

# Paper Petition Details

## Save Our Green Spaces

We the undersigned petition the Council to ensure that it protects Bower Playing Fields and all existing public green spaces across Slough from being developed on for residential or commercial purposes as part of its current and future local plans, for the benefit of residents' quality of life.

**This petition was received on 2<sup>nd</sup> February, 2021.**

**This petition was passed to the Principal Planning Officer on 2<sup>nd</sup> February, 2021.**

**This petition was responded to by the Principal Planning Officer on 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2021.**

### Final Results

<b>Number of Signatures</b>	<b>208</b>
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### Council Response

This petition relates both to Bowyer Playing Fields and to all other greenspaces in Slough.

With regards to Bowyer Playing Fields, it may be helpful to refer to the Planning Committee report which was considered at the Planning Committee meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> February. You can view this on the agenda at the following link; the report is at item 106 on the agenda:

<http://democracy.slough.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=111&MId=6525&Ver=4>

(The numbering of items on the agenda starts at 101).

The following extracts may be useful:

From Section 7:

#### 7.0 Policy Background

##### The Site Allocations Development Plan Document

The policy for the site (reference SSA17) sets out the following

- *Reason for allocation:*

*To ensure that this site is developed in a comprehensive way which maximises the attractiveness of the canal and the basin. To establish the principle of allowing residential development within the public open space.*

- *Site Planning Requirements:*

Redevelopment proposals should:

- Provide facilities that will attract visitors and form a focal point for users of the towpath and canal

- Open up views from Stoke Road to the Canal Basin
- Retain and enhance the winding hole and pedestrian and cycle access to the basin
- Retain and take opportunities to enhance the nature conservation value of the canal
- Consider the provision of visitor moorings and the north side of the canal
- Provide residential development
- Enhance recreational facilities within the Bowyer Playing Fields

The policy also refers to Core Strategy Policies 2 (Green Belt and Open Spaces) and 4 (Type of Housing), which are noted above.

The site allocation recognises that the above development must be delivered within the following constraints:

- The need to retain a significant area of the existing open space, making compensatory provision for the loss of some of this space and providing public realm / open space around the canal basin.
- The presence of the canal itself and the unique opportunities it provides for development at this site.
- Site access is expected to be from Stoke Road. A secondary access from Kendal Close could be provided, but there should be no access from St John's Road.
- The existing electricity pylon and power lines on the northern side of the basin.

## 9.0 Principle of development

9.1 The site is a mix of previously developed land and open space. As noted in the previous sections of this report, the site is an allocated site, ref. SSA17 as identified in the Site Allocations Development Plan Document. The DPD sets out the reasons for this allocation:

- To ensure that this site is developed in a comprehensive way which maximises the attractiveness of the canal and the canal basin.
- To establish the principle of allowing residential development within the public open space.

*The DPD states that "...only a limited amount of the Bowyer Playing field will be developed adjacent to the canal in a manner which still preserves views to and from the open space. It is considered that the loss of some open space is acceptable, as an exception, on the basis that some new public areas will be created around the canal basin with hard and soft landscaping. There will also be compensatory improvements to the quality and facilities provided within the Bowyer Playing field including the provision of a multi use games area".*

While the DPD does not explicitly state what the quantum of development within this existing open space should be provided, the general form of this part of the proposal - Blocks F1-F4 - largely coincides with an illustrative plan within the Document...

Section 12 of the report deals with **Impacts on recreational users**. As this section is approximately five pages long, I refer you again to the above link to access the report in full.

Turning to other green spaces in Slough, the Council recently consulted on a Proposed Spatial Strategy, which can be accessed at the following link:

<https://www.slough.gov.uk/downloads/download/143/the-spatial-strategy-consultation-document-nov-2020>

Paragraphs 13.86 – 13.91 sets out the intention to protect all designated open space, with the exception of the area within *the Bowyer Playing field that is allocated as discussed above, in the Site Allocations DPD*. Paragraphs 15.27 – 15.31 sets out the policy direction for Parks and Open Spaces, and reiterates that

*A key principle of the Spatial Strategy is that there should be no loss of parks or public open space.*

I trust that this is helpful in addressing the key points raised in the “Save Our Green Spaces” Petition.