

Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee Hearing Statement

November 2022

[MATTER 12: Green Spaces](#)



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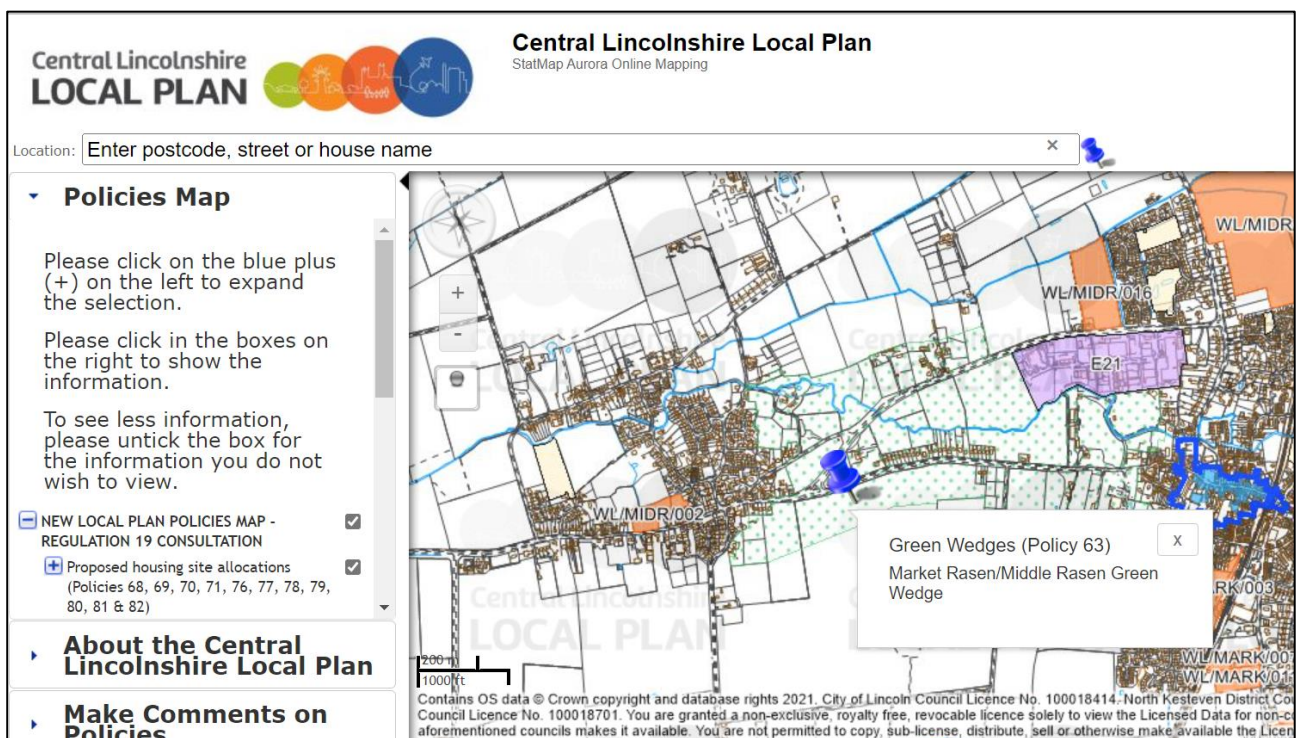
Issue 1 – Green Wedges – Policy S63

Q1 – Is Policy S63 sufficiently clear as to whether an area of land is a Green Wedge or not? Should these areas be listed in the policy?

The first paragraph of the policy states that Green Wedges are identified on the policies map. The policies map illustrates geographically the application of the policies in the Local Plan. Green Wedges are identified on the policies map to ensure consistency with paragraph 23 of the NPPF.

The policies map is also available as an interactive map on the Central Lincolnshire website. This allows users to click on sites on the map to bring up site specific information, including relevant Local Plan policies, designations and allocations. This is considered sufficiently clear as to whether an area of land is a Green Wedge or not.

The Committee does not consider it necessary or helpful to an applicant or decision maker to list the Green Wedges in the policy. When users click on sites on the policies map using the interactive map, the site-specific information includes the name of the Green Wedge. An example is provided below to illustrate this point.



Q2 – How were Green Wedges identified and assessed as part of this Local Plan? What factors were taken into account and where is this evidenced?

Local designation of Green Wedges in and around the main settlements in Central Lincolnshire is long standing, having first been identified and allocated in in the 1998 City of Lincoln Local Plan, 2006 West Lindsey Local Plan and 2007 North Kesteven Local Plan and subsequently reviewed and allocated in the adopted 2017 Central Lincolnshire Local Plan. The Committee wishes to maintain a long-term commitment to these Green Wedges and so carried forward the designations, which have been effective to date, into this Local Plan.

The background to the development of Policy S63 is contained within the policy evidence report (**ENV063**). The policy evidence report demonstrates that this policy is justified. It is the most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives (as set out in the

evidence report and appraised through the SA (**STA004.1b**, **STA004.1g**) and is based on robust and proportionate evidence.

The implementation of Policy S63 is key to delivering the vision of the Local Plan and the strategic objective *“To protect and enhance the rich diversity of the character and appearance of Central Lincolnshire’s landscape and townscape, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place.”*

Section 3, paragraphs 3.1 to 3.5 of the evidence report set out the context and evidence behind the policy. The Central Lincolnshire Green Wedge and Settlement Breaks Review, April 2016 (**ENV003**) was prepared to identify and assess the Green Wedges as part of the adopted Local Plan. This report sets out a thorough and robust assessment of whether land meets the criteria for designation as Green Wedge and what factors were taken into account. The Inspector’s Report for the 2017 Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (**ALP096**) concluded the review *“set out, in a clear and transparent manner, why certain areas should be included within a Green Wedge, and why some should not”*. ENV003 therefore provided a sound baseline for the preparation of the Proposed Submission Local Plan.

Section 6 of ENV063 identifies a small number of changes that have been made to the Green Wedge boundaries during the preparation of the submitted Local Plan. These reflect a change in circumstances since the adoption of the 2017 Local Plan, such as an area of land being allocated for housing in the Local Plan or where planning permission has been granted for residential development and the site has been completed.

Q3 - Are the development requirements relating to the Green Wedges justified and effective?

Yes. With the exception of a minor change to the policy wording following the Regulation 18 consultation to reference blue as well as green spaces within criterion e), the wording of Policy S63 has been carried forward unaltered from Policy LP22 Green Wedges in the adopted 2017 Local Plan (**ALP001**).

The policy has been effective to date and it will continue to be. It does not place a blanket restriction on new development within a Green Wedge. 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. Paragraphs 11.4.4 and 11.4.5 of the supporting text to Policy S63 makes this clear and were added through the Inspector’s Report and Main Modifications to the adopted 2017 Local Plan to ensure that the policy was effective. 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.

Issue 2 – Local Green Space – Policy S64

Q1 – Is Policy S64 sufficiently clear as to which sites are designated as Local Green Spaces?

Yes, the policy is clear as to which sites are designated as Local Green Space and these are clearly shown on the Policies Map.

Q2 – How were sites selected and do they meet the requirements designation under paragraph 102 of the Framework?

Yes, the sites selected meet the requirements of paragraph 102 of the Framework. As set out in the Local Green Space Evidence Paper March 2022 (**SOS002**) the sites from the Adopted Local Plan were carried forward, and their current status confirmed. Any potential new sites suggested were assessed against the requirements of paragraph 102 and were designated where the requirements were met.

Q3 - Paragraph 101 of the Framework states that the designation of land as Local Green Space through local plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Have all the designations been put forward by local communities? If not, which ones have been identified by the Committee?

All of the sites carried forward from the Adopted Local Plan had been suggested by the local community, prior to their assessment. A small number of additional sites were suggested during the consultations undertaken at Regulation 18 stage. The Local Green Space Evidence Paper March 2022 (**SOS002**) includes the assessment of these suggested sites, and whether they have subsequently been designated. There were no sites identified specifically by the Committee.

Q4 - Have any Local Green Spaces been identified in Neighbourhood Plans which have either been through examination or formally made since submission of the Local Plan?

Yes. The Examiners Report for the Leasingham and Roxholm Neighbourhood Plan was received on 12 September 2022. Policy 7 of this Neighbourhood Plan proposes to designate nine Local Green Spaces.

Sturton by Stow and Stow Neighbourhood Plan was Made on 4 July 2022, the week that the Local Plan was submitted. This neighbourhood plan designates Local Green Spaces at Policy 8.

In addition, two Neighbourhood Plans that seek to designate Local Green Spaces have been submitted and are currently at the examination stage. These are Hemswell Cliff Neighbourhood Plan and Scopwick and Kirkby Green Neighbourhood Plan.

Local Green Spaces designated by made neighbourhood plans form part of the development plan, and therefore will automatically be added to the Policies Map as and when they arise.

Issue 3 - Important Open Space – Policy S65

Q1 – Is Policy S65 sufficiently clear as to whether an area of land is Important Open Space? Should all these areas be listed in the policy?

Yes, the policy is clear as to whether an area of land is Important Open Space. The policy clearly states that Important Open Spaces are shown on the Policies Map. In addition to those areas shown on the Policies Map, some areas are protected by type. These types of Important Open Spaces, as listed within the policy, are clearly defined by their use and type.

Q2 – How were the spaces selected and what factors were taken into account? Are they justified?

Yes, the spaces selected as Important Open Space are justified.

As set out in the Important Open Space Evidence Paper Updated March 2022 (**SOS001**), the Important Open Spaces from the Adopted Local Plan were carried forward to form the baseline of areas to assess for this plan. The evidence paper sets out the methodology and criteria used to assess sites carried forward and potential new sites submitted.

The following table is taken from paragraph 3.5 of the Important Open Space Evidence Paper Updated March 2022. It sets out the criteria that were used to undertake the assessments to determine if areas were suitable for designation as Important Open Space within this plan.

Important Open Space Criteria	Explanation
1. Is the open space larger than 0.05ha ?	Open spaces smaller than 0.05ha are less likely to face development pressures due to their small size.
2. Is the space publicly accessible and/or publicly visible ?	Spaces that are behind high walls or hedges are unlikely to be considered as Important Open Space as they are not open in nature. While publicly accessible spaces offer a greater benefit to a settlement, private spaces can also be of benefit to the character and setting of a settlement.
3. Is the open space important to the character of the area?	Open spaces can offer a range of benefits, such as enhancing local character and providing an open or green area within an otherwise built up setting, maintaining an open feel of a less densely developed area or providing recreational value to the local community through both formal and informal spaces.

In addition, further background to the development of Policy S65 is primarily contained within the policy evidence report (**EVR065**). The policy evidence report demonstrates that this policy is the most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives (as set out in the evidence report and appraised through the SA (**STA004.1b**, **STA004.1g**) and is based on robust and credible evidence.