

SWDP 38: Green Space

- A. Green Space, as identified on the Policies Map⁽⁸³⁾, includes a range of private⁽⁸⁴⁾ and public open spaces and associated community facilities.**
- B. Development of Green Space will not be permitted unless the following exceptional circumstances are demonstrated:**
- i. The proposal is for a community / recreational use that does not compromise the essential quality and character of the Green Space; or**
 - ii. An assessment of community and technical need (using recognised national methodology where appropriate) clearly demonstrates that the Green Space is surplus to requirements; or**
 - iii. Alternative / replacement Green Space of at least equivalent value to the community has been secured in a suitable location⁽⁸⁵⁾.**
- C. This policy should be read in conjunction with policies SWDP 5, 22, 29 & 39 as any new Green Infrastructure secured under these policies will be designated and protected as Green Space.**

83 The policy also applies to new Green Spaces secured through planning permissions which will then be included on the interactive Policies Map.

84 The Green Space designation does not prejudice a householder's permitted development rights.

85 A suitable location will be dependent upon need and the type of facility being proposed.

Reasoned Justification

1. Well-designed, attractive and functional open space is an essential component for a high quality of life. It contributes positively to biodiversity, health and the character of an area and can also help to mitigate the impacts of extreme temperatures and flash flooding.
2. The Framework (paragraphs 114, 117) emphasises the benefits of recreational open space in terms of its contribution to creating sustainable patterns of urban and rural development, its role in maintaining strong and vibrant communities and the associated promotion of health and well-being. Green Space for recreation and sport can also deliver a number of Green Infrastructure objectives, often simultaneously.
3. There is a wide range of types of open space across south Worcestershire; for example, playing fields, recreation grounds, allotments, cemeteries, parks and amenity green space. They are all part of and contribute to the Green Infrastructure within and outwith settlements. Other open spaces have high ecological or landscape value and are protected elsewhere in the Plan, e.g. SWDP 22 – Biodiversity & Geodiversity and SWDP 23 – The Cotswolds and Malvern Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
4. SWDP 38 aims to protect open spaces identified on the Policies Map, together with numerous incidental open spaces too small to include but that nonetheless contribute to the quality and character of their local areas. These small local spaces are often valued and used heavily by local communities and are therefore worthy of policy protection. Whilst most open spaces are publicly accessible, some are in private ownership, although they nonetheless perform valuable functions such as contributing to biodiversity, the character of the area and providing a sense of openness and space.