



Policy Document

Requests for Sale of Amenity Land

Adopted: Policy, Governance & Finance Committee on 30/09/2024. Minute no: F538
Review Date: 01/10/2026

Policy:

Witney Town Council values all open spaces and amenity lands in its ownership across Witney. These areas, regardless of size or location contribute to the visible, recreational, and biodiverse landscape across the town. Grass areas in particular aid drainage and help mitigate against surface water flooding. Therefore, the Town Council resolves to deny any requests from residents to purchase Town Council land, to extend their household area.

Reasoning:

This policy was established to meet the Council's aim in respect of Climate Change and protecting the environment as areas of green space that are important for biodiversity. It also clarifies the position of the Council on requests to purchase or re-assign parcels of amenity land, green spaces and other environmental features which make up its green space resource.

Examples of green space resource include:

- playing fields
- parks and gardens
- areas used for informal recreation
- courtyards and amenity open space in residential developments including incidental areas of green space such as grass verges
- informal provision for children and young people
- allotments and community gardens
- cemeteries and churchyards
- local nature reserves
- green corridors
- river corridors

Environmental Aims:

- Protect and maintain its range of existing green infrastructure assets
- Provide informal recreation and access to nature
- Provide safe green routes for pedestrians and cyclists linking accessible green spaces
- Support biodiversity conservation through the management of existing accessible natural green space and through the restoration and creation of habitats
- Mitigate and adapt to climate change through natural drainage, flood water storage, carbon capture, and pollution and microclimate control.

Other reasons include:

- The Land is part of an existing or potential strategic or locally important open space
- The area may be deficient in public open space as defined in the adopted Local Plan
- Area contains a Scheduled Ancient Monument / Tree Preservation Order or encompasses Protected Hedgerows
- Land has a title covenant that restricts its use or requires it to be retained as public open space
- Land sale will cause detrimental effects within neighbouring or nearby properties
- The Boundary of land is shared by more than one property
- Land sale will reduce the width of any public rights of way corridors
- Land sale will adversely affect highway sight lines
- Land sale would impact upon or cause loss of local amenity / recreational value
- Land sale would inhibit access to other Council land and/or increase maintenance costs for any retained landscaped areas
- Land sale would result in loss of trees / shrubs / hedges
- The land is suitable for development and / or may be of interest to other parties and best value will be obtained only if it is offered for sale on the open market
- The Council has other foreseeable operational use of the land