

CLIMATE, BIODIVERSITY & PLANNING

Date: 13th October 2020

Title: Request to Purchase Land at Burwell Close

Contact Officer: Adam Clapton – Office Manager

Background

The Town Council designates this piece of land as ‘amenity land’ and it would have been transferred into its ownership when the estate was built during the 1990’s for this purpose.

The definition of amenity land, as listed on the Planning Portal glossary of terms is:

‘A positive element or elements that contribute to the overall character or enjoyment of an area. For example, open land, trees, historic buildings and the inter-relationship between them, or less tangible factors such as tranquillity.’

Current Situation (provided by the Operations & Estates Officer)

The Operations and Estates Office recently agreed the removal of several trees on this piece of land following complaints from residents. The trees were unsuitable for the location they were planted in which is why the ground still looks uneven due to the tree base that was there and the lack of grass due to where it had limited light due to the previous trees canopy. The grass has now started to regrow in this area since the removal of the tree. The Council replaced the removed trees with some that are more suitable to this location.



The Town Council owned land in this area is marked blue on this map. With the remaining areas still being maintained, the loss of this area would result in a long, dark and narrow passageway between what would be the new fence and the large hedge on private land on the other side.

Environmental impact

- The loss of amenity space/green land in this area.

Risk

While land purchase requests are usually considered on their own case by case basis, the committee should consider any planning obligations, covenants, wishes of neighbouring properties and the potential for further such requests in its decision making.

Financial implications

- The resident is offering to buy the land and cover the costs of the land transfer.
- If the sale were to go ahead, although marginal, there would be a saving on the Grounds Maintenance Contract.

Recommendations

Member are invited to note the report; and,

1. Consider the request for the purchase of land from the Town Council adjacent to 10A Burwell Close, Witney.