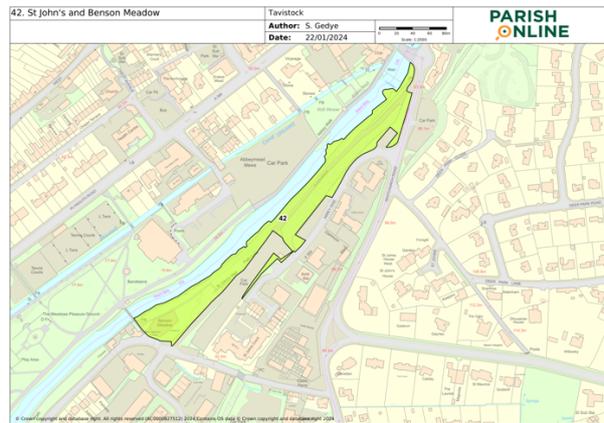


42. St John's Avenue and Benson's Meadow



Site	St John's Avenue and Benson's Meadow	
	Note – considered as single site as continuous along riverside with only a short section of wall separating the two spaces.	
1	Planning History - Does it meet LGS criteria?	Y
	Does the sites have an extant planning permission, which can still be implemented and would conflict with a Local Green Space designation? <i>(If yes, the site is considered not suitable for Local Green Space Designation)</i>	N
	Has the site been allocated for an incompatible Local Green Space use? <i>If yes, the site is considered not suitable for Local Green Space Designation</i>	N
	Any further points to raise from the Strategic Land Availability Assessment?	

2	Other Designations - Does it meet LGS criteria?	Y
	<p>Is the site covered by any of the following designations?</p> <p>Special Areas of Conservation; Special Protection Areas; Sites of Special Scientific Interest; Registered Parks and Gardens; Local Nature Reserves; Registered village greens; Common land; Strategic Green Space; Minerals Safeguarding Area</p> <p><i>If yes, the site is considered not suitable for Local Green Space Designation</i></p>	N
3	Proximity to Community - Does it meet LGS criteria?	Y
	<p>Is the site within 240m radius of 10 dwellings or more?</p> <p><i>If yes, the site is considered suitable for Local Green Space Designation due to its proximity to the community it serves</i></p>	Y
4	Local Character and Not Extensive Tract of Land - Does it meet LGS criteria?	Y
	<p>Is the site, or adjacent green spaces appropriate for Local Green Space taken together, larger than 10ha?</p> <p><i>If yes, the site is considered not suitable for Local Green Space Designation</i></p>	N
	<p>How does the site relate to the local area? Does the site feel part of the local area? Does the site connect physically, visually and/or socially to the area? Is the site distinct from its context by virtue of its size, land type or landscape features, e.g. what are its boundary conditions?</p> <p><i>Please provide justification below :</i></p> <p>The site is essentially a long thin riverside walkway extending from Abbey Bridge as far as the footbridge across the Tavy into The Meadows park. Alongside The Meadows and Pearce's Meadow this site is one of three that together provide a coherent recreational and riverside landscape very much valued and heavily used.</p> <p>As a strip of land with a footpath running through it, this particular area is mainly a wooded walking route. The exception to this is the skate park at its western end.</p> <p>Its main boundary features are the river Tavy on its long northern edge. Its southern boundary traces the line of the old railway embankment where on its upper, southern edge it runs along Abbey Rise road.</p>	
	The site should not be an extensive tract of land. How large is the site in comparison to the community it serves and areas of land in the vicinity?	

	<p><i>Please provide justification below:</i></p> <p>The site is an area of 1.39 Ha within a total parish area Of 1,330 Ha.</p>	
	<p>Is the extent of the size reasonable for its potential designation as a Local Green Space - How has the size of the site been decided? Does the site follow natural features or existing constraints? Does the whole site justify allocation as Local Green Space or is some of the site unnecessarily included? Is the site unusually large for its use?</p> <p><i>Please provide justification below:</i></p> <p>The site is reasonably defined on the basis of the land use, this being a wooded riverside walkway along with some areas of grass but more importantly, this containing a skate park.</p>	
5	Particular Local Significance - Does it meet LGS criteria?	Y
5.1	Beauty - Does it meet LGS criteria?	Y
	<p>Is the site discernibly beautiful or more beautiful than the surrounding areas?</p> <p><i>Is on south east bank of River Tavy, with trees (mainly deciduous) down to waters edge, so provides seasonal colour and variety viewed both from the path running through it and that on the opposite bank. On St Johns, the land (the embankment of an old railway) rises steeply to the south east of the path, and is woodland with a variety of mature trees, also visible from above.</i></p>	Y
	<p>Site visibility - Is the site visible from a public place? Are there views of the site from any key locations?</p> <p><i>The riverside aspect of the site is visible from the path on the opposite side of the river – a wide and popular traffic free link between town centre, parking and leisure facilities. The wooded slopes are visible from Bedford Car Park (the largest in the town). The top of the sloping woodland along St Johns borders Abbey Rise, a road with mixed residential and public (eg health centre) use, providing natural beauty. The eastern corner of the site borders Whitchurch Road, providing a patch of woodland alongside the pavement as a busy road approaches the town centre.</i></p>	Y
	<p>Is the site (or type of landscape) specifically mentioned in any relevant landscape character assessments, conservation area appraisals or similar documents?</p> <p><i>Within Tavistock Town Centre conservation area. The 2014 Management Plan mentions Bensons Meadow within the section on parks, and emphasises the importance of trees within the town as a whole.</i></p>	Y

	<p>Is the site covered by any landscape or similar designations?</p> <p><i>There is a Natural England designated “woodland corridor” on part of St Johns Avenue (the south eastern side, from border with Bensons Meadow, but not reaching Whitchurch Rd). [Visible on Parish Online, Natural England Green Infrastructure Framework – woodland corridors layer. [This part is also on the Natural England Habitats Priority Habitat Inventory, deciduous woodland category. [Visible on Parish Online, Natural England Habitats – priority habitat layer.]</i></p>	Y
	<p>Are there any cultural references to the site’s scenic quality?</p> <p>Some reference by 19th century writers including Mary Elizabeth Bray (see https://awalkinenglishweather.com/st-johns-chapel-tavistock/) and Rachel Evans in her book ‘Home Scences’.</p>	Y
	<p>Does the site bring interest from further afield to the local area?</p> <p><i>NCN27, a Devon coast to coast long distance cycle route, runs through the site, and touring cyclists, including some from overseas, are observed using it. Within that overall route, this section (and the adjoining section through the Meadows) is notable as combining the desirable features of being traffic-free, through natural scenery, and close to town centre facilities. It therefore adds to the overall appeal of this route & cycle tourism in Devon overall.</i></p>	Y
	<p>Does the green space help to improve the overall appearance of the area by means of its features?</p> <p><i>Part of green corridor beside the river which runs through the town centre. The band of tall trees provides visual screening of car parks and modern buildings.</i></p>	Y
5.2	Historic Significance - Does it meet LGS criteria?	Y
	<p>Are there any historic buildings, features or remains on the site? For example, listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, and war memorials.</p> <p>Small well linked by tradition to St John. Stone steps on river bank near Abbey Bridge which may date back to a route used before the bridge was built in 1764. The area is known to have contained the medieval chapel of St John and hermitage (now gone). See https://awalkinenglishweather.com/st-johns-chapel-tavistock/</p>	Y
	<p>Are there any historic landscape features on the site? For example, old hedgerows, ancient trees, historic ponds, historic garden features, ancient woodlands.</p>	Y

	<p>The site contains St Johns Well, recorded on the Historic Environment Record (MDV43885)</p> <p>Trees on upper slope are mature but not historic, as on embankment of railway closed in 1960s. While riverside trees appear similar age there is a long history of this as a natural, undeveloped riverbank.</p>	
	<p>Did the site play an important role in the historic development of the village or town? For example, part of the grounds for the manor house, site of an old railway station, village green.</p> <p>Has been used since mediaeval times in a variety of ways, including religious site and later road / rail route, arising from location across the river from the centre of the town and (pre-reformation) monastery. See https://awalkinenglishweather.com/st-johns-chapel-tavistock/</p>	Y
	<p>Did any important historic events take place on the site? Is there a longstanding event which takes place on the site? For example, fete's, well-dressing, maypole dancing, pace egg rolling, plays, market.</p> <p><i>See reference above re possible pre-reformation St Johns Eve celebrations. In recent history The Meadows, close by, is the main setting for community events. This site supports that role by providing an attractive walkable route to them from residential areas in south east of town.</i></p>	?
5.3	Recreational Value - Does it meet LGS criteria?	Y
	<p>Is there evidence or is it feasible that the site is used for playing sport or is it included in the playing pitch strategy to deliver sports provisions?</p> <p><i>Informal rather than competitive sport.</i></p>	?
	<i>Which Sport? Skatepark and single basketball hoop.</i>	
	Is this sports provision free?	Y
	<p>Is it good quality?</p> <p><i>Case for replacing skatepark with improved design made elsewhere in NDP. Basketball hoop appears similar age.</i></p>	N
	Are there better facilities nearby?	N
	Does the Green space incorporate play provision or is it included in the play strategy to deliver new play provision? What is the quality of the play area?	?

	<i>Depends what the distinction is between sport / play. These facilities are designed for / used by older children / young people for self-organised activities.</i>	
	<p>Are there any other play provisions within a 240m for local playable space or 600m for strategic play space?</p> <p><i>The Meadows, with variety of playground equipment and open space is reached by a footbridge across the river at the western end of Bensons Meadow. However, this provision is with respect to a play area not a purposefully designed skate park.</i></p>	Y
	<p>Is there evidence or is it feasible that the site is used for informal recreation? Can the site be accessed easily? Are there desire-lines present on site?</p> <p><i>The skatepark is regularly used. Bensons Meadow is also one of the few grassed spaces within town where dogs are allowed off the lead.</i></p>	Y
	<p>Does the site incorporate any recreational routes, e.g. bridleways, PRoWs, National Cycle Routes, key pedestrian and cycle links?</p> <p><i>Surfaced step free path which is part of NCN27 runs from cycle bridge linking Bensons Meadow to the Meadows, through Bensons Meadow to become the wider traffic free path known as St Johns Avenue. See note in 5.1 on importance of this as cycle route through the town. Riverside Car Park connects directly to the site near the St Johns Avenue / Benson's Meadow boundary. There is also a gate to Pixon Lane at the western end of Bensons Meadow. These routes are lit, and together provide a key part of the network of pedestrian / cycle paths connecting town centre facilities to the southern part of Tavistock.</i></p>	Y
5.4	Tranquillity - Does it meet LGS criteria?	Y/N
	<p>Is the site considered to be tranquil? If yes, what features make it feel tranquil?</p> <p><i>Well away from traffic, with sounds of river & trees. People tend to stroll rather than rush here.</i></p>	Y
	<p>Does it enhance the feeling of tranquillity within the local area through a feeling of remoteness?</p> <p><i>It's not remote, but is more tranquil even than the attractive path the other side of the river, due to shielding by trees.</i></p>	?
	<p>Does it provide an area of tranquillity within a busy setting by hiding man-made structures such as roads, power-lines or lighting and by reducing the appearance of noise and light impacts?</p>	Y

	<i>Plays important role in concealing car parks (Riverside and Bedford) and buildings, not just for users of the space, but through how the trees appear in other viewpoints, eg from Abbey Rise or from the other side of the river.</i>	
5.5	Richness in Wildlife - Does it meet LGS criteria?	Y/N
	Is the site formally designated for its wildlife value? <i>Whole area apart from the path, the skatepark & the grassed area around it, are within the Devon Nature Recovery Network. See 5.1 re Natural England designation.</i>	Y
	If the site is not formally designated, is there any evidence that there are important habitats or species found on the site?	n/a
	Have ecological surveys been undertaken on or close to the site? <i>Probably, given NRN & Natural England designations.</i>	(Y?)
	Has the site been defined as part of the JLP biodiversity network? Is the site adjacent to a designated site?	(N?)
	Is there any evidence, or is it likely that other wildlife of interest has been found on the site? Are there ancient hedgerows, woodland, veteran trees on the site? <i>Highly likely given riverside setting. See also comments on related questions in 5.1 & 5.2.</i>	Y
6	Evidence of Local Support and Alternate Green Space Provision - Is there sufficient current evidence of Local Support?	Y
	<i>Owned and managed by Town Council. Well used by pedestrians and cyclists passing through, and young people at skate park.</i>	
7	Could the site help to mitigate against the effects of climate change on the local community? Does the site have the local community? sufficient landscape qualities that could help tackle climate change?	Y
	<i>Significant level of tree and shrub cover, both for carbon reduction and shade. Important in drainage pattern to river. Encourages walking and cycling for local journeys.</i>	
8	Does the site include any landscape features that could help build resilience to climate change challenges? Does the site have sufficient landscape features that could build resilience to climate change?	Y
	<i>As above</i>	
9	Conclusion - Should site be considered for allocation?	Y
	<i>Definitely – key location with multiple benefits. Meets all the headline criteria.</i>	