

Local Green Space – Policy KP20

This policy is intended to provide the highest level of protection from development (equivalent to Green Belt status) to the land comprising Abbey Fields, Oddibourne Allotments, Kenilworth Common and the land between them along the valley of Finham Brook. This Appendix provides the justification for this designation in accordance with paragraph 77 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

The land comprises four distinct parcels which together form a green corridor along Finham Brook in the heart of the town which are appreciated and used by the residents for a variety of community and recreational purposes and which essentially link the Ford by the Castle in the West to the Green Belt in the East. The four areas are linked not only by the river but by a range of footpaths and for much of the length by a shared cycleway, which is part of Sustrans National Route 52.

In the previous Local Plan (WDC 1996-2011) this was designated as a n Area of Restraint but this designation was not continued in the new Local Plan (WDC 2011-2029). The various parcels each enjoy a different status and degree of protection so the aim of this policy is to harmonise the status of the space and provide a high level of protection for all the land. The land is all in public ownership; either Warwick District Council or, in the case of the allotments, Kenilworth Town Council.

The four parcels are, from West to East:



Map A.1 Justification of Policy KP20 Local Green Space

- A. Abbey Fields** To many residents this is the jewel in the town and is greatly appreciated for a variety of reasons whether as a historic site, a relaxing green space around the lake or a recreation area. The ruins of the Abbey are visible in some areas whilst remaining buried in others. A surviving building houses the Town Museum whilst nearby is a very popular children's

playground which is next to a small wildlife area. Abbey Fields are a Scheduled Monument and lie in the Conservation Area.

- B. Behind School Lane** The other side of the Townpool Bridge is an unnamed corridor along Finham Brook with a shared cycleway. Compared to Abbey Fields it is more natural and tranquil. A mill race ran through here but has long since disappeared apart from some stone wall remains near the Washbrook Bridge at the Eastern end. The area south of the river is identified as Public Open Space but it is all outside the Conservation Area. Part of the Southern area was developed for housing about 30 years ago.
- C. Oddibourne Allotments** There is a significant demand for allotments in Kenilworth and these are well managed and maintained with hardly any vacant plots, With Finham Brook running through the middle the result is a very picturesque setting. The shared cycleway runs along The Close alongside the allotments and this is include within the designated area. As well as being active allotments this is all within the Conservation area.
- D. Kenilworth Common** Although this area was historically open but hilly heathland much of the area is now covered in trees. The Common is bisected by the Coventry to Leamington Spa railway line and a plateau on the Common was the site of a navy camp during the construction of that railway. Two shared cycleways also cross the Common as does a disused byway. The resulting area remains relatively natural providing a recreational and wildlife resource. It is registered common land.