ePetition details

Protect our last open space in Nanpantan

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We the undersigned petition the council to 1. Recognize that the Leconfield Road open space be protected for the wellbeing of residents and to safeguard biodiversity. 2. Work with the Nanpantan community to protect this important open space for the long term.
For 50 years, the open space at Leconfield Road has provided our community with a place to walk, run, exercise dogs and for children to sledge. It gives residents an opportunity to stop, breathe and take in the unique long views over Loughborough. It is a site of ecological importance. Abundant wildlife lives here, forages here or just passes through between neighbouring Burleigh Wood and the Outwoods. Its special character and ancient uplands that are part of Charnwood Forest need to be preserved and celebrated.

That the open space is dear to our hearts was demonstrated by our recent protest that attracted more than 250 residents.

We expect the Council to follow its Corporate Strategy that pledges to look after our environment for future generations, care for our communities and improve our open space.

Started by: David Mulvaney (Nanpantan Ward Residents' Group)

This ePetition ran from 27/09/2020 to 30/10/2020 and has now finished.

704 people signed this ePetition.

Council response

This is a response to the petition 'Protect our last open space in Nanpantan' submitted to the Council which closed on 30/10/2020.

The site at Leconfield Road identified in the petition was proposed as a housing allocation in the Draft Charnwood Local Plan consulted on for six weeks between 4th November 2019 and 16th December 2019, available to view here: http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/draft_charnwood_local_plan_2019_36. The site has also been proposed by Nanpantan Residents Group as a Local Green Space in response to this consultation. A Local Green Space is a specific planning policy designation which allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them and should be identified through a local or neighbourhood plan. The landowner is promoting the site for housing development and responded to the consultation in support of the allocation.
The process of preparing the Local Plan requires the Council to consider competing interests and to come to a view in light of evidence and national policy. The evaluation of the proposal for a Local Green Space, the representation from the landowner and the

objections to the allocation of this site for housing will all inform the reassessment of the site and the preparation of a final draft of the Local Plan.

The Local Plan is due to be published for public consultation in the Spring ahead of an Examination in Public conducted by an independent Inspector appointed on behalf of the Secretary of State. This is later than originally planned due to delays finalising the evidence required to inform the plan. This consultation will provide an opportunity for residents and the landowner to view and comment on the proposed approach to this site.

It is important to highlight that the Open Spaces Assessment Study prepared on behalf of the Council to inform the preparation of the Local Plan and Open Space Strategy does not identify the site at Leconfield Road as an area of open space. The study can be found here: **http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/open_spaces_sport_and_recreation_studies**. This is due to the land being in private ownership with no public right of access to the land.
This does not prevent the land being considered as a Local Green Space, although the National Planning Policy Framework sets out that 'designating land as Local Green Space needs to 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 site is currently being reviewed against this national policy.

The Council is aware of the concerns of local residents and have met with Nanpantan Ward Resident Group in December 2019, June 2020 and September 2020. There continues to be regular correspondence with the group which Officers are happy to continue to have. The proposed approach to this site will be shared once all the evidence is completed and the Local Plan is finalised and approved for consultation.