



Cumnor Parish Neighbourhood Plan  
Quiet Area Designation Report  
September 2020

## Abstract

This report details the process and outcomes of the Quiet Area Designation Review.

Following the work by the Local Green Spaces Group, a further piece of work was undertaken to assess whether any Local Green Spaces should be put forward as Quiet Areas as per Part F of the Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Noise Action Plan: Agglomerations (Urban Areas) Environmental Noise (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended) published on 2 July 2019.

Four sites are proposed as Local Quiet Areas. These areas are important tranquil sites within a 10-minute walk of the majority of homes in the agglomeration area (as defined by DEFRA). Such access has been identified as providing health, wellbeing and quality of life for residents of the Parish as “refuges” from areas more impacted so are worthy of protection and support of proposals which will enhance such tranquillity.

In reaching a shortlist and defining the four areas as shown in Maps 1-4 below, consideration was also given to the presence of nature, visual and other aesthetic qualities of the spaces and is complimentary to the approach taken above to also identify them as part of wider Local Green Spaces.

## Legislative Context of Quiet Area Designations

The approach to designating Quiet Areas was introduced in Part F of the Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Noise Action Plan: Agglomerations (Urban Areas) Environmental Noise (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended) published on 2 July 2019<sup>1</sup>. The Action Plan applies to the relevant authorities within the identified agglomerations across the country, Oxford is one of those agglomerations including part of the Cumnor Neighbourhood Plan area (the eastern part of Cumnor village and lower slopes of Cumnor hill down to Dean Court – maps of the agglomeration area are available on the DEFRA website<sup>2</sup>).

Noise needs to be considered when development may create additional noise, or would be sensitive to the prevailing acoustic environment (including any anticipated changes to that environment from activities that are permitted but not yet commenced). When preparing plans, or taking decisions about new development, there may also be opportunities to make improvements to the acoustic environment. Good acoustic design needs to be considered early in the planning process to ensure that the most appropriate and cost-effective solutions are identified from the outset. Related policies in the NPPF are: [paragraph 170e](#), [paragraph 180a](#), [paragraph 180b](#), [paragraph 182](#)

Set out in Part F of the DEFRA Environmental Noise Regulations are the requirements for designating a Quiet Area. Firstly the area needs to have been identified as a Local Green Space in the relevant Local or Neighbourhood Plan. Accordingly, all the proposed Local Green Spaces in this Neighbourhood Plan that are in the agglomeration area have been considered as possible Quiet Areas. Any nominated spaces need to be areas which provide a relative “tranquil oasis” and noise thresholds are not set but left as a matter for local discretion. Once designated the Quiet Areas (known as END Areas) will become a material consideration in planning decisions. Set out in this policy are four candidate areas for possible END designation by DEFRA.

The identified areas have been proposed as it is considered important that the community can access such outdoor tranquil areas within a 10-minute walk of the majority of homes in the agglomeration area. Such access has been identified as providing health, wellbeing and quality of

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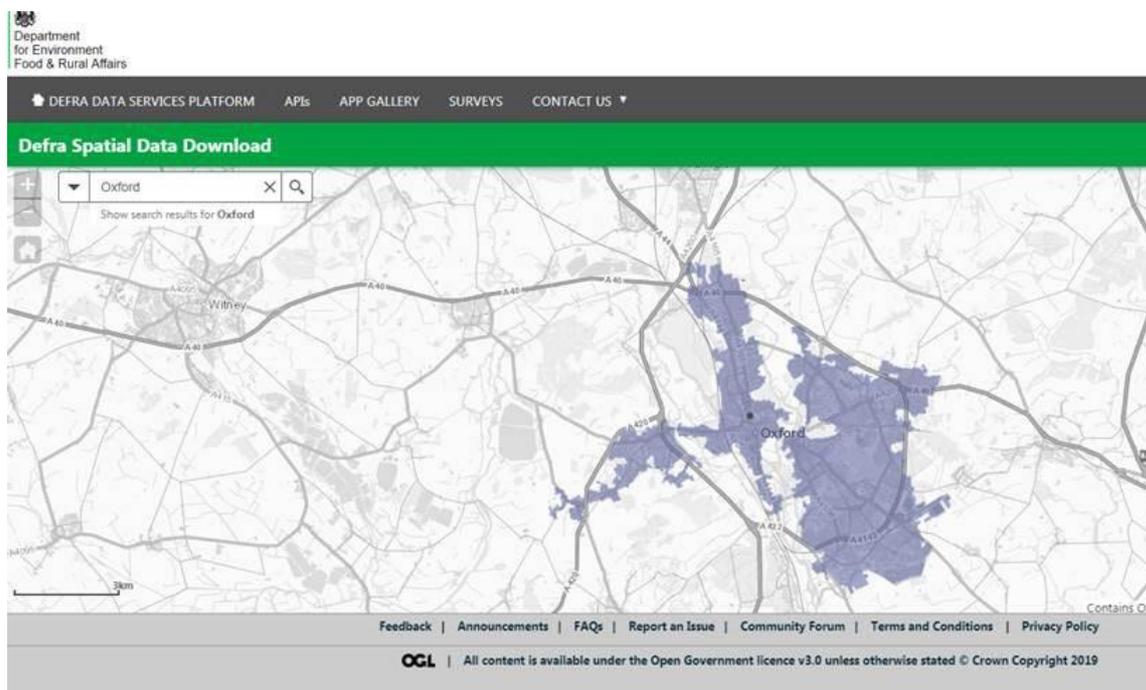
<sup>1</sup> [https://consult.defra.gov.uk/environmental-quality/noise/supporting\\_documents/noiseactionplanagglomerations.pdf](https://consult.defra.gov.uk/environmental-quality/noise/supporting_documents/noiseactionplanagglomerations.pdf) accessed September 12th 2020

<sup>2</sup> <https://environment.data.gov.uk/dataset/4739c0c3-e800-4cb1-89cd-e71115b191e9> accessed September 12th 2020

life for residents of the Parish as “refuges” from areas more impacted so are worthy of protection and support of proposals which will enhance such tranquillity. In reaching a shortlist and defining the areas as shown in Map 1 below, consideration was also given to the presence of nature, visual and other aesthetic qualities of the spaces and is complimentary to the approach taken above to also identify them as part of wider Local Green Spaces.

## Evidence Base for LQA – Noise Monitoring Approach and Records

At the start of September 2019 all the proposed Local Green Space (LGS) areas that are within the DEFRA Oxford Agglomeration area were visited and noise measurements were taken both within and in adjacent areas. Most of the Local Green Space areas set out in the Neighbourhood Plan above are outside the DEFRA agglomeration area, so would not qualify for national designation, so were excluded from further assessment. Areas which would not meet the “tranquil” requirement due to the use patterns such as play spaces and pitches were also excluded. This left a total of 9 LGS areas as possible quiet areas.



Map 1 Defra Oxford Agglomeration Area

## Conclusion

Noise measurements were taken during the normal working day periods and at times avoiding abnormal periods such as unusually quiet times like

low traffic times due to roadworks or peak noisy times such as during overflying aircraft across those 9 LGS areas. This found that only 6 of the LGS areas showed a significant decrease in noise levels inside the tranquil part of the site (more than 5dB reduction). Those 6 areas as listed in the table below were therefore selected for further monitoring which was undertaken on four separate days in the following weeks.

Location description	Ward
Nobles Close Green (LGS4)	Dean Court
Green Lane/Denton Close Green area (LGS5)	Dean Court
Fogwell Walk Central Area (Central Park of LGS7)	Dean Court
Tilbury Lane Allotments (LGS7)	Dean Court
Glebe Green(LGS14)	Cumnor Village
Glebe play park (LGS15 open area)	Cumnor Village

*Table 1 Initial long list for proposed Quiet Area Status*

Levels were not found to be consistently lower than the immediate surrounding area for the Nobles Close and Glebe Green areas, so those were also rejected as possible sites (perhaps also indicating that noise mitigation measures should be encouraged to bring them into being suitable as quiet areas).

## Outcomes

That left the following four areas as being identified as being suitable for quiet area designations:

Site Re	Location description	Average Decibel "benefit" measured compared to surrounding area (and average noise measurement).	Ward
<b>LQA1</b>	Green Lane Quiet Area	6bB (62dB)	Dean Court
<b>LQA2</b>	Fogwell Road Quiet Area	8dB (63dB)	Dean Court
<b>LQA3</b>	Tilbury Lane Allotments Quiet Area	8dB (57dB)	Dean Court
<b>LQA4</b>	The Glebe Play Park Quiet Area	6dB (62dB)	Cumnor Village

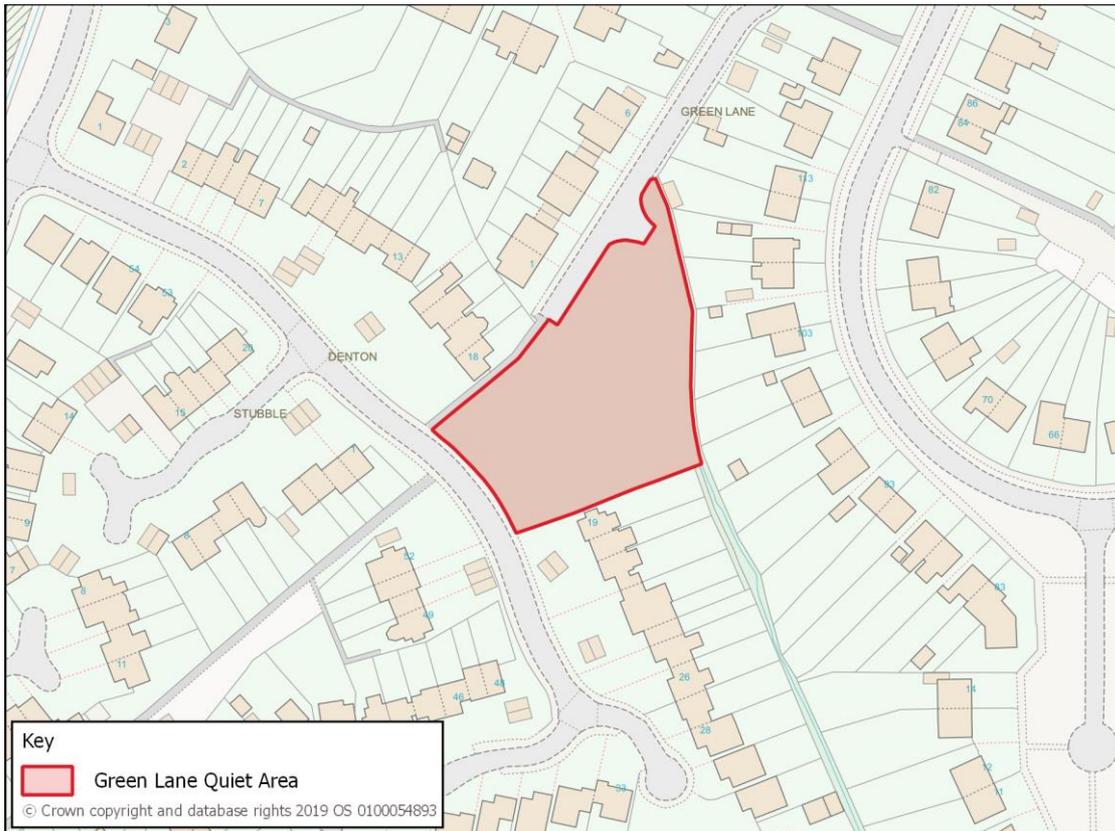
*Table 2 list for proposed Quiet Area Status in draft Plan subject to Regulation 14 consultation*

Following analysis of responses to the Regulation 14 consultation, the Glebe Play park was removed from the proposed Local Green Spaces list. Hence, the final list proposed for Local Quiet Area status are:

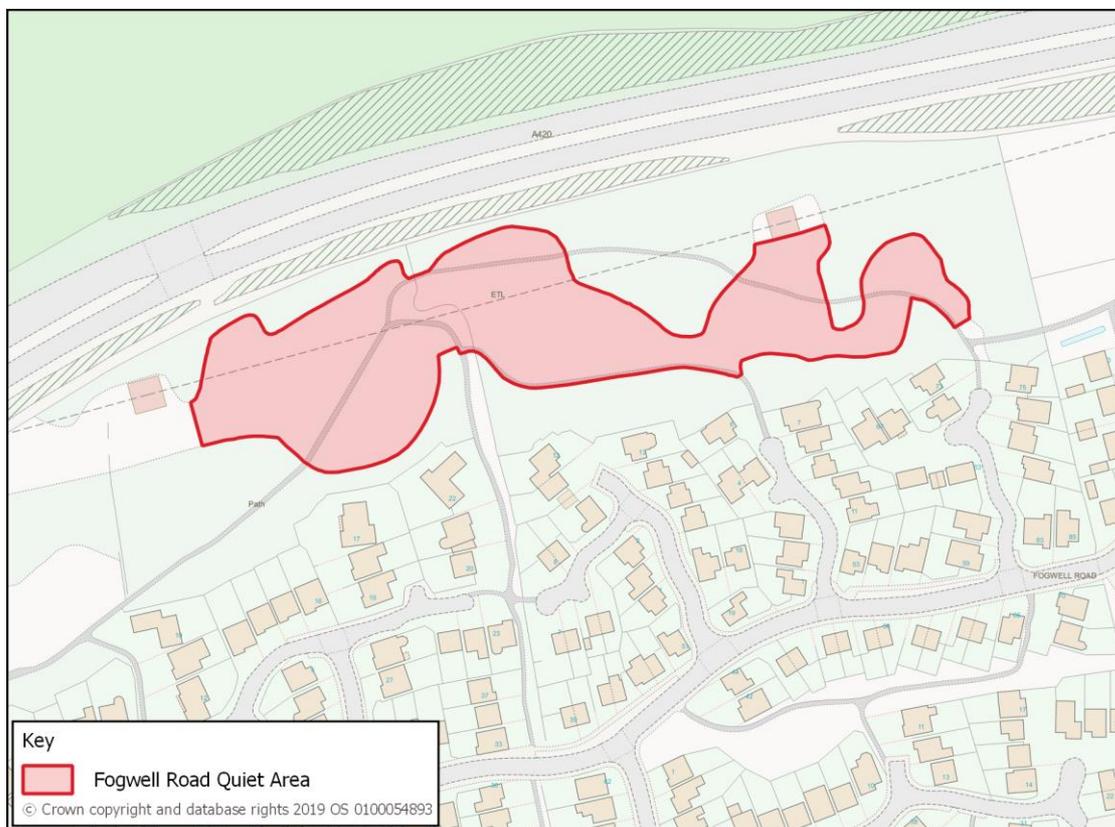
Site Ref	Location description	Average Decibel "benefit" measured compared to surrounding area (and average noise measurement).	Ward
<b>QA1</b>	Green Lane/Denton Close Green	6bB (62dB)	Dean Court
<b>QA2</b>	Fogwell Walk Quiet Area	8dB (63dB)	Dean Court
<b>QA3</b>	Tilbury Lane Allotments	8dB (57dB)	Dean Court

*Table 3 list for proposed Quiet Area Status in Cumnor Neighbourhood Plan*

## Maps of Quiet Areas



Map 2 QA1 Green Lane Quiet Area



Map 3 QA2 Fogwell Road Quiet Area



Map 4 QA3 Tilbury Lane Allotments Quiet Area