits, the Lincolnshire Historic Environment<sup>1</sup> Record, the CPRE Tranquillity Map<sup>2</sup> and GIS layers held by the Central Lincolnshire Authorities for environmental designations, such as Local Wildlife Sites, Local Nature Reserves and Conservation Areas.

***Q10. Are the Local Green Space designations justified, effective and consistent with national policy? Are there any significant factors that indicate that any sites should not have been designated?***

The designation of Local Green Spaces has been based on a robust assessment of each site put forward for consideration, published in the Evidence Report for LP23: Local Green Space and other Important Open Space, April 2016 (**PS.EVR23**), and participation by local communities in their identification. Their designation is therefore considered to be fully justified.

The Local Green Space designations are considered to be effective. They do not undermine the identification of suitable land to meet the housing needs of the Central Lincolnshire area, are not on land with planning permission for development and are capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.

Consistency with national policy has been set out in response to Q8 above.

***Q11. What criteria have been used to inform the designation of land as 'Important Open Space'? Are they justified?***

The approach to the designation of land as 'Important Open Space' is set out in paragraph 5.4 (p5) of the Evidence Report for LP23: Local Green Space and other Important Open Space, April 2016 (**PS.EVR23**).

Areas of Important Open Space on the Policies Map are existing open spaces that were designated in the adopted Local Plans as a Visual Amenity Area in North Kesteven, an Important Open Space in West Lindsey or a Critical Natural Asset, Basic Natural Stock or Functional Open

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://maps.cpre.org.uk/>

Space in the City of Lincoln. These have been merged into one designation of 'Important Open Space' in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan. These open spaces were designated for one or more of the following reasons:

- Contribution to the open character or appearance of a settlement;
- Open to public view;
- Ecological or landscape value;
- Recreational or social function.

A desk based review was undertaken of these existing open space designations to check 1) whether the status of each site had changed since the adoption of the Local Plan in which they are designated and 2) whether the site was being considered for an alternative allocation in the emerging Central Lincolnshire Local Plan. Only sites where the land use remained open space and were not required for allocation in the Plan were designated as Important Open Space on the Policies Map. As such, the designations are considered to be justified.

***Q12. Is the designation of land as 'Important Open Space' consistent with the Framework, which seeks to rule out new development on Local Green Space where the bullet point list at paragraph 77 is satisfied?***

It is considered that the designation of land as 'Important Open Space' is consistent with paragraph 74 of the NPPF, which seeks protection of existing open space, sports and recreation buildings and land. It is not intended that Important Open Spaces have the same status and level of protection as Local Green Spaces, as they have not been put forward by the local community (paragraph 76 of the Framework) or tested against the criteria set out in paragraph 77 of the NPPF. Where an existing Important Open Space was nominated by the local community to be considered for designation as a Local Green Space, it was assessed following the methodology set out in the Evidence Report for LP23: Local Green Space and other Important Open Space, April 2016 (**PS.EVR23**) and as summarised in the response to Q9 above.

***Q13. Are there any areas where evidence-based documents recommended inclusion as part of a Local Green Space or Important Open Space that were not taken forward into the Local Plan? If not, why not? Is this justified?***

No. The Committee can confirm that there are no areas where evidence based documents recommended inclusion as part of a Local Green Space or Important Open Space that were not taken forward into the Local Plan. Sites recommended for designation as listed in Appendix 1, Table 2-2 (p5) of **PS.EVR23** are shown on the Local Plan Policies Map.

***Q14. What is the justification for including land off Wolsey Way, Lincoln (site CL4432) as part of an area of Important Open Space?***

Land off Wolsey Way is an existing Basic Natural Stock open space designation in the adopted City of Lincoln Local Plan. The site has not been developed for another use since the adoption of the City of Lincoln Local Plan and is not allocated for an alternative use in the Central Lincolnshire

Local Plan. It was considered as a reasonable alternative to the preferred residential allocations in Policy LP49 in **PS.EVR48-54** (p160-161) but was rejected for the reasons stated in the Evidence Report. The site therefore continues to be designated in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan as an Important Open Space on the Policies Map.

***Q15. What is the justification for including land to the rear of Riby Road and Woodlands Avenue, Keelby as Important Open Space?***

Land to the rear of Riby Road and Woodlands Avenue, Keelby is an existing Important Open Space designation in the adopted West Lindsey Local Plan. The site boundary as shown on the Policies Map was included as an Important Open Space as it was understood the site had not been developed for another use since the adoption of the West Lindsey Local Plan. The site is not allocated for an alternative use in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan and wasn't considered as a reasonable alternative, either in whole or part, to the preferred residential allocations set out in Policy LP52.

Since submitting the Plan, and based on further investigation following a representation objecting to the designation, it has come to light that two parts of the site have been developed since the adoption of the West Lindsey Local Plan. The Committee requests a modification (modification Main/SC/30) to the Policies Map so that these areas are removed from the Important Open Space designation, but the remainder of the site remains as an Important Open Space designation. The map is set out at Appendix 1 (as well as in the Modifications document) for ease of reference.

***Q16. What is the justification for including land at Ferry Lane/High Street, Skellingthorpe as Important Open Space?***

Land at Ferry Lane/High Street Skellingthorpe is an existing Visual Amenity open space designation in the adopted North Kesteven Local Plan. The site has not been developed for another use since the adoption of the North Kesteven Local Plan and is not allocated for an alternative use in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan. The site wasn't considered as a reasonable alternative to residential allocations in Policy LP52 as the site was not submitted for consideration, either through the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment, or call for sites as part of the Preliminary Draft Local Plan stage. The site therefore continues to be designated in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan as an Important Open Space on the Policies Map.

**Issue 15c – New Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities Policy LP24****Q17. What process and/or evidence base has informed the standards in Appendix C of the Plan?**

The main pieces of evidence informing Policy LP24, and the standards in Appendix C, are; the Central Lincolnshire Open Space Audit and Provision Standard Assessment, April 2016 (**E055**) and the Central Lincolnshire Playing Pitch Needs and Assessment, July 2013 (**E054**). These documents are consistent with paragraph 73 of the NPPF, which states that planning policies should be based on "...robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sport and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision".

Further information on the background to the development of the policy is provided in LP24 Creation of New Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities Evidence Report, April 2016 (**PS.EVR24**).

**Q18. Policy LP24 requires development to provide new or enhanced open space, sports and recreation facilities in accordance with standards in Appendix C. Is it justified to seek open space in connection with all development or just housing? Is it justified to seek open space where existing provision is satisfactory?**

The vast majority of new open space provision does relate to the demands required by new occupants of new dwellings. So, yes, the policy should be clear in stipulating that the requirements (and standards of Appendix C) only apply to residential development.

A set of linked modifications (all forming modification Main/SC/31) are therefore proposed:

The second paragraph of the policy amended as follows:

**"Residential d**Development will be required to..."

Likewise, paragraph 5.9.4 should be amended to

"...new **residential** developments..."

And likewise, Appendix C, para 2, should be amended to :

"As a minimum, the strategic aim is for any new **residential** major development (~~as defined under the Town and Country planning Act (Development Management Procedures) (England) order 2010~~) providing or having access to open space to the following quantity standards:"

In terms of seeking provision where existing provision is satisfactory, the Open Space Audit identified a need for higher quality and more accessible open space rather than simply a focus on quantitative provision, as has been the approach in the previous Local Plans. For some local communities, improvement to the quality of, or accessibility to, existing open space provision may be more beneficial than providing additional open space. The information contained within the Open Space Audit should be used by developers to identify the current level of provision of each type of open space in the surrounding local area so that new open space relates to the needs of that area. If existing open spaces do not meet the qualitative standards, but quantitative and accessibility standards are met, enhancements to the existing open spaces may be more appropriate than increasing the quantity of open space. This is considered to be a reasonable approach.

How open space standards set out in Appendix C will be applied is outlined in section 12, pages 30-34 of the Central Lincolnshire Developer Contribution Supplementary Planning Document (Officer Working Draft) April 2016 (**E012C**).

Residential requirements are based on an assessment of need and opportunity within the context of the local area in which the development proposal is located, using the population size of the development and the standards of accessibility, quality and quantity set out in Appendix C of the Plan. The draft SPD outlines diagrammatically in paragraph 12.18, p33, the process by which open space requirements will be considered in relation to the standards outlined in Appendix C.

**Issue 15d Green Infrastructure – Policy LP20**

**Q19. Policy LP20 expects development proposals to make contributions towards green infrastructure. Does this relate to all development? If so, is this appropriate and justified even for small scale proposals?**

Policy LP20 relates to all development, as it is considered that both residential and non-residential development, and at every scale, from individual buildings (or even extensions to existing buildings) through to strategic developments sites, such as Sustainable Urban Extensions, has the potential to make a contribution to providing, enhancing and/or managing green infrastructure. For example, even a small house extension could provide bat or bird boxes, or a roof pitch suitable for swallow nests, or the provision of a native hedge or tree. The list is endless, and can be extremely cheap to implement, yet make an important contribution.

The wording of the policy is considered to be sufficiently clear that the expectation on developers will be contributions that are proportionate to the scale of the development proposed. However, as advised by the NPPG at paragraph 032 (Reference ID: 8-032-2160211) what is expected in terms of securing and funding green infrastructure will need to be assessed on a case by case basis taking into account individual circumstances. A Developer Contributions SPD (see **E012C** for the latest version) is currently being prepared which sets out additional guidance on potential green infrastructure requirements in relation to different size residential schemes (section 12, p30) and non-residential schemes (para 12.5, p31).

