



Cabinet

Tuesday, 23 June 2026

Designation of New Local Nature Reserves

Report of the Director – Neighbourhoods

Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Environment and Safety, Councillor R Inglis

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. This report is to seek approval for the designation of three new Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) in Rushcliffe under the powers provided by Section 21 of The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.
- 1.2. Cabinet is asked to support the Council making these three new designations.
- 1.3. This issue has not been considered by any other committee.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet approve for a Declaration to be made designating the land at The Green Line, West Bridgford; Meadow Park, East Leake and Springdale Wood, East Bridgford (shown hatched on the plans in Appendix 1) as Local Nature Reserves pursuant to Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. To regularise the established use of these sites as nature reserves.
- 3.2. To act on the Council's biodiversity duty to consider actions to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- 3.3. To meet the objective within the Rushcliffe Nature Conservation Strategy 2026 – 2030 to identify and designate new sites.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1. Rushcliffe Borough Council has previously declared eight LNRs in Rushcliffe. It is proposed the Council declare three further three sites as LNRs.
- 4.2. LNRs are protected areas statutorily designated by local authorities due to their special natural interest and educational value.

- 4.3. The groups supporting the management of these three sites have all requested that they be designated as LNRs.
- 4.4. The new sites proposed for declaration as LNRs are:
- 4.4.1. **The Green Line, West Bridgford**; this is part of a former railway, this section runs from Melton Road to Boundary Road. The site has been used as nature area / public open space since 1988. It has nature conservation interest and is designated a Local Wildlife Site by the Nottingham Biological and Geological Record Centre (NBGRC). The site is owned by the Council, and its day-to-day management is shared with the Green Line Conservation Group under a Service Level Agreement.
- 4.4.2. **Meadow Park, East Leake**: Meadow Park is almost eighteen hectares of former agricultural land given to the Council in 1995, as a permanent leisure facility for local residents. The Nottinghamshire Biological and Geological Records Centre (NBGRC) designated the site a Local Wildlife Site on 1 May 2024. The Park remains under the control of the Council, but day-to-day management of the park has been in the hands of East Leake Parish Council and Friends of Meadow Park volunteers since 2009.
- 4.4.3. **Springdale Wood, East Bridgford**: Springdale Wood is a 1.41ha site created by The Woodland Trust in November 1999, on former arable land, purchased by The Woodland Trust, as one of 200 'Woods on Your Doorstep' across the UK. East Bridgford Parish Council took a 999-year Lease that commenced in 2016. Day to day management is provided by East Bridgford Wildlife and Biodiversity Community Interest Company since 2016. As the Council does not own this site a Management Agreement between the Council, East Bridgford Parish Council (as leaseholder) and The Woodland Trust (as freeholder) has been agreed; to enable the Council to declare the site as a LNR.
- 4.5. Natural England has been consulted on the proposals to designate these sites as LNRs, for the Green Line and Meadow Park they replied, "Natural England is supportive of these plans for both sites as the declaration as a LNR will ensure the future management of the sites for the benefit of the local community in terms of outdoor recreation and for wildlife and green infrastructure connectivity." For East Bridgford they replied "Natural England is delighted to support the declaration of the site as an LNR. Protecting this site and its habitats will allow it to continue to be used and valued by local people for recreation and enjoyment of the natural environment."

5. **Alternative options considered and reasons for rejection**

Cabinet can decide to not make the declarations, the management of these sites will continue as present, without any statutory designation. This will not further the reasons stated in Section 3 above.

6. Risks and Uncertainties

- 6.1. Failure to manage the sites in accordance with the management plans creates a reputational risk to the Council; however, this risk would be present whether the designation was made or not.
- 6.2. Management of the sites to seek to ensure compliance with agreed management plans will continue to be overseen by appropriate Council officers, with oversight provided by the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Environment and Safety.

7. Implications

7.1. Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications because of designation. Management and oversight of sites will remain unchanged.

7.2. Legal Implications

7.2.1. The Council has the power under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to Countryside Act 1949 to provide nature reserves on any land in the Borough where it appears expedient that the land should be managed as a nature reserve. This power can only be exercised after consulting Natural England. If approved, the Council formally declare the sites as LNRs under Section 19 of the Act and must send a certified copy of the declaration to Natural England, along with copies of the final site boundaries, management plans, public notices and completed local nature reserve factsheets for each site.

7.2.2. If designated as LNRs, ownership of the sites will remain unchanged and the sites must be managed as a nature reserve. The Council can introduce byelaws to control people's use of the site, but this will be used as a last resort if there are any problems to deal with. Any changes in the LNR's boundary will need to be approved by Natural England. LNRs are statutory sites that are designated using a legal mechanism. Once designated, they are protected from development by local planning policies.

7.3. Equalities Implications

There are no foreseen equalities implication of designation and usage of the sites remains unchanged.

7.4. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

There are no foreseen Section 17 implication of designation and usage of the sites remains unchanged.

7.5. Biodiversity Net Gain Implications

Designation of the sites supports the borough council's biodiversity duty requirements. The sites potentially could provide opportunity to provide Biodiversity Net Gain units for sale, but this is unlikely.

7.6 Local Government Reorganisation Implications

There are no direct Local Government Reorganisation Implications contained within this report.

8. Link to Corporate Priorities

The Environment	Yes – supports good management of environmental assets
Quality of Life	Yes – provides publicly accessible green spaces
Efficient Services	Not applicable
Sustainable Growth	Not applicable

9. Recommendation

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For more information contact:	Paul Phillips Senior Ecology and Sustainability Officer 0115 914 8595 pPhillips@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 Location maps for the three proposed LNR's

Appendix 1 – Maps

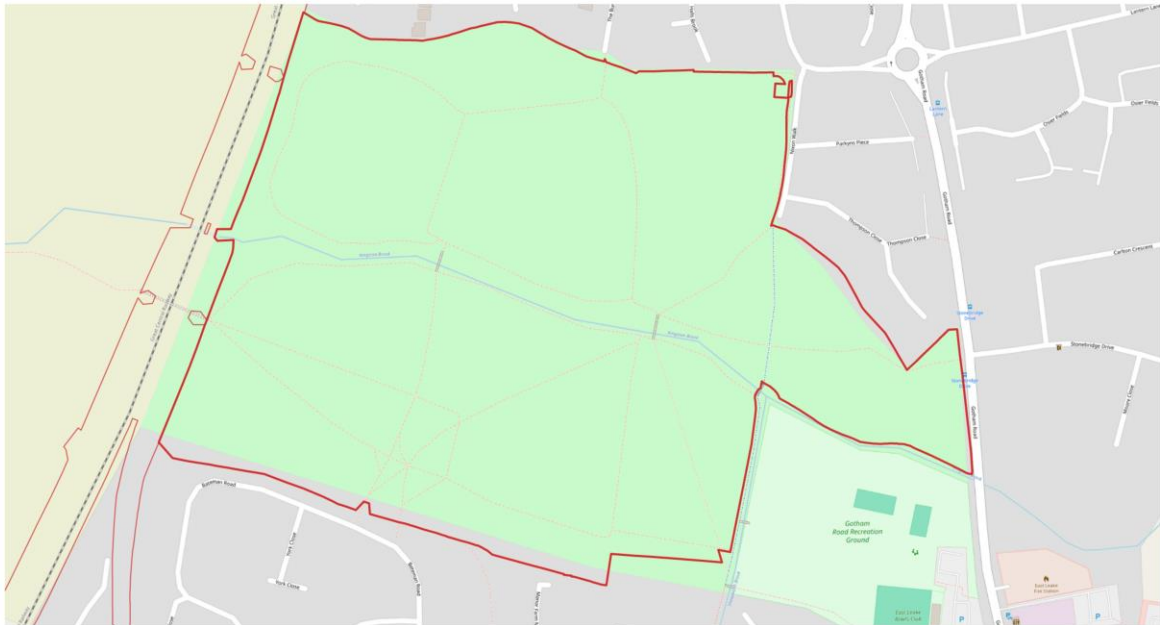
The Green Line Nature Reserve



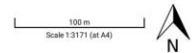
Produced on Land App, Mar 4, 2026.
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Meadow Park LWS, East Leake



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Springdale Wood, East Bridgford, Notts



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