

**GIRTON's Neighbourhood Plan Team Feedback on the Draft Greater Cambridge
Local Plan 2025 – 2045**

The Neighbourhood Plan Team in Girton have working in conjunction with Girton Parish Council in this, and their separate response which should be taken as being consistent one with the other. Each supports the other and vice versa.

Comments Our comments are mostly based round the Policies Map that arises under Policy BG/PO. We note the definition of the term Open Spaces in the glossary:

'Open space: Areas of land not built on and water bodies such as rivers and lakes, regardless of ownership and access. These areas include parks and gardens, natural and semi natural green spaces, green corridors, outdoor sports facilities, amenity green space, teenagers' and children's play areas, allotments and community gardens, cemeteries and churchyards, accessible countryside in urban fringe areas and civic spaces.'

General points

1. The Policies Map for Girton is a great step forwards from the version in the Local Plan 2018. Thank you.
2. The Neighbourhood Area for Girton's nascent Neighbourhood Plan is the whole of the parish of Girton. A draft of this Neighbourhood Plan was shared and discussed with SCDC in October 2025. The feedback is being taken on-board, and the Plan moves forwards aligning itself with the new Draft Local Plan too. Within the Neighbourhood Area we have both the Girton village Development Extent and the Eddington Allocated Site and therefore we deal with both so that the whole Neighbourhood Area is covered.
3. You will see in the detailed points on specific areas below that we would be keen to have more areas designated on the Policies Map rather than through the Neighbourhood Plan because, while both the self-consistent Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan ought to be given equal weight this is not always proven to be so, with the Local Plan carrying greater weight. We also want your Policies Map to be the best it can be and so reflect positively on you.
4. We are more than happy to meet with you to discuss things further to assist you in your Local Plan development.

5. We include with this submission a copy of the Policies Map with numbered areas identified for reference, and a map showing our current thinking on proposed LGSs, PVAAs and ICFs. When we were considering these the 'Open spaces' category didn't exist in the 2018 Local Plan.
6. Protections of open spaces, LGSs, PVAAs and ICFs should be no lower than in the NPPF with 'exceptional' circumstances being judged by the local people who know and understand the details of the area, and not at Greater Cambridge Planning level. Girton is not against development, but it needs to be of the right type and in the right manner in the context of Girton.
7. One point unrelated to the policies map is with regards to the indicative housing figure of 90 new homes in the period in the non-Eddington portion of Girton. This is based on the 2021 Census data regarding population. At that time some of the population of Girton lived in Eddington so the population figure ought not to be used, but should be reduced a little to give a more accurate figure for the rest of Girton. For example, if 10% of the census figure lived in Eddington, the figure of 90 houses in the rest of Girton should be reduced to close to 80. This accuracy in use of data helps set a more realistic figure given that Girton is close bounded by Green Belt and this would then fit more easily with the avowed intent not to release land from Green belt (Policy GP/HD and paragraph 7.26).
8. A second aspect not related to the Policies Map is in relation to Policy BG/GI – revitalising and protecting streams other than just the (important) chalk streams is important. In Girton this means Washpit Brook and Beck Brook. The protection of blue corridors needs to be broadened to a wider set of such corridors.

Detailed points on Specific Areas

Area 1: According to the key, this appears to be a Protected Open Space (POS). We are not sure that this is correct in the design intent for Eddington?

Area 2: We note that the Brook Leys area of Eddington is a POS. Area 2 also seems to fit the definition of Open Space perfectly. It not only fits the definition but is also a major flood control mechanism for Washpit Brook that flows into Girton, joining Beck Brook. These brooks have flooded homes in Girton in the recent past, and therefore this area needs all the protections it can have as well as enhancing biodiversity in the areas – e.g. otters have been reported there since Brook Leys was developed.

We note that it is in Green Belt. This is clearly not a barrier to POS designation given that most of the other POSs in Girton are in Green Belt

ICF1: Please consider the whole of the South West line of the Eddington area to be an ICF. If you stand along that line you see to the South West the greatest vertical topography in/near Cambridge apart from the Gogs, looking across the valley to the Madingley ridge.

As a result of the definition of an ICF, they must lie along the edge of a development extent / allocated site as shown by our two existing ICFs marked on the map. We should be protecting one of the greatest rural views in Cambridge and let it sweep into the Eddington street scene.

Area 3 This area is marked 'playing fields' on the map and was used by ARU as such with rugby posts still there. Given that Area 4 is correctly a POS, then surely Area 3 ought to be so too? Please do so.

Area 4: We agree this designation, but please refer to Area 3 comment above. Please note that we agree with Girton Parish Council that preservation of the Girton Gap (Areas 3 – 6 inclusive) is essential and that its loss should be rated 'Very high' harm. In this aspect the LUC Green belt assessment of Parcel AR1 is incorrect.

Area 5: This is the area of the future playing fields in Darwin Green 2/3 as now approved with planning permission. At present it is a field and always has been. By your sensible designation it is clear that future areas where planning permission has been given can be designated now, in theory before they actually become what is intended for them. We support this approach given your Local Plan stretches out to 2045.

On that basis, and given that it also falls clearly within the definition of Open Spaces, surely Area 6 (the future Country Park) should also be given the same designation? Please do so.

Area 6: See comment on area 5 above.

Area :7 This is called Millenium Wood and forms the largest single woodland in Girton. It is highly valued by walkers in Girton as it adjoins the Recreation Ground. It falls under the definition of Open Spaces and so we'd like you to include it as a POS.

Area 8: This is the Golf course at Girton Golf Club. As an outdoor sports facility, surely it should be a designated POS to keep the consistency with other sports facilities in Girton and elsewhere?

Area 9: This is the Town End Close which is recognised by the Parish Council as a Nature Reserve and recognised by South Cambs District Council (see link <https://visitsouthcambs.co.uk/activities/town-end-close-nature-reserve/>). It is presently awaiting Nature England's confirmation for their register. This ought to appear on the Policies Map as a Local Nature Reserve.

ICF2: The line from Woody Green to the bridge over the A14 should be an ICF. It brings a rural feel to a popular path (used also by many cyclists and to be upgraded in the Neighbourhood Plan to be a proper cycle route).

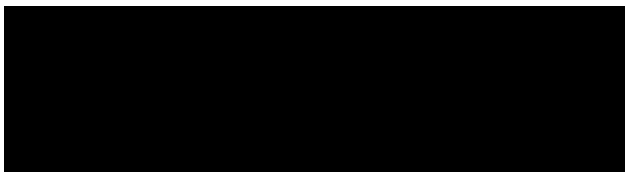
Area 10: This area of open country bounded by Duck End, Washpit Lane and the new NMU track has become a much more important area to Girton as a Community asset as the NMU now enables circular walks and many cycle journeys to be made in a rural environment.

Area 11: This small area opposite the church comprise the Hibbert-Ware Garden maintained in honour of a famous local naturalist, and Smithy Green (the area of the former blacksmith's) which fall under the parks and gardens aspect of the definition.

Other Areas: You will see several areas of green (under Neighbourhood Plan Team consideration for LGS status), pink (under consideration for PVAA status) and dark green triangle lines (under consideration as ICF's) by the Neighbourhood Plan Team that are not included above. These considerations were before your new Policies Map.

We have outlined to you (Areas 1 – 11 and ICFs 1 and 2) the highest priority ones for your consideration. If these can be included on your Policies Map then we can re-assess the others to strike a balance between protecting the open areas while not preventing suitable potential development. Such development must enhance Girton and not detract from it.

We can provide our current assessment of each area to assist you if required and can meet too to help you with local details.



Andrew Muston

Girton Neighbourhood Plan Team

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