

# Appendix 2

## Green Infrastructure and Open Spaces

### Contents

1. Introduction .....	2
2. Green Infrastructure .....	3
3. Footpaths .....	4
4. Open Spaces.....	7
5. Local Green Spaces .....	13
5.1. National Planning Policy Framework .....	13
5.2. Description .....	15
5.3. Lewknor Sites .....	19
Knapp Farm Orchard .....	20
Lewknor School Playground.....	21
Lewknor Allotments and former Watercress Beds .....	22
Land between the Leathern Bottle and the former Watercress Beds.....	23
Verges at entrance to Lewknor Village .....	24
5.4. Postcombe Site .....	25
Area of wood at Box Tree Lane .....	25
5.5. Assessment against Criteria .....	27
5.6. Conclusion of Assessment.....	29
5.7. Independent Examination.....	30
5.8. Future Management .....	30
5.9. Conclusion.....	30

## 1. Introduction

The preservation of Green Infrastructure and Open Spaces is important to protect biodiversity and connected habitats.

Green infrastructure is a network of multi-functional green space, both new and existing, both rural and urban, which supports the natural and ecological processes and is integral to the quality of life and health of sustainable communities. Open spaces are an essential part of any balanced community.

National guidance states in NPPF 97:

Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements
- the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location
- the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

In a 2019 Parish Survey, conducted at the Lewknor Parish Horticultural Show

- 85% of respondents considered it important to retain existing green space
- 64% thought that the suggested Green Spaces should be protected to ensure that a network of green spaces is available for the future.

Even though the pastures along the B4009 were not presented for comment, several people expressed the view that all pastures and fields around the settlement boundaries should be protected to preserve the rural character, while comment was made that any endeavours that are made to maintain and improve biodiversity and wildlife are well received by the community.

Assessment of the open spaces in the parish has been carried out following the methodology recommended by My Community Locality<sup>1</sup>.

The process has also been informed by the work done on the South & Vale Infrastructure Strategy.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> My Community Locality Feb 2019

<sup>2</sup> Natural Environment Topic Paper Jan 2019 and South and Vale Green Infrastructure Strategy Sept 2017

## 2. Green Infrastructure

Natural England posed the question “What is Green Infrastructure?” in their 2009 Green Infrastructure Guidance. Two paragraphs of their answer are particularly relevant:

- Green infrastructure is about giving consideration to the environment right at the centre of the planning process to produce a multifunctional network of spaces with benefits for people and wildlife. It’s also about underpinning the sustainability of an area, including making it resilient to the effects of climate change and enabling local authorities to meet their duty to conserve biodiversity under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006.
- Green infrastructure also relates to the rural environment. In the wider countryside, green infrastructure is often viewed at a larger scale, encompassing large country or regional parks; extensive habitats, major landscape features such as river corridors and flood meadows landscapes, and the identification of wide green corridors and ecological networks. Green infrastructure at this scale can provide the wider framework and context for planning green infrastructure at a more local level.<sup>3</sup>

Within our rural area of Lewknor Parish, the Green Infrastructure surrounds us with corridors running through the settlements such as streams, lakes, millponds, footpaths, gardens, trees and hedges. Wildlife can use these corridors to move through the settlements or connect with the surrounding open country. Some gardens in the Parish contain ponds which are small ecosystems in their own right. Buildings provide roosting or nesting sites for bats and birds such as barn owls, swallows and swifts.

It is important when considering development, and new building in particular, that such threads and connections are not compromised and habitats adversely affected.

Preservation of the Green Infrastructure is important so this appendix discusses two key aspects:

- Footpaths and some potential improvements
- Open and Green Spaces and how to ensure their protection.

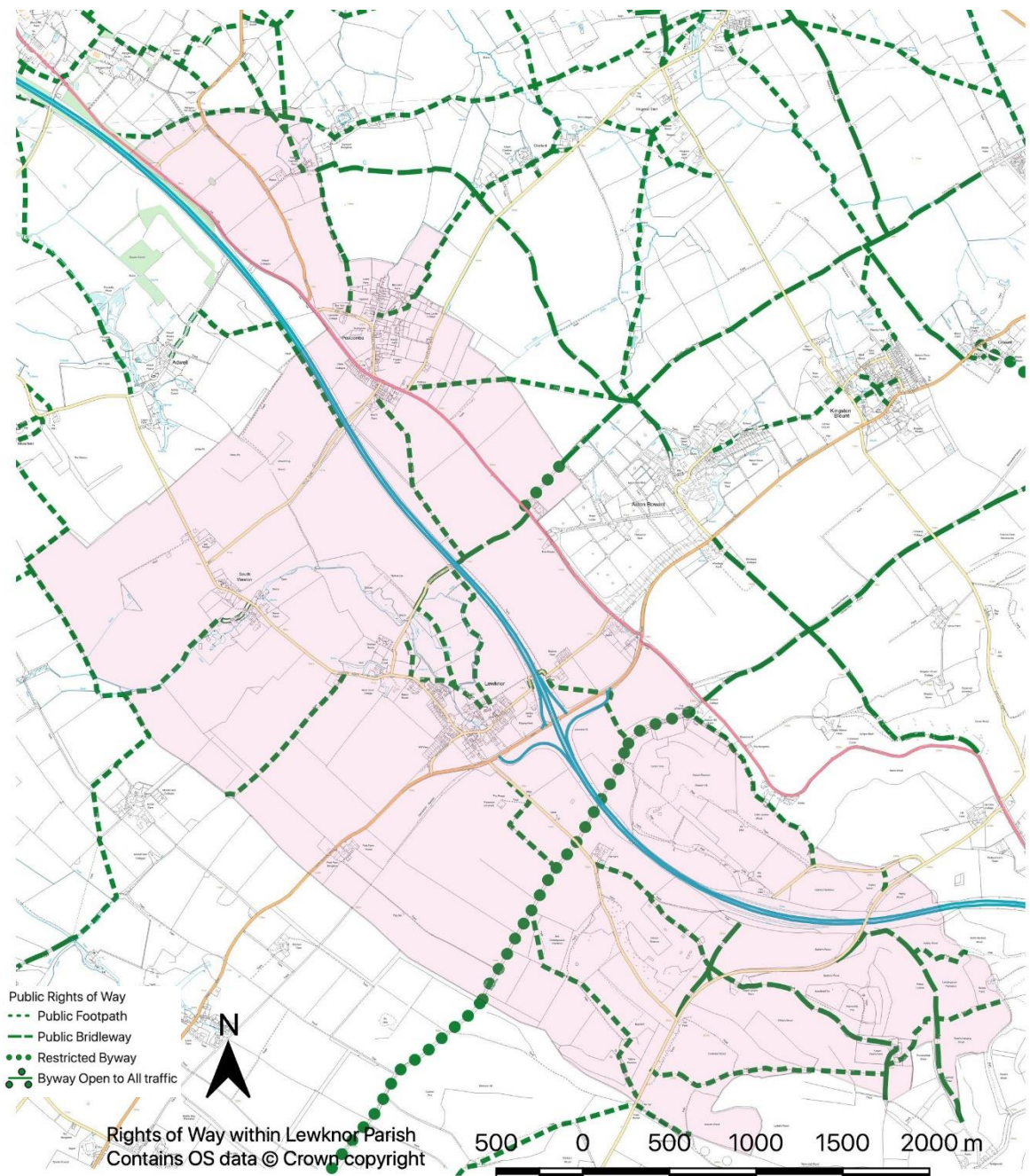
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<sup>3</sup> Extracted or paraphrased from Natural England Green Infrastructure Guidance

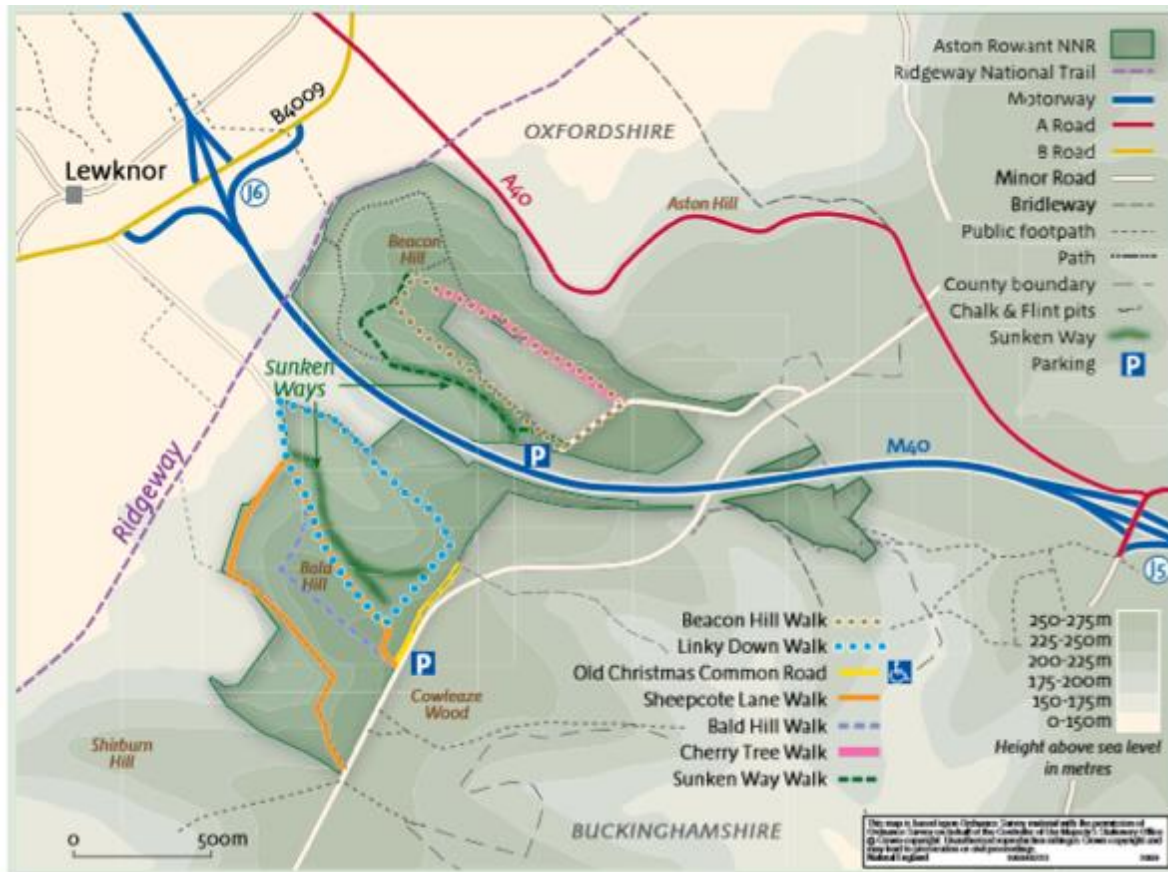
### 3. Footpaths

NPPF 98 states that “Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails”.

Lewknor Parish has a network of footpaths, as shown on the Oxfordshire County Council Definitive Footpath Map, Sheet SU79NW



All the footpaths in the Parish are generally well maintained. Paths are used extensively for recreational purposes, such as keeping fit, dog walking and observing wildlife. Many villagers and visitors to the area regularly walk the local footpaths. The map below, which appears in the Natural England Guide to the Aston Rowant Nature Reserve indicates the variety of walks in the Chilterns National Landscape (previously the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty). The reserve is open access, however the paths identified on



the map are not physically way marked on the ground and are not all public rights of way.

Map courtesy of Natural England Aston Rowant Nature Reserve publication ISBN 978-1-84754-135-6

In consultation at a Parish event, parishioners gave feedback and offered suggestions for maintaining, improving and extending the network of paths available for their enjoyment and recreation.

<b>Place</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Improvement</b>
Track bed of former railway line to Watlington starting from junction of Hill Road and B4009	Create a new right of way along the disused railway line towards Watlington	Provision of a safe route between the communities of Lewknor, Pyrton and Watlington
Burial Path from Postcombe to St Margaret's, Lewknor	Footpath linking Lewknor and Postcombe	Better signage and identification would encourage greater usage of this historically significant path
Create a new path from Barley Close to St Margaret's Churchyard	No existing Path	Create a safe alternative to using narrow, busy Weston Road, particularly for those heading to and from the school with young children
Hill Road from the B4009 to toward the Hills and Cowlease Woods	Signposts and Information Board required	Hill Road links the bus stops and the village to the Ridgeway and the Chilterns National Landscape. At the point Hill Road leaves the B4009, there are poorly sited signs to guide people without local knowledge
Track by Moorcourt Barns (TVR Garage)	Part of Lower Icknield Way which has disappeared and does not show on recent OS maps	Reinstate the sections of footpath needed to link this track through to the route within the Shirburn and Pyrton Parishes

## 4. Open Spaces

The network of footpaths, together with the largely open areas over which they run, constitute a significant resource in terms of open spaces available for community enjoyment. It is not possible to review the open spaces of Lewknor Parish without considering the dramatic impact of the Chiltern escarpment which dominates the southern vistas of the Parish. However, the protection afforded to the Chilterns National Landscape (previously the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) in section 87 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and the stronger protection given to the Aston Rowant Nature Reserve in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 mean that this document does not have to concern itself with protection, other than commenting that the rules for agricultural development should not allow for visually obtrusive development.

The following descriptive paragraphs are included as they help guide thoughts on Green Spaces in and around the settlement areas

“The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) covers 324 square miles (833 square kilometres) of countryside, stretching from the River Thames in southern Oxfordshire up through Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire to Hitchin in Hertfordshire. Its designation as an AONB in 1965 recognised that the Chiltern Hills contain some of the finest landscapes in the country which are worthy of protection at the highest level.

The Chilterns AONB is a living, working area of countryside whose character has been shaped by people for centuries. Farmland covers nearly two-thirds of the AONB and over one-fifth of the area is wooded. Attractive villages with brick and flint cottages nestle in quiet valleys. The chalk rock underlying the Chilterns gives rise to hillsides of velvety chalk downland. Water stored in the rock emerges from springs to feed clear, sparkling chalk streams”<sup>4</sup>.

The Chiltern escarpment rising in the south east of the Parish to a height of 240 metres and lying within the Chilterns National Landscape is a particularly striking feature with two distinct hills, Beacon Hill and Bald Hill. It is also the site of Aston Rowant National Nature Reserve, which covers an area of 159.1 hectares and is also a European Special Area of Conservation. Most of it is a 128.5 hectare biological site of special scientific interest (SSSI). The SSSI is listed as a Grade 1 site<sup>5</sup>. The reserve is home to plants and butterflies of chalk grassland. The flowers include a number of orchids and the Chiltern gentian; the butterflies include the silver spotted skipper and the Adonis Blue. As well as chalk grassland, the reserve contains woodland with beech, yew, and juniper. The area is also famous for the successful reintroduction of the Red Kite.

Lewknor Parish has farmland, wooded areas, settlement areas with brick and flint cottages, chalk escarpments and a spring which rises in Lewknor allotment and flows as a stream through the Parish. A review has been carried out of all the remaining Open Spaces in the

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<sup>4</sup> From the Chilternsaonb.org “About the Chilterns”

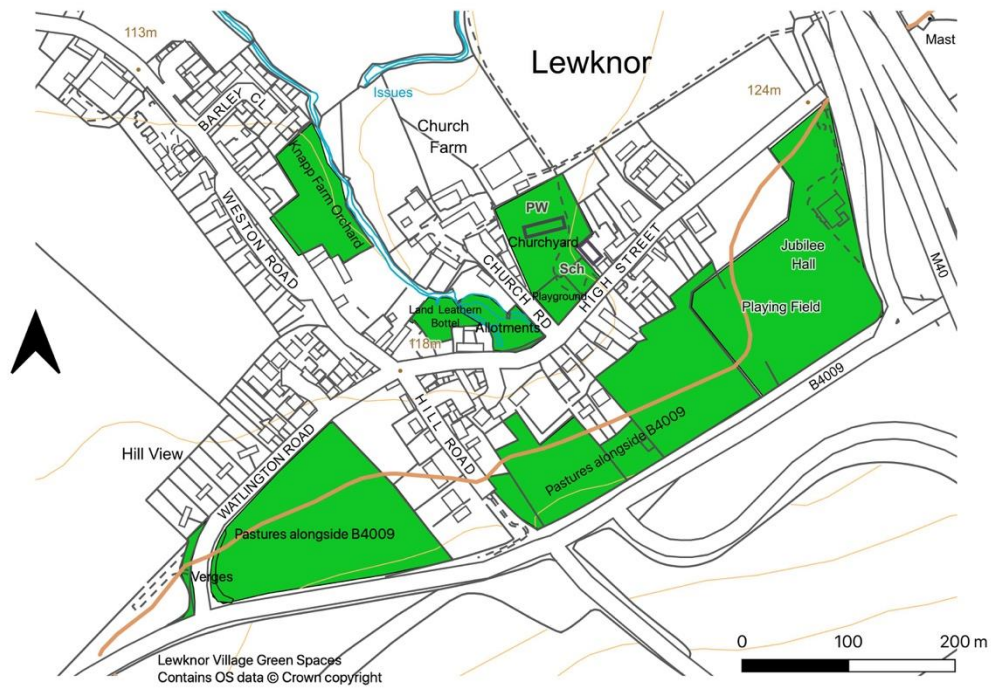
<sup>5</sup> A Nature Conservation Review

Parish. This review was based on the extensive local knowledge of members of the Neighbourhood Planning team and Parish Councillors. The following were identified as being of significant value to the community:

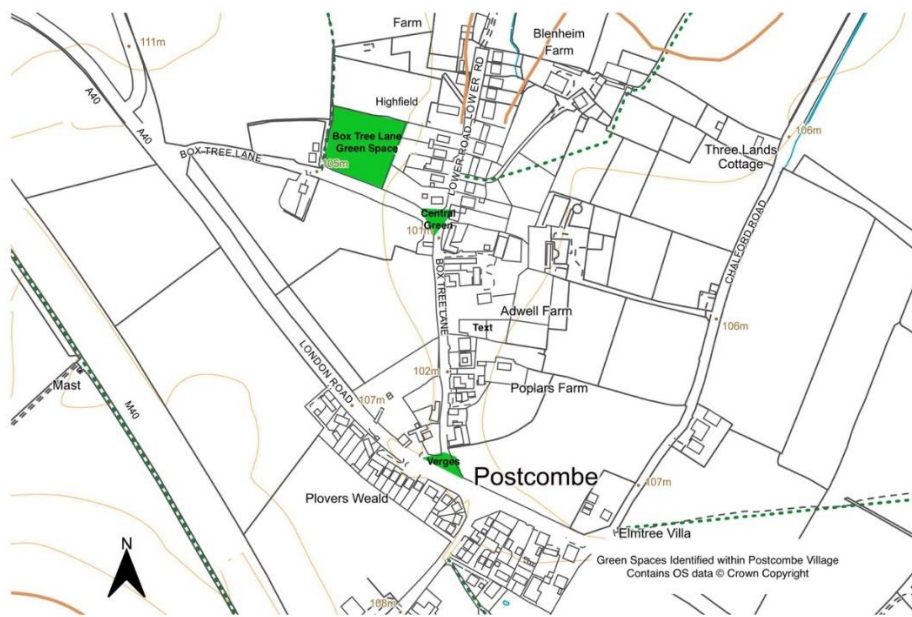
<b>Key</b>	<b>Name of Green Space</b>	<b>Village</b>	<b>Significance of Green Space</b>
A	Recreation Ground	Lewknor	Site of Village Hall, Pre-school, playing field, children's play area and car park
B	Knapp Farm Orchard	Lewknor	Remains of ancient orchard within the Conservation Area allowing views toward the church
C	St Margaret's Churchyard	Lewknor	Consecrated burial ground
D	School Playground	Lewknor	An open area in close proximity to listed buildings, the Church and the School, allowing good views of them
E	Allotments and former watercress	Lewknor	Historic site where chalk springs rise and watercress beds were sited
F	Land between Leathern Bottle and the watercress beds	Lewknor	Important area of biodiversity in the heart of the village linking with the chalk stream and former watercress beds
G	Pastures alongside B4009	Lewknor	Part of Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty before B4009 reroute, important green buffer between village and road
H	Verges at Entrance to Village	Lewknor	Wide grass area on roadsides with hedges extending country feel toward the village centre also allowing views toward the Conservation Area
I	Wood area next to Box Tree House	Postcombe	A large wooded area with tree preservation orders on some trees elevated from the road, highlighted by some Postcombe residents as having the potential to become a village playground/recreation area.
J	Junction of A40 and Box Tree Lane	Postcombe	A grassed open area in the approximate centre of the village
K	Junction of Box Tree Lane and Lower Road	Postcombe	A small triangular grassed area in close proximity to listed buildings.
L	St Lawrence's Churchyard	South Weston	Consecrated burial ground



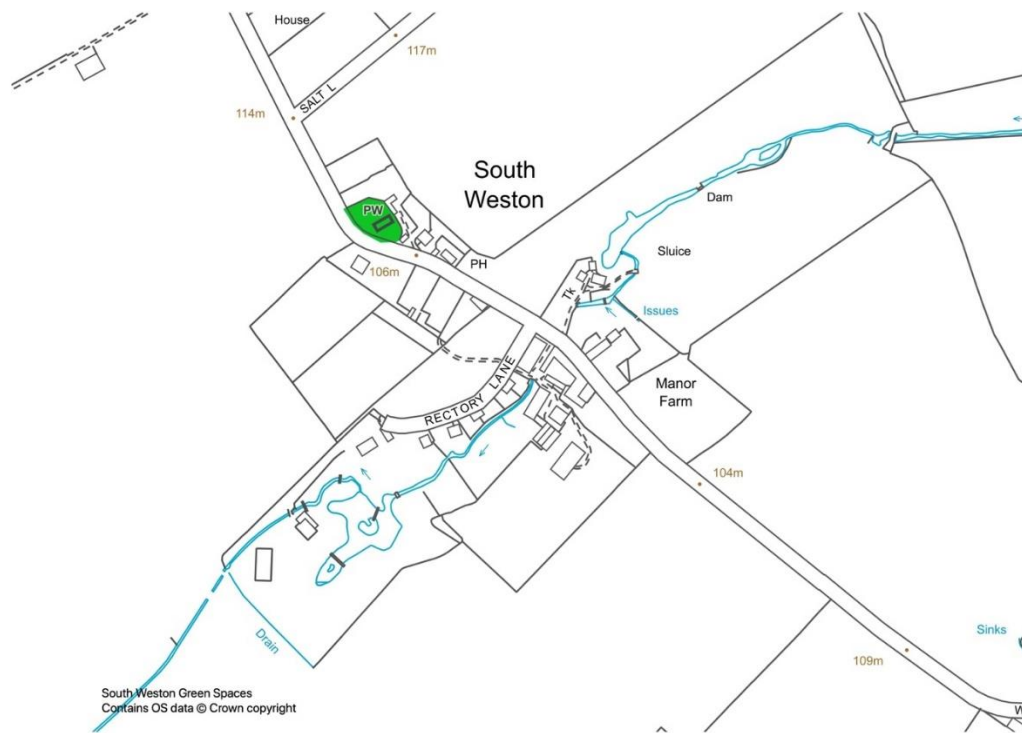
The location of each of the spaces considered as potential green spaces, is shown on the following maps:



Lewknor



Postcombe



South Weston

A number of options are available in order to protect open spaces:

1. Designation as a Local Green Space
2. Agreements with land-owners
3. Community Purchase - in some instances local communities have purchased important sites to ensure that they remain in community control in perpetuity
4. Village Green status
5. Local Nature Reserve – A Local Nature Reserve (LNR) provide people with special opportunities to study or learn about nature or simply to enjoy it. Local Nature Reserves are designated by district or county councils and the Local Authority must control the LNR through ownership, lease or agreement with the owner
6. Assets of Community Value - The Community Right to Bid gives community groups a fairer chance to prepare and bid to buy community buildings and facilities that are important to them. This could include greenspaces, village shops and pubs. The Community Right to Bid covers private as well as public assets. It is important to nominate land and buildings for them to be registered as assets of community value. If something on this register is offered for sale, the community then has up to six months to prepare a bid.

However, only the “Designation as a Local Green Space” option comes within the scope of a Neighbourhood Plan. There are statutory bodies which have their own rules and regulations covering the other options.

Twelve sites suggested by parishioners, set out in the following tables, have therefore been tested for inclusion using the Local Green Space criteria.

Each of the open space sites has been assessed against a number of criteria as follows:

Key		Village	Important village open space?	Landowner	Current protection	Current protection adequate?
<b>A</b>	<b>Jubilee Hall and Recreation Park</b>	Lewknor	Yes	Parish Council	Restrictive Covenant	Yes
<b>B</b>	<b>Knapp Farm Orchard</b>	Lewknor	Yes	Private Owner	None	No
<b>C</b>	<b>St Margaret's Churchyard</b>	Lewknor	Yes	Church of England	Consecrated church burial ground	Yes
<b>D</b>	<b>School Playground</b>	Lewknor	Yes	Church of England	None	No
<b>E</b>	<b>Allotments and former watercress beds</b>	Lewknor	Yes	All Souls College, Oxford	None	No
<b>F</b>	<b>Land between Leathern Bottle and the watercress beds</b>	Lewknor	Yes	All Souls College, Oxford	None	No
<b>G</b>	<b>Pastures alongside B4009</b>	Lewknor	Yes	Various private owners	None	No
<b>H</b>	<b>Verges at village entrance</b>	Lewknor	Yes	Oxfordshire County Council Highways Dept	None	No
<b>I</b>	<b>Wooded area next to Box Tree House</b>	Postcombe	Yes	Unknown	Unknown	No
<b>J</b>	<b>Junction of London Road and Box Tree Lane</b>	Postcombe	Yes	Oxfordshire County Council Highways Dept	Degree of protection by virtue of its contribution to road safety	No
<b>K</b>	<b>Junction of Box Tree Lane and Lower Road</b>	Postcombe	Yes	Oxfordshire County Council Highways Dept	Degree of protection by virtue of its contribution to road safety	No
<b>L</b>	<b>St Lawrence's Churchyard</b>	South Weston	Yes	Church of England	Consecrated church burial ground	Yes

The table above shows that, following assessment, three of the sites (Sites A, C and L) are adequately protected. Nine of the twelve sites are inadequately protected and these are therefore considered further below.

## 5. Local Green Spaces

### 5.1. National Planning Policy Framework

In order to arrive at the allocation of Green Spaces it is important to look at the criteria for designation of green spaces under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The opening paragraph of the NPPF on Open Space and Recreation<sup>6</sup> says:

“Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.”

Furthermore the NPPF<sup>7</sup> states:

“The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Designating land as Local Green Space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.”

The NPPF<sup>8</sup> further states that designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. The “designation should only be used where the green space is:

- a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- b) 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
- c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land”

Any land proposed as a Green Space should not:

- have planning permission within which the Green Space could not be accommodated;
- have been allocated for development in the relevant Neighbourhood Plan or the Local Plan, unless it can be shown that the Local Plan housing allocation is not strategic and can be re-located somewhere else in the neighbourhood plan area; or

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<sup>6</sup> NPPF 96

<sup>7</sup> NPPF 99

<sup>8</sup> NPPF 100

alternatively that the Local Green Space could be incorporated within the site as part of the allocated development.

It is therefore worth considering, whether some or all of the inadequately protected land is suitable for designation as Local Green Spaces.

## 5.2. Description

<b>Code</b>	<b>SD1</b>	<b>SD2</b>	<b>SD3</b>
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Name of Space</b>	<b>Space description</b>	<b>Has a map of the space been provided?</b>
Site B	Knapp Farm Orchard	Paddock containing the remains of an historic orchard	Yes
Site D	School Playground	Area of asphalt and grass in front of Lewknor School	Yes
Site E	Allotments and former watercress beds	Former watercress beds at site of springs now cultivated as allotment	Yes
Site F	Land between the Leathern Bottle and the watercress beds	Mostly an area that is unmanaged and is a mix of grass, shrubs, small and large trees, but with two small areas of garden within it	Yes
Site G	Pasture alongside B4009	Pastures of varying size between the B4009 and the village	Yes
Site H	Verges at village entrance	Grass verges at the entrance to and along Watlington Road	Yes
Site I	Plot next to Box Tree House	Rectangular plot, wild and unmaintained in Box Tree Lane	Yes
Site J	Junction of London Road and Box Tree Lane	Open area of land in centre of Postcombe on either side of the entrance to Box Tree Lane	Yes
Site K	Junction of Box Tree Lane and Lower Road	Small triangle of grass and trees in centre of junction	Yes

Firstly, an assessment of the land has been carried out against the key Local Green Space criteria, all of which must be met:

<b>Table 1</b>							
<b>Code</b>		<b>1.1</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>1.3</b>		<b>1.4</b>	<b>1.5</b>
<b>Criteria</b>		<b>Land is not subject of a planning permission for development</b>	<b>Space is not allocated or proposed for development in the Local or Neighbourhood Plan</b>	<b>The space is not an extensive tract of land and is local in character</b>		<b>The space is within close proximity of the community it serves</b>	<b>The space is demonstrably special to the local community and holds particular local significance</b>
Site B	Knapp Farm Orchard	Yes	Yes	This is not an extensive site	Total area is 0.61 Ha	Space is within the built area of the village	This was a popular choice on a display of Green Spaces
Site D	School Playground	Yes	Yes	This is not an extensive site	Total area is 0.20 Ha	Space is within the built area of the village	This was a popular choice on a display of Green Spaces
Site E	Allotments and former watercress beds	Yes	Yes	This is not an extensive site	Total area is 0.23 Ha	Space is within the built area of the village	This was a popular choice on a display of Green Spaces
Site F	Land between Leathern Bottle and the former watercress beds	Yes	Yes	This is not an extensive site	Total area is 0.15 Ha	Space is within the built area of the village	This site provides a green area within the centre of the village



<b>Criteria</b>		<b>Land is not subject of a planning permission for development</b>	<b>Space is not allocated or proposed for development in the Local or Neighbourhood Plan</b>	<b>The space is not an extensive tract of land and is local in character</b>		<b>The space is within close proximity of the community it serves</b>	<b>The space is demonstrably special to the local community and holds particular local significance</b>
Site G	Pastures alongside B4009	Yes	Yes	This is an extensive site	Total area is 4.2 Ha	Space is outside the Settlement Boundary	It was queried why these could not be listed as a Green Space
Site H	Verges at Lewknor village entrance	Yes	Yes	This is not an extensive site	Total area is 0.69 Ha	Space is outside the Settlement Boundary	This was a popular choice on a display of Green Spaces
Site I	Wooded area in Box Tree Lane	Yes	Yes	This is not an extensive site	Total area is 0.65 Ha	Space is within the built area of the village	Requested as an additional site by Postcombe residents
Site J	Junction of London Road and Box Tree Lane	Yes	Yes	This is not an extensive site	Total area is 0.05 Ha	Space is within the built area of the village	This scored highly during a survey of Green Spaces
Site K	Junction of Box Tree Lane and Lower Road	Yes	Yes	This is not an extensive site	Total area is 0.01 Ha	Space is within the built area of the village	This scored highly during a survey of Green Spaces

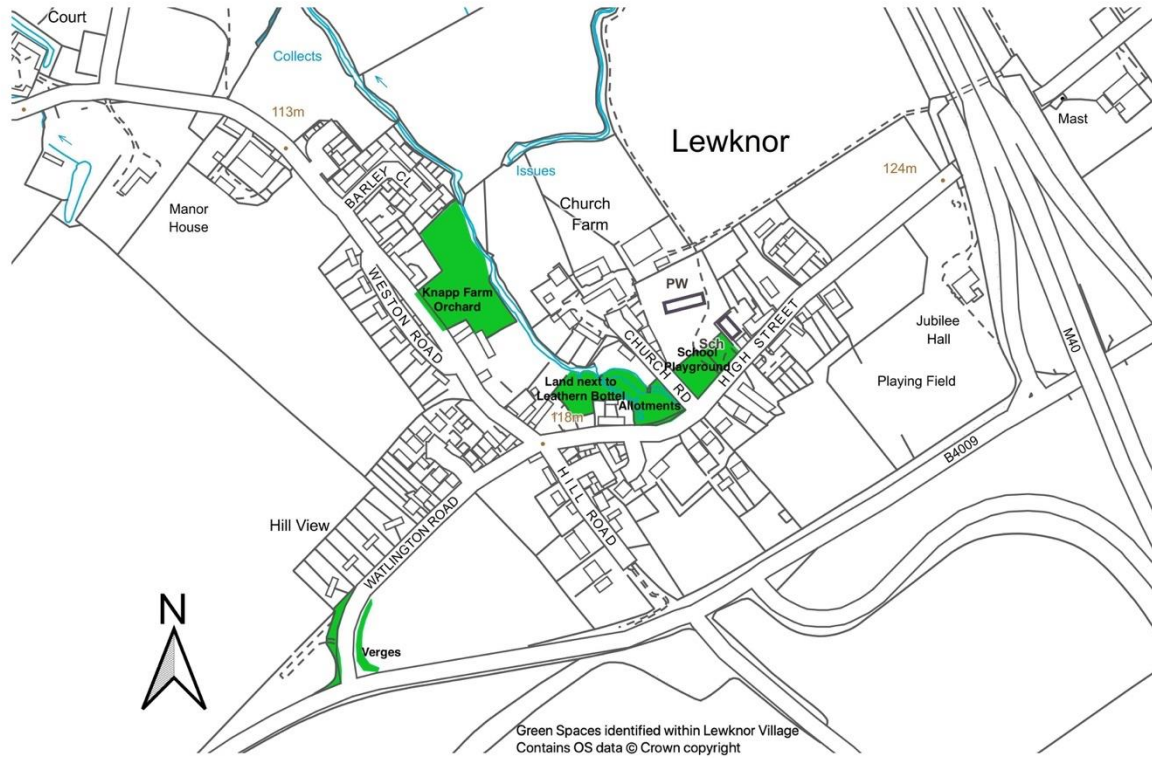
The pastures along the B4009 cumulatively form an extensive tract of land and therefore do not meet the criteria for designation as a Local Green Space. Additionally they are also outside the settlement boundary and as such are not an area identified as available for development by this plan.

The grass verges in Postcombe at the junction of London Road and Box Tree Lane and at grass triangle at the junction of Box Tree Lane and Lower Road were considered against the criteria and, whilst meeting these, were felt to be sufficiently well protected by virtue of the road safety aspects relating to their position. These have therefore not been considered further.

The six remaining sites now need to be considered in greater detail and assessed further against additional criteria.

### 5.3. Lewknor Sites

All the sites have well-defined boundaries in Lewknor Village which are readily identifiable both on maps and plans and on the ground.



*Green Space sites identified within Lewknor*

## Knapp Farm Orchard

The site lies within the Conservation Area and runs from Weston Road between the barn at Knapp Farm and the Victorian Houses, through which runs the Lewknor Brook. The orchard is used for grazing livestock, normally either sheep or ponies. This field is special to the community; it is a haven of tranquillity close to the centre of the village with a view across the field towards St Margaret's Church, and Hall Barn. The field makes an important contribution to the setting and visual amenity of this part of the village. It adds to the rich biodiversity of the area due to the wildlife which can enter this field with its hedges and a stream from the fields beyond.

The freehold of the land is held by All Souls College, Oxford as part of Knapp Farm.

One comment indicative of how people viewed this space was "It is important that the village keeps its open spaces so that it doesn't lose its rural feel, particularly as the new developments further down the (Weston) road make it further to get into the countryside".



*Knapp Farm Orchard and view to church*

## Lewknor School Playground

The playground sits in front of the school, between the High Street and the churchyard within the Conservation Area. A picket fence surrounds the playground divided by a public right of way leading to the lychgate into the churchyard, on one side of which is a grass area, on the other side closest to the school buildings is a tarmacked area. It is also used by villagers to access the footpaths beyond the church. Mature beech trees are a feature of this green space. The current open space allows a clear view of the listed church and school buildings.

Comments received during the Green Spaces survey indicate that villagers have fond memories of the area and the part it plays in village life. Further comment was received that this important green space in the middle of Lewknor added to the character of the village.



*Lewknor School Playground and church*

## Lewknor Allotments and former Watercress Beds



*Former watercress beds*

This area contains two chalk springs, around which the village originally evolved, allotments and former watercress beds. The allotments are sited in the centre of the village below road level and bounded by the spring fed streams. A small area, it is generally well tended and very popular with villagers, indeed there is typically a waiting list. Lined with mature trees, it is an area rich in wildlife. Adjacent to the allotments are former watercress beds providing important fresh water habitats and wider biodiversity value.



*Allotments*

### Land between the Leathern Bottle and the former Watercress Beds

There is an area of land lying between the Leathern Bottle and the Allotments and old watercress beds that has two small areas of garden within it but is mostly an area that is unmanaged and is a mix of grass, shrubs, small and large trees. This borders the spring-fed brook running away from the old watercress beds and provides a rich wildlife habitat especially as it provides continuity with the area around the old watercress beds.



Land between Leathern Bottle and former watercress beds

## Verges at entrance to Lewknor Village

Looking into Lewknor and particularly the conservation area presents a rural village vista and provides an open and inviting entrance to the village down Watlington Road. It is framed by extensive grass verges and hedgerows, with pasture and arable fields behind, and gives open views to the farmland beyond. It provides a natural transition from the village to the Chilterns National Landscape, which sits the other side of the B4009.



*Verges at entrance to Lewknor village*

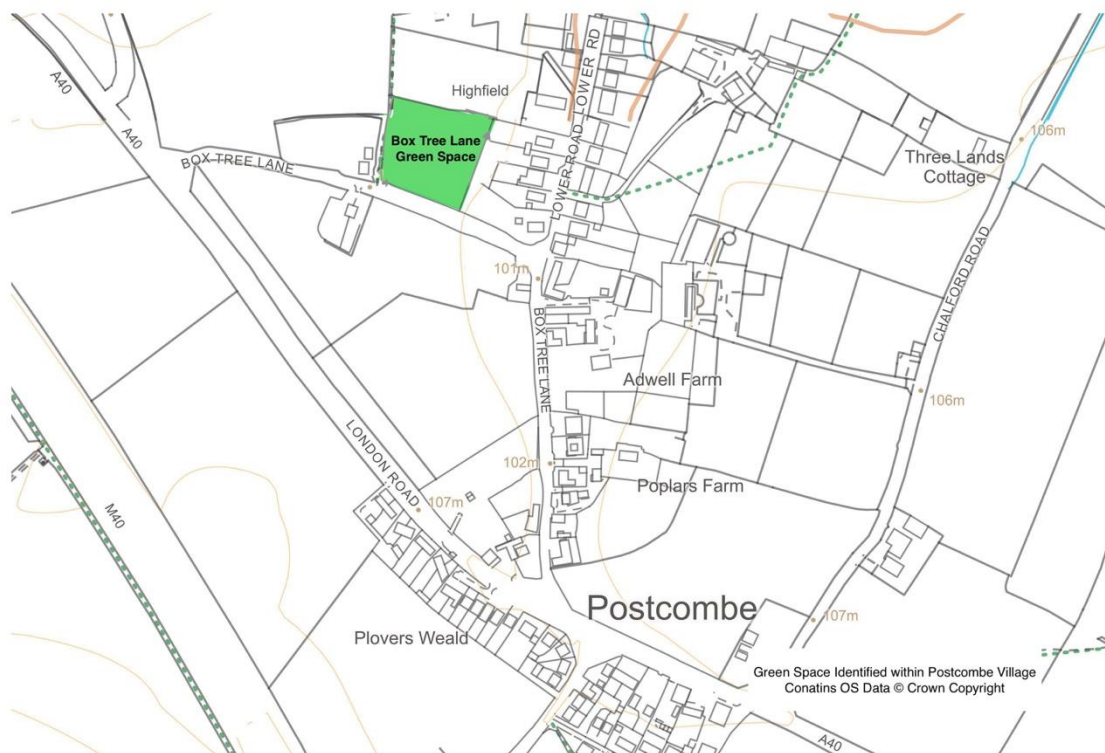


## 5.4. Postcombe Site

### Area of wood at Box Tree Lane

Postcombe Village has no public open space other than the green areas at the various road junctions, which are certainly not large or safe enough to hold a well-supported event. Space to hold public functions in the village is dependent on the generosity of private land or business owners.

The closest playgrounds and recreation areas are in Lewknor or Tetsworth, in other words a car drive away. Comments have been made that the land could have the potential to provide a recreation area.



*Green Space sites identified within Postcombe*



*Wooded land green space on Box Tree Lane, Postcombe*

## 5.5. Assessment against Criteria

These six sites are now assessed against the required criteria:

Code		2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6
<b>Criteria</b>		The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its visual amenity value (beauty)	The proposed space is of particular local historic significance	The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its recreational value	The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its tranquillity	The proposed space is of particular local significance because of the richness of wildlife	The proposed space is of particular local significance because of another reason
<b>Site B</b>	<b>Knapp Farm Orchard</b>	Yes This site has high visual amenity value. It is an open field with a stream running down one boundary	Yes The site is within the Conservation Area. As a former orchard, it is an example of biodiversity history	No This is private land, though it is frequently rented to villagers for grazing of livestock	Yes Valued by the community for conserving the rural, open and tranquil nature of the village by offering a peaceful outlook and a restful space	Yes Hedgerows, streams and mature trees provide habitats for many species	Yes It is a valued rural space within the conservation area the loss of which would significantly change the character of the village
<b>Site D</b>	<b>School Playground</b>	Yes This site has a high visual amenity value allowing open views to listed buildings on three sides	Yes The site is within the Conservation Area. There is anecdotal evidence of this being the site of village fetes and gatherings prior to the opening of Jubilee Park	Yes Both as a school playground and a recreational area after school hours	Yes When not being used as a recreational area this is a peaceful space within the middle of the village, associated with the church and churchyard	Yes Mature trees providing nesting for many species of birds	Yes Villagers have fond memories of the area and the part it plays in village life
<b>Site E</b>	<b>Allotments and former watercress beds</b>	Yes The secluded former watercress beds have been attractively reclaimed by nature	Yes Chalk springs rise here which led to the siting of the village and former watercress beds	Yes The allotments provide a recreational activity for villagers	Yes Provides a secluded and restful space in the centre of the village	Yes Hedgerows, streams and mature trees provide habitats for many species	Yes It provides outdoor activity and a source of fresh produce

<b>Criteria</b>		The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its visual amenity value (beauty)	The proposed space is of particular local historic significance	The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its recreational value	The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its tranquillity	The proposed space is of particular local significance because of the richness of wildlife	The proposed space is of particular local significance because of another reason
<b>Site F</b>	<b>Land between Leathern Bottle and the watercress beds</b>	Yes Currently has limited visual amenity due to large hedge	No	No	Yes This site is large green area in the centre of the village	Yes Hedgerows, streams and mature trees provide habitats and wildlife corridor for many species as it borders the old watercress beds	Yes It is a valued rural space within the conservation area the loss of which would significantly change the character of the village
<b>Site H</b>	<b>Verges at entrance to Lewknor village</b>	Yes As a feature of the entrance to the village the verges give a sense of open space which reflects the wider setting of the village on the edge of the Oxford plain	No	No	No	Yes Hedgerows and trees provide habitats for many species	Yes The verges contribute to the rural and low-density impression of the entrance to the village which dips into the heart of the settlement, enhanced by the first houses sitting below the level of the road
<b>Site I</b>	<b>Wooded area next to Box Tree House</b>	No	No	Yes Identified in the past as potential site of playground	Yes This site is a raised green space with large protected trees on the edge of the village	Yes A natural wooded area with a number of protected trees, providing a space rich in biodiversity	Yes Potential site for a playground/recreational area

## 5.6. Conclusion of Assessment

<b>Code</b>		<b>CA1</b>		<b>CA2</b>	<b>CA3</b>
<b>Criteria</b>		Have all the Local Green Space criteria in Table 2 been met?	Why is the area considered to be demonstrably special to the local community?	Is the space suitable as a Local Green Space?	Landowner details
<b>Site B</b>	<b>Knapp Farm Orchard</b>	Yes	Visual Amenity value; Tranquility; Richness of Biodiversity; Character of area	Yes	All Souls College, Oxford
<b>Site D</b>	<b>School Playground</b>	Yes	Historic significance; Community value; Tranquility	Yes	Church of England
<b>Site E</b>	<b>Allotments and former watercress beds</b>	Yes	Visual Amenity value; Recreational value; Tranquility; Richness of Biodiversity	Yes	All Souls College
<b>Site F</b>	<b>Land between Leathern Bottle and watercress beds</b>	Yes	Visual Amenity Value; Historic significance; Richness of Biodiversity; Character of area	Yes	All Souls College, Oxford
<b>Site H</b>	<b>Verges at Lewknor village entrance</b>	Yes	Visual Amenity Value	Yes	Oxfordshire Highways
<b>Site I</b>	<b>Plot in Box Tree Lane</b>	Yes	Current Richness of Biodiversity; Tranquility	Yes	Crown House Properties (Oxford) Limited

## 5.7. Independent Examination

The independent examiner as part of his review of the neighbourhood plan considered the proposed Local Green Spaces and concluded that site I in Box Tree Lane, Postcombe did not have the characteristics to warrant its designation and therefore recommended its deletion from the list of proposed Local Green Spaces.

## 5.8. Future Management

The Parish is well served by Open Spaces. The Chilterns National Landscape with its embedded National Nature Reserve is a particularly valuable asset, as are the green spaces in and around the villages. The rural feel they generate is very important in retaining the character of the village.

Future development must retain a balance between the built-up areas of the Parish and the open spaces, and any significant future development should have provisions to ensure that balance is maintained. This process should be informed by the South & Vale Green Infrastructure Strategy.<sup>9</sup>

## 5.9. Conclusion

Twelve sites were originally considered:

- Three sites - sites A (Recreation Ground), C (St Margaret's churchyard) and K (St Lawrence's churchyard) were felt to be adequately protected, therefore they were not considered further

Nine sites were considered further:

- Site F (the pastures alongside the B4009) does not qualify as green space because the cumulative area forms an extensive tract.
- Site J (the grass verge in Postcombe at the junction of London Road and Box Tree Lane) and site K (the grass triangle in Postcombe at the junction of Box Tree Lane and Lower Road) were considered against the criteria and, whilst meeting these, were felt to be sufficiently well protected by virtue of the road safety aspects relating to their position. These have therefore not been considered further.

Six sites were put forward in the submission version of the plan:

- Site I, a wooded area in Box Tree Lane, Postcombe was not considered appropriate to be designated as a Local Green Space by the Independent Examiner for the Plan.

Following the examination, the following five sites are considered appropriate to be designated as Local Green Spaces as per NPPF 99 and NPPF 100

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<sup>9</sup> South and Vale Green Infrastructure Strategy Sept 2017

- B - Knapp Farm Orchard
- D - School Playground
- E - Allotments and former watercress beds
- F - Land between Leathern Bottle and the watercress beds
- H - Verges at entrance to Lewknor village, and

Any future development must retain a balance between built-up areas and open spaces and make specific open spaces provision.