BLACON NEIGHBOURHOOD ALLIANCE
The Designated Neighbourhood Forum for Blacon

BLACON COMMUNITY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2025 - 2040

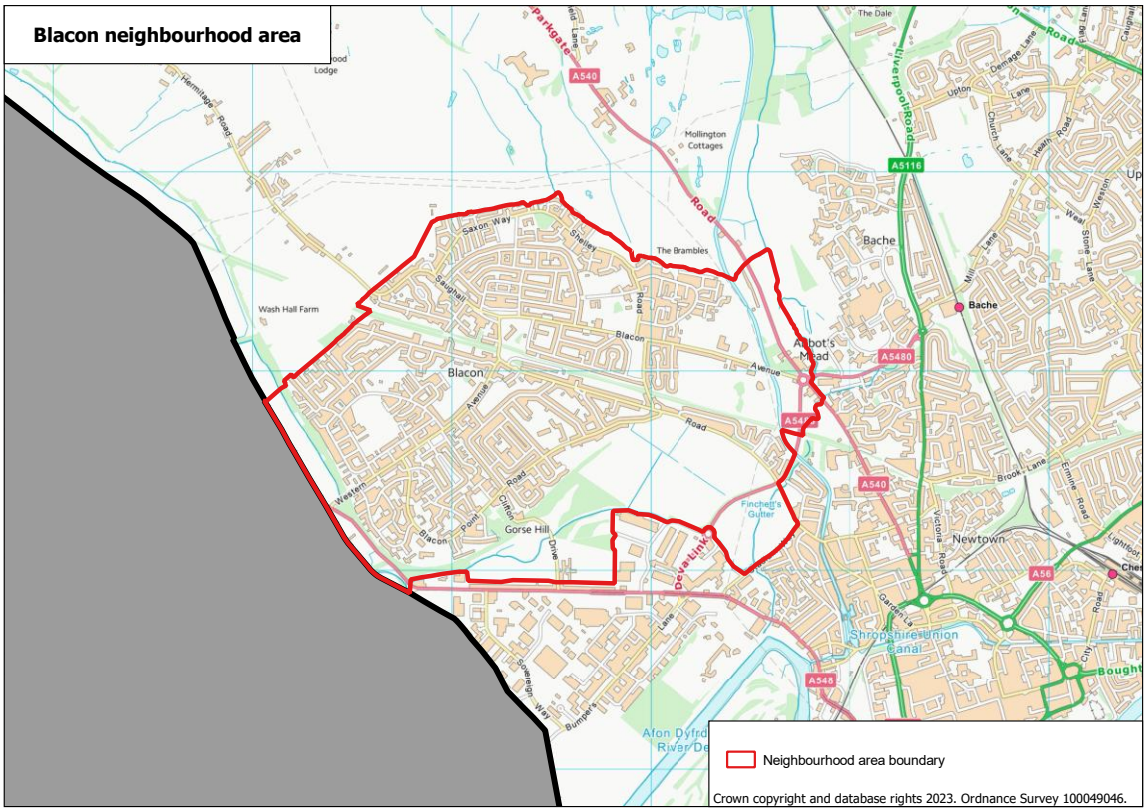
MADE SEPTEMBER 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Blacon Neighbourhood Alliance (BNA) has prepared the first Blacon Community Neighbourhood Plan (BCNP). The BNA is defined as a 'qualifying body' for this purpose in line with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). As Blacon is unparished, the BNA was designated by the local planning authority, Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC), on 22 August 2023 as a 'neighbourhood forum' for a five year period within which to bring forward the BCNP.

1.2 The Blacon Neighbourhood Area has been designated by CWaC as the area to which the policies of the BCNP will apply (see map below). The Area was chosen to cover all of the built up area of Blacon, a small area of land off the Parkgate Road roundabout and the open land between Blacon and the commercial areas off Sealand Road. Its western boundary is part of the border between England and Wales.

1.3 Blacon has a secondary school – Blacon High School – and five primary schools. There are also a number of places of worship, the Blacon Cemetery and two local shopping areas at The Parade and at Western Avenue.



1.4 The BCNP will cover the period from April 2025 to March 2040. This version contains four policies to help CWaC determine planning applications for the use and development of land within Blacon during that period. In doing so it operates alongside other policies of the CWaC development plan that relate to Blacon.

1.5 The BCNP has been subject to informal engagement and a statutory consultation period during 2024 and 2025. This referendum version has been modified to take account of comments made during that time.

1.7 At the same time, the BNA is proposing a Blacon Community Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO) to grant outline planning permission for a scheme that will deliver the Sports & Community Hub scheme of Policy BLACON1 of the Plan at Cairns Crescent. It has been consulted on alongside the BCNP and is also submitted for examination at the same time.

1.8 Shortly before the submission of the BCNP and NDO, the Government announced the inclusion of the Blacon South ward in its second phase of the Pride in Place Programme. This will invest up to £20 million in delivering a good range of local amenities and high-quality physical infrastructure. The endowment-style funding will include revenue to support managing and delivering investment projects. The BNA and Blacon Community Trust (BCT) will look to work with CWaC and the new Neighbourhood Board to make this a success for Blacon.

2. BACKGROUND

History

2.1 Blacon was originally known as Blakon Hill and was owned by the Marquess of Crewe. The Parish of Blacon cum Crabwall was formed in 1923 but in 1936 most of the parish was transferred to Chester County Borough.

2.2 It was a small farming village community until major building work by Chester City Council began in the early 1950s. Most of the older and original estate, was built in the ten years to 1960; though further parts were added on the old army camp site in South Blacon, in the late 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. 'The Parade' Shops, built in 1954 in north Blacon, are an example of Chester City Council building. In 2015, the Parade Enterprise Centre opened, a joint venture between Avenue Services and Cheshire West and Chester Council. The Parade Enterprise Centre houses Sanctuary Housing, Blacon Library, as well as a community hall and various other offices for local businesses.

2.3 The British Army maintained an army camp in south Blacon, from just before, to just after, the Second World War. A mixture of wooden and 'Nissen' huts were occupied by soldiers until the late 1950s; and the army firing range was still in evidence until the Chester City Council 'tower block' buildings of the mid-1960s. Blacon Camp housed various military operations, containing aircraft and war prisoners at the time. This part of (South) Blacon is referred to as 'The Camp' by local residents. Blacon station was served from Chester Northgate Station but was closed to passengers on 9 September 1968 as part of the 'Beeching Axe' for the economic modernisation of the British railway network in the mid-1960s. Freight trains ran through Blacon until 1992. Although the old station and railway line have gone, they have been replaced with a cycle path, jogging track and a countryside walkway. This amenity is accessed from the side of old Blacon station bridge; but its route can also be joined (just off) Chester's 'Fountain' roundabout, travelling via Blacon, and on to the North Wales countryside.

Profile

2.4 Blacon has a population of approx. 14,000. Its age profile shows that it has more younger people (under 19) and fewer older people (over 70) than the national averages. It has more 1 and 3 person households than the average, but fewer 2 and 4+ person households. It has many more houses and far fewer flats than average, with many more 2 and 3 bedroom homes and far fewer 1 and 4+ bedroom homes.

2.5 A much higher number of its households have no car or van and far fewer have 2 or more vehicles than average. The community has a much lower number of people working from home and far higher number travelling less than 6 miles to work than average. A much higher number of people work in supervisory, routine or semi-routine occupations than average, with fewer in small businesses, management or full-time students. Its unemployment rate is higher than the average and on some health indicators the health of the community is below average.

Strategic Planning Policy

2.6 The BCNP has been prepared to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part One) adopted by CWaC in 2015 and the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part Two) adopted in 2019. A fuller explanation will be set out in the Basic Conditions Statement as part of the submission but the key policies affecting Blacon are:

- STRAT11 - supporting measures to protect, enhance or improve access to existing facilities, services and amenities that contribute to the quality of life of residents, businesses and visitors … (and to) facilitate the timely provision of additional facilities, services and infrastructure to meet identified needs
- SOC5 - supporting proposals to improve health and well-being, including opportunities to widen and strengthen the borough's cultural, sport, recreation and leisure offer … (and to) consider the specific requirements of different groups in the community
- SOC6 - seeking to protect, manage and enhance existing open spaces, sport and recreation facilities to provide a network of diverse, multi-functional open spaces and showing them on its Policies Map
- DM15 - identifying the full length of the Parade on Saughall Road/Blacon Avenue as a local retail centre but not the Western Avenue/Maitland Way area
- DM36, 37 and 39 - managing the improvement, replacement or loss of sports and recreation facilities and encourages proposals for new or improved community facilities, including supporting "neighbourhood plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders

2.7 CWaC is bringing forward a new Local Plan to cover the period to 2045 but this is at a very early stage in its process and has not reached a point where the BCNP can reflect its proposals.

National Planning Policy

2.8 The BCNP has also had regard for national planning policy and guidance as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) of December 2024.The Basic Conditions Statement contains further details but the key policies are:

- §30 - neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area, which can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions
- §98a – planning should provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship)
- §98c/d – planning should also guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs and should ensure that established shops,

facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community
- §103 - access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change
- §106 - the designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them
- §176 - plans should apply a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development so as to avoid, where possible, flood risk to people and property

2.9 The Playing Field Guidance of Sport England from 2018 seeks to apply the NPPF policy on sport and recreation matters. Although the guidance is intended to apply to planning applications, it is helpful in framing plan making, as it seeks to prevent the loss of existing, vacant or allocated playing field land unless a proposal meets one or more of five exceptions.

2.10 The BCNP must demonstrate how its policies contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and how they will not cause any harm to important ecological areas (in respect of the Habitats Regulations). Both of these matters are also addressed in the Basic Conditions Statement.

Project Progress

2.11 Having set up the project in late 2023, the BNA was keen to understand from the local community what it saw as the main planning and development issues in Blacon. A Community Engagement exercise was carried out through the summer and a report was produced in September 2024 by Cheshire Community Action (CCA) for the BNA. The report summarised the key issues raised by the community, which focused on the delivery of a new Community Hub facility and an Indoor Sports Facility, as well as wanting to protect existing community facilities, local shops and green spaces in Blacon.

2.12 The BNA secured funding from the Neighbourhood Plan Support Programme in 2024 to produce the BCNP and NDO. It was also able to commission a Feasibility Study to explore how the communities' ambitions could be realised. The Study was completed in February 2025 and concluded that the Cairns Crescent site could accommodate a new combined Sports & Community Hub as part of a project to improve the existing pitches and facilities. The Study has been used to inform Policy BLACON1 of the BCNP and the NDO.

2.13 The BNA will publish a Consultation Statement as part of the submission documents that will summarise the nature and outcome of the informal engagement and statutory consultation activities and how they have informed the BCNP.

3. VISION, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

3.1 Our vision of Blacon is …

"By 2040 the residents of Blacon will have benefited for a decade or more from a range of successful and accessible community facilities, which are the envy of other parts of the city. The community is healthier and happier as people no longer need to travel long distances to access them. The local shops have survived and thrived by continuing to meet every-day needs that most people can walk to. All its local green spaces have been kept to provide residents with local play and recreation spaces and places to enjoy in the hotter summer days".

3.2 The objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan, which match the findings of the 2024 Community Engagement Report, are:

1. Build a new Indoor Sports facility and Community Hub to make Blacon more self-sufficient in its local services
2. Prevent the loss of existing community facilities and widen their accessibility
3. Prevent the loss of any local shops that meet the day to day needs of the local community
4. Protect important green spaces for the enjoyment of local residents

3.3 The Neighbourhood Plan contains four policies, each of which is intended to contribute to one or more of these objectives. Each policy has a code number and title and the policy wording is in **Bold** text. Below each policy is some supporting text to explain the intent of the policy and how it should be understood by applicants and applied by CWaC to planning applications. The justification of each policy will be contained in the Basic Conditions Statement. Where a policy applies to specific land or sites in Blacon this is shown on the Policies Map.

Policy BLACON1: Sports & Community Hub Building, Cairns Crescent

Community-led development proposals to deliver a Sports & Community Hub building on land at Cairns Crescent sports ground, as shown on the Policies Map, will be supported, provided:

- The building comprises space and facilities capable of being used for both indoor sports (Class E(d)) and community uses (Class F2(b));
- The building includes changing rooms that meet the standards of the Football Foundation and a canteen for building users and visitors and for users of the indoor and outdoor sports pitches;
- The two existing full size football pitches are retained per their existing specification and any necessary repositioning of them to accommodate the building and its car parking is kept to a minimum;
- The existing children's play area is re-provided at a new safe and convenient location within the site boundary;
- The scheme provides sufficient vehicle and cycle parking on site and includes a safe and well-lit pedestrian and access and cycle route using the existing access on to Cairns Crescent;
- The design and operation of the building will ensure its effect on local amenity will not be significantly greater than the established sports use; and
- A sustainable drainage scheme is delivered.

3.4 The desire and local need for new, improved and community-led sports facilities in Blacon was one of the main driving forces for bringing forward the BCNP. There is currently a distinct lack of facilities that are affordable and accessible for the local community. There is an increasing local demand for sports facilities and the existing provision in Blacon does not have the capacity to meet this, leading to the community regularly having to travel outside the area to access facilities (see separate Basic Conditions Statement).

3.5 The BNA has identified a solution and the newly established Blacon Community Trust (BCT) has expressed a keenness to deliver and manage the project. With the objective of ensuring accessibility and affordability, the policy requires that a proposal for the Hub must be community-led and the BCT constitution meets the NPPF definition for that purpose. A commercial operator will therefore not benefit from this policy.

3.6 The BCT now needs the land use and development principles to be agreed so that it can secure the funds to finalise the operating model and building specification details and then raise the capital to carry out the scheme. The new Pride in Place Programme may provide an opportunity to secure all or some of this investment from 2027 Hence BNA is proposing to implement the policy using a Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO). The NDO route was chosen instead of a planning application for two reasons: the BNA and BCT are keen to show they have community backing for the proposals through the referendum; and funding was only available for an NDO.

3.7 The BNA Feasibility Study concludes the Cairns Crescent site is the best available as the land is already in an established sports and recreation use (since the 1950s) and the football and youth club that occupy the land want to have improved facilities.
An indicative masterplan (see Plan B) shows it is possible to create space for a new building (of up to approx. 3,000 sq.m. and 8m in height) and car parking area (for up to approx. 64 spaces), as well as re-provide the children's play area, using the current informal parking area and access off Cairns Crescent. It will require the demolition of the existing youth club and changing room buildings and the minor repositioning of the two full size sports pitches. The much smaller pitch between them cannot be accommodated, but a Hub building of that maximum size can accommodate for five-a-side football, meaning that there will be no overall loss of land in formal sports use on the site.

3.8 The policy serves two purposes: it allows for a change of use of part of the land to allow for a community use of the Hub building; and it sets the parameters for the detailed building design. It is expected the building design will allow for a great deal of flexibility in how the space is used, rather than having spaces that can only have one fixed use. This will enable other community uses of the space alongside and outside the core sports operating hours in a compatible way. The rest of the land outside the defined Building Zone is proposed as a Local Green Space under Policy BLACON4 to ensure it is protected from any further encroachment.

3.9 Setting these principles in this way allows for the BCT to consider options for a building that may be smaller (but not any larger) or that is delivered in phases to meet the availability of funds and its preferred operating model.

Plan B: Indicative Masterplan showing Site Boundary and Building Zone with sports pitches, play and parking areas)

3.10 The Study has shown that the Hub should not cause significant amenity harm to the adjoining residential area so it can remain a ‘good neighbour’. It also notes that the Environment Agency surface water flood maps indicate some small areas around the periphery of the site are at a low to medium risk of surface water flooding. Recent heavy periods of rain have left pools of water in some of those locations as there are no current drainage systems designed to manage it.

3.11 The Basic Conditions Statement sets out how the Plan has taken into account this flood risk by applying the sequential test required by NPPF §176. It concludes that there are no alternative sites in Blacon that have no flood risk that are in suitable locations to meet the specific needs of the Hub and that have a reasonable prospect of becoming available on a non-profit basis. The sequential test is therefore met, and as a ‘less vulnerable use’ there is no need to apply the exception test.

3.12 The Statement also explains how the policy meets the fifth exception test of Sport England’s guidance as the new indoor and outdoor sports facility “can be judged to be sufficiently beneficial to the development of sport in the local area as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss of the area playing field, or the impact on the use of the remaining playing field or pitches”.

Policy BLACON2: Community Facilities

The Neighbourhood Plan identifies a number of Community Facilities, as listed below and shown on the Policies Map

1. King George V Community Sports Facility
2. St Theresa's Catholic Primary School
3. St Theresa's RC Church
4. Florence Grogan House Care Home
5. Holy Trinity Church
6. Blacon Beacon
7. The United Reform Church
8. The Arches Community Primary School
9. Blacon Children's Centre
10. Highfield Community Primary School
11. Chester Skills Development Centre
12. Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses
13. JH Godwin Primary School Stepping Stones Pre School
14. Blacon High School
15. Willows Care Home
16. Matthew Henry Evangelical Church
17. Ash Tree Day Nursery
18. Dee Point Primary School
19. Chester Mosque and Islamic Centre
20. Western Avenue Medical Centre
21. Busy Bees Chester Hopscotch Childcare

Proposals affecting a Community Facility will be considered against the policies of the development plan relating to culture and community facilities.

3.13 Not only is it important to create new facilities, but it is also vital that Blacon's existing facilities are kept. This policy identifies all those facilities that the community wants to keep and to which the policies of the adopted Local Plan (policies STRAT11 and DM39 at present) should apply.

3.14 They are a mix of religious worship sites, educational facilities, sport & recreational facilities, charitable institutions, skills centres and residential care homes. In planning terms they are classed as either 'Local Community Uses' (Class F2); 'Learning and non-residential institutions' (F1), in the case schools and churches; 'Commercial, Business and Service' (E) uses in the case of day nurseries and skills centres; and 'Residential institutions' (C2) in the case of residential care homes.

Policy BLACON3: Western Avenue Local Retail Centre

As shown on the Policies Map, the Neighbourhood Plan identifies land at Western Avenue as a Local Retail Centre. Proposals affecting land within the Local Retail Centre will be considered against the policies of the development plan relating to local retail centres.

3.15 The local shopping areas at Western Avenue and The Parade are popular and are essential for meeting the day to day needs of local residents. Both comprise a critical mass of shops and services that if lost could undermine their viability as local centres.

3.16 The Parade is already defined by Policy DM15 of the adopted Local Plan as a 'local retail centre' to protect its vital value for Blacon. Local Plan Policy STRAT11 is also relevant. Although smaller in its number of units, the mix of retail and local services at Western Avenue plays an important role for residents on the southern side of Blacon in a way that is consistent with the definition of a 'local centre' in the Chester Retail Study Update report that informed the Local Plan.

Policy BLACON4: Local Green Spaces

The Neighbourhood Plan designates the following Local Green Spaces, as shown on the Policies Map:

1. Saxon Way Playing Field
2. Willow Drive Green Space
3. Queen Elizabeth Field
4. Canterbury Road Recreation Ground
5. King George's Recreation Ground
6. Cranleigh Crescent Green Space
7. Graham Road Playing Field
8. Blacon Community Nature Park
9. Dalton Close Green Space
10. Willan Road Green Space
11. Fowler Road Green Space
12. Kipling Road Green Space
13. Meynell Place Green Space
14. Shelley Road Green Space
15. Blacon Station Green Space
16. Cairns Cresent Playing Field

Proposals for inappropriate development in a local green space will only be supported in very special circumstances.

3.17 Blacon is almost surrounded by the Green Belt but some of the open spaces within the community are just as precious to retain for local amenity and use by residents. The policy designates them as Local Green Spaces which gives them an equivalent

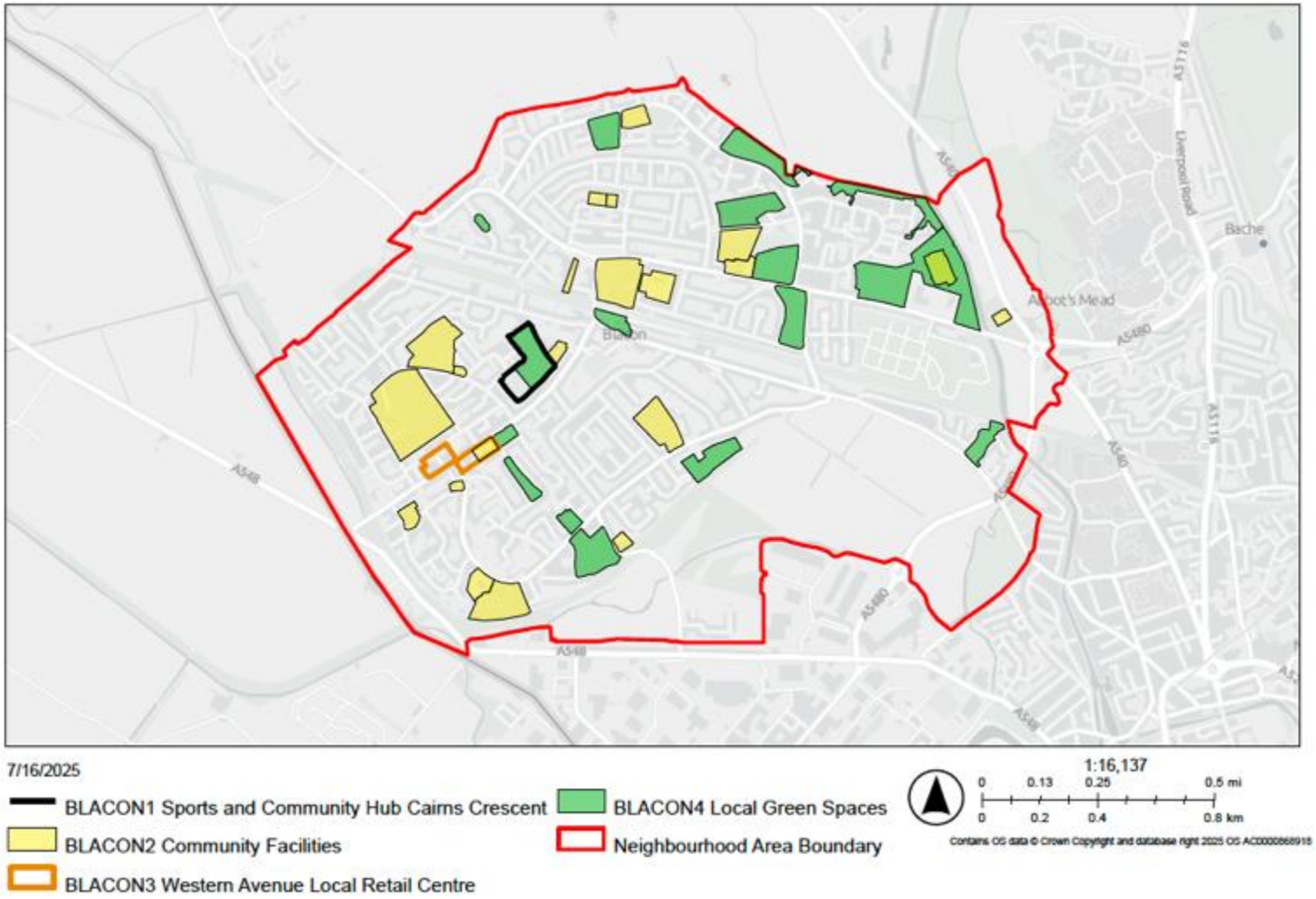
protection of the Green Belt. Only in ‘very special circumstances’ therefore will inappropriate development on them be supported.

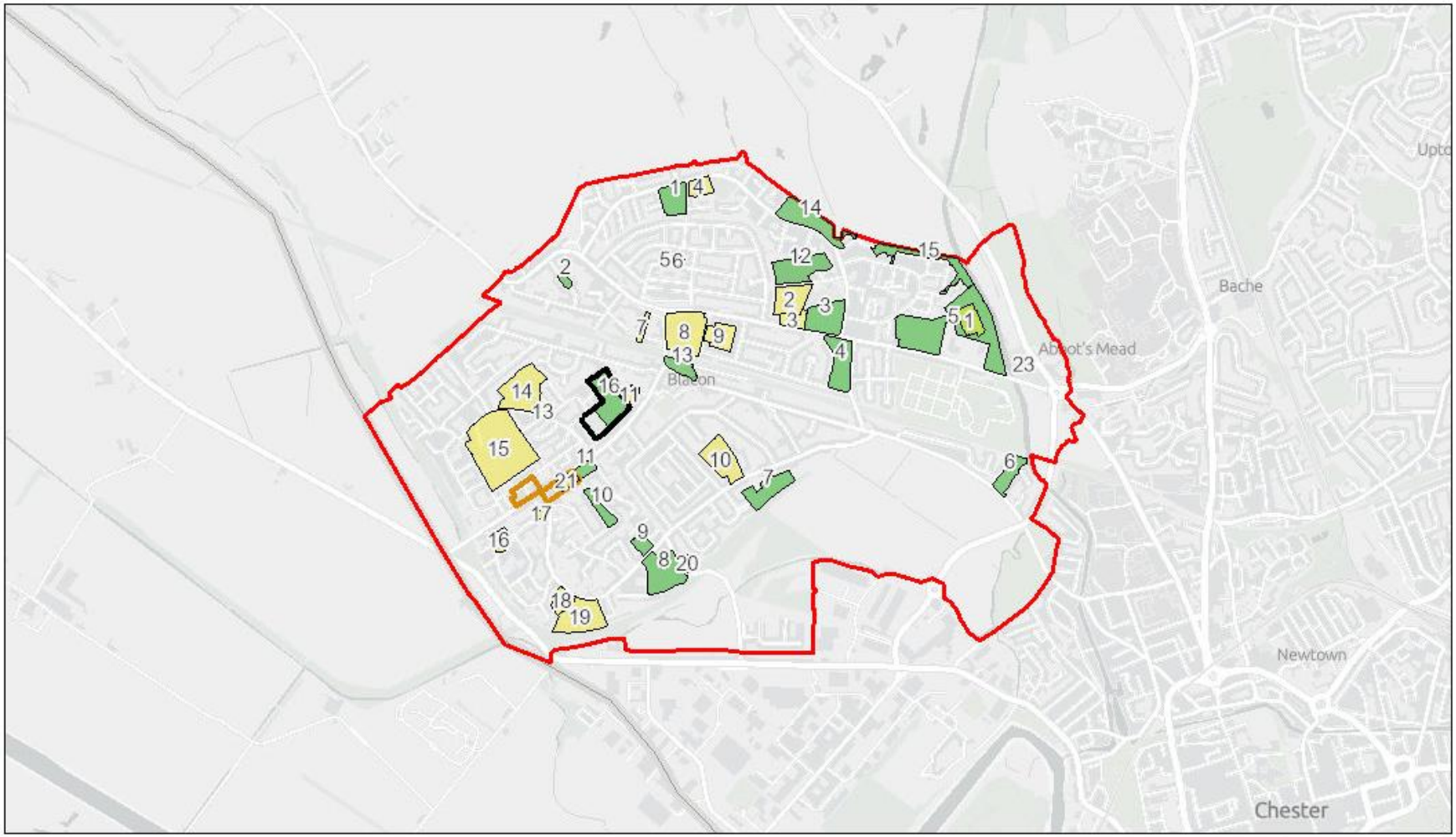
3.18 A review of all open land within Blacon has been completed and using national criteria these eleven sites are considered to justify this status. They are all relatively small parcels of land lying in close proximity to the surrounding local communities and all are cherished as open spaces by local people.

3.19 Without exception, the green spaces in Blacon serve as vital community hubs, offering residents a much-needed escape from the densely built environment. Families gather for picnics, children play safely away from traffic, and local groups use them for activities like outdoor events, fitness classes, and social activities. Some also provide an essential connection to nature – Queen’s Park especially – but all help improve mental well-being and foster a sense of community among residents. For many, especially those without private gardens, the spaces are their only access to greenery, making it crucial for relaxation, exercise, and informal social interaction.

3.20 The proposed Local Green Space at Cairns Crescent Playing Field complements the proposals in Policy BLACON1. The retention and reorganisation of the sports pitches, and the demolition of the existing building in that space, are compatible with this designation, which will ensure that part of the site will be protected from any further development.

Blacon Community Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map





5/22/2026

BLACON1 Sports and Community Hub Cairns Crescent

BLACON2 Community Facilities

BLACON3 Western Avenue Local Retail Centre

BLACON4 Local Green Spaces

Neighbourhood Area Boundary

1:20,357

0 0.17 0.35 0.7 mi

0 0.28 0.55 1.1 km

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4. INFORMATION

4.1 The BNA has referred to the following documents as its evidence to support the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan:

- Community Engagement Report
- Local Green Space Survey
- Sports & Community Hub Feasibility Study
- CWaC Playing Pitch Strategy Update

4.2 The policies of the BCNP will be used by CWaC in its determination of planning applications in Blacon and by the BNA, BCT and others in delivering the new facilities.

4.3 If future funds become available, the BNA will also seek to invest them in addressing the priorities identified in its stakeholder engagement work:

1. The NHS dentist stands out as a critical missing service that Blacon residents strongly desire.
2. There is demand for more community-based facilities, especially for children, young adults, and sports.
3. Affordable and accessible cafés, fresh food options, and community centres seem to be focal points for further development.

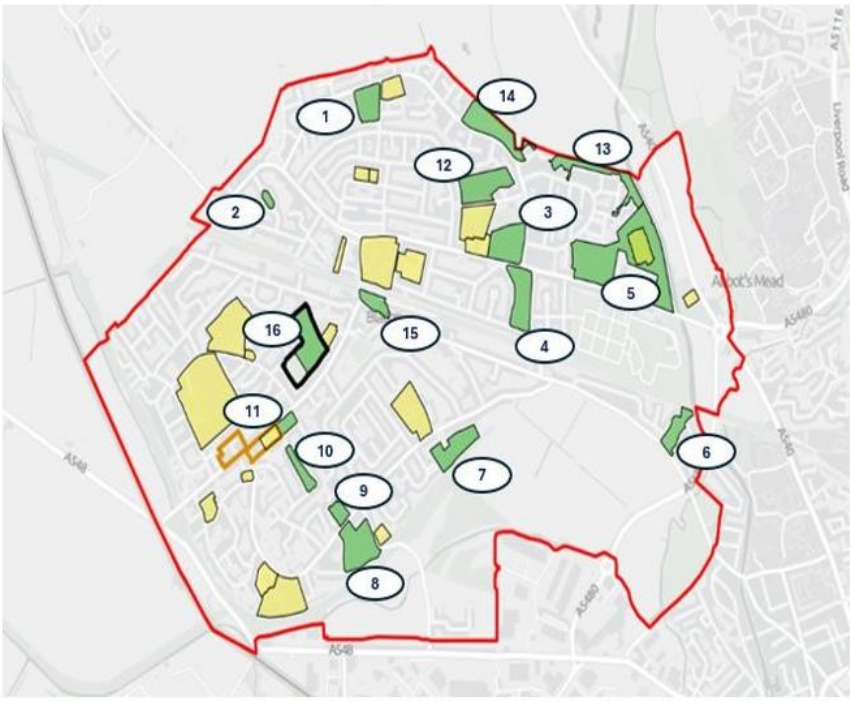
4.4 The BNA kindly acknowledges the help of the following in the production of the BCNP:

- Cheshire Community Action
- Cheshire West and Chester Council
- Locality
- ONH Planning for Good

APPENDIX A: LOCAL GREEN SPACES INFORMATION

This Appendix provides information in support of the proposed Local Green Space designations in Policy BLACON4. It has been prepared by the Working Group with the engagement of the local community both before and during the project.

Each Local Green Space is described in terms of its special value to the community (per NPPF §107b) and has been photographed.



Local Green Space

1. Saxon Road Playing Field
2. Willow Drive Green Space
3. Queen Elizabeth Field
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12. Kipling Road Green Space
13. Meynell Place Green Space
14. Shelley Road Green Space
15. Blacon Station Green Space
16. Cairns Crescent

1. Saxon Way Playing Field

Saxon Way Playing Field is a large, open green space located within a residential area of Blacon. It provides a safe and accessible environment for children and families to enjoy a wide range of outdoor activities. The field includes a well-maintained children's play area, equipped with play equipment that encourages physical activity, social interaction, and imaginative play. Additionally, goalposts are permanently erected on the open grass, offering space for informal football games and encouraging young people to be active within their own neighbourhood.

Surrounded by housing and easily reached by foot, this green space acts as an informal community hub—used daily for casual play, dog walking, and neighbourly interaction. Its size and layout make it especially valuable for unstructured recreation, giving local children a safe alternative to playing near roads or in unsuitable urban spaces.

Designating Saxon Way Playing Field as a Local Green Space will help ensure this much-needed area remains protected from future development, allowing it to continue serving as an essential space for sport, play, and wellbeing in the Blacon community.

2. Willow Drive Green Space

Willow Drive Green Space is a small but significant amenity area situated within the Willow Drive residential area in Blacon. The green space is surrounded by approximately 35 properties, providing immediate access to a natural environment for local residents. This open space offers a safe and accessible area for informal recreation, children's play, and community gatherings. Its presence is particularly valuable in a densely populated area where private gardens may be limited, offering residents a communal area for relaxation and social interaction. The green space contributes to the overall green infrastructure of Blacon, supporting local biodiversity and enhancing the visual appeal of the neighbourhood. Protecting Willow Drive Green Space from future development is essential to maintain the quality of life for residents and to preserve the environmental and social benefits it provides.

3. Queen Elizabeth Field

Queen Elizabeth Field is a well-used and much-loved green space situated in the heart of Blacon. It provides a safe, welcoming, and easily accessible area for sport, recreation, and a wide range of community activities. The space is regularly enjoyed by residents of all ages and supports informal games, children's play, dog walking, and social gatherings.

As one of the few large open green spaces in the area, the field plays a vital role in promoting physical health and mental wellbeing, particularly for young people and families. Community engagement platforms, such as local Facebook groups, frequently showcase the field being used for seasonal events like the Blacon Festival, underlining its social and cultural importance to the area.

Although the field previously offered a full-sized grass football pitch, these are no longer actively used. However, the site remains an essential community asset due to its size, versatility, and informal character. Without any commercial or institutional restrictions, it is freely accessible and inclusive, making it a popular and much-valued space for everyday use.

Designating Queen Elizabeth Field as a Local Green Space will ensure it is safeguarded from future development and continues to provide vital health, environmental, and social benefits to the people of Blacon for years to come.

4. Canterbury Road Recreation Ground

Canterbury Road Recreation Ground is a well-established, multi-functional green space located in the heart of Blacon. It plays a vital role in supporting physical activity, social connection, and community cohesion for residents of all ages. In 2019, the play area was significantly refurbished, enhancing safety and inclusivity and creating a welcoming environment for children and families.

The site also features a large open field with two permanent football pitches, which are regularly used by local residents and community football teams for training and recreational matches. In early 2025, Blacon Youth FC launched a new girls' football team based at this site, offering essential opportunities for young female players to train and compete within their own community. The ground has also proven itself to be a successful venue for large-scale community events, most notably Blacon's Platinum Jubilee Festival in 2022, which brought together families, local organisations and residents in a joyful celebration of community pride.

This substantial green space provides an essential escape from the densely built environment of the surrounding estate. Families gather, children play safely away from traffic, and local groups make use of the area for outdoor events, sporting activities, such as football, and social activities. For many residents—especially those without access to private gardens—it offers their only nearby access to open green space. This connection to nature supports mental well-being and creates a stronger sense of belonging and resilience within the community.

Like other valued parks on the Blacon Estate, Canterbury Road Recreation Ground promotes not only well-being and environmental health, but also social cohesion and biodiversity. It provides a safe, welcoming space for informal recreation and shared community use. Development on this land would erase these vital benefits, diminishing quality of life and undermining the social and environmental fabric of the neighbourhood.

Designating Canterbury Road Recreation Ground as a Local Green Space will help safeguard it against future development and ensure that it continues to support the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of Blacon residents for generations to come.

5. King George's Recreation Ground

King George's Recreation Ground is a key green space in Blacon, offering high-quality recreational and sporting facilities for local residents. In 2023, significant improvement works were carried out on the site, including the upgrading and rotation of the main grass pitch to enhance its quality and maximise the recreational value of the surrounding area. Although initially planned as a grass football pitch, the site now features a rugby pitch, complete with new drainage, re-seeding, levelling, and the creation of a small grass viewing bank for spectators. These enhancements were designed to improve the durability and usability of the field for community sport, while maintaining open green areas for dog walking, informal play, and outdoor exercise.

The site remains largely accessible to the public. A children's playground is also located on-site, providing a safe and well-used space for younger residents. In addition, the refurbished pavilion received new changing room benches in 2023, further improving the facilities for sports teams and visitors.

King George's is also home to Chester FC Community Trust, which manages the adjacent 4G artificial pitches. This close proximity to a hub of community sport and development programmes reinforces the strategic value of the site for health, fitness, and social cohesion.

Designating King George's Recreation Ground as a Local Green Space will ensure it remains protected from inappropriate development and continues to serve as a cornerstone of sport, play, and wellbeing for the Blacon community.

6. Cranleigh Crescent Green Space

Cranleigh Crescent Green Space is a vital amenity, providing residents with a nearby open area that supports informal recreation, children's play and everyday relaxation. Surrounded by residential housing, the site enables families to access greenery without the need to travel. Locally the green space offers a safe and accessible setting for children's kicking-about, dog walking, meeting neighbours and enjoying fresh air. Retaining and designating Cranleigh Crescent Green Space as a Local Green Space will secure its value for outdoor activity, community cohesion and mental wellbeing, safeguarding it from future development pressures and ensuring it remains a shared asset for current and future residents.

7. Graham Road Playing Field

Graham Road Playing Field is a well-used and valued green space in the heart of a residential area in Blacon. In 2018, the site benefited from a significant upgrade to its play area, with new equipment installed through a partnership between Avenue Services and Cheshire West and Chester Council. This investment created a more stimulating and inclusive environment for children, enhancing the play value and safety of the space for families in the area.

Alongside the formal play area, the field provides a large, open grassed space used informally for games, picnics, dog walking, and community gatherings. Surrounded by housing, the playing field is especially important for those without access to private gardens and offers a safe, traffic-free location for outdoor recreation and social interaction.

The green space also contributes positively to the environmental quality of the neighbourhood, acting as a green lung within the urban landscape. Its continued popularity and the community-led improvements made in recent years highlight its importance to residents.

Designating Graham Road Playing Field as a Local Green Space will safeguard this vital community asset from future development, ensuring that it remains a place for play, relaxation, and neighbourhood connection for generations to come.

8. Blacon Community Nature Park

Blacon Community Nature Park is a highly valued green space that combines environmental, social, and educational benefits in the heart of the community. It serves as a natural sanctuary for a wide variety of wildlife, supporting local biodiversity through its open meadows, woodland areas, and purpose-built habitats such as bug hotels and bird nesting boxes. These features have been developed and maintained with the help of local volunteers, underlining the park's deep community roots.

The park includes a network of accessible footpaths that allow residents to explore and enjoy nature on their doorstep—providing crucial opportunities for outdoor activity, mindfulness, and connection to the natural environment. It is especially important for residents living in nearby high-density housing, where access to private green space is limited.

The space is actively used for community-led activities such as regular litter picks, nature walks, school visits, and educational workshops. Its dedicated Facebook page demonstrates consistent local engagement and ongoing support from residents and partner organisations. As one of the few designated nature-focused spaces in Blacon, it plays a vital role in promoting environmental stewardship, physical wellbeing, and social cohesion.

Designating Blacon Community Nature Park as a Local Green Space will ensure its protection from future development and preserve its unique ecological and community value for generations to come.

9. Dalton Close Green Space

Dalton Close Green Space is a modest but well-utilised green area located within a quiet residential cul-de-sac in Blacon. Framed by a cluster of homes on three sides, the space serves as an informal communal area that provides essential outdoor access for families and individuals—particularly those without private gardens. The open layout allows for safe play, casual ball games, dog walking, and social interaction between neighbours, fostering a strong sense of community.

Its peaceful setting, set back from main roads, offers a safe and easily accessible outdoor environment for children and older residents alike. The green space also contributes to the visual character and environmental quality of the area, softening the built environment and supporting local biodiversity.

Designating Dalton Close Green Space as a Local Green Space will help preserve its role as a valued community asset and ensure that it continues to enhance the wellbeing, connectivity, and quality of life for residents in this part of Blacon.

10. Willan Road Green Space

Willan Road Green Space is a small but valued open area located within the residential setting of Willan Road in Blacon. Like the nearby green spaces at Dalton Close and Willow Drive, it provides an important communal area for local residents—many of whom have limited or no access to private gardens. The space is used informally by children for outdoor play and by families and neighbours as a convenient place to meet, relax, and enjoy the outdoors. Its open nature and central location within the housing area make it a safe and accessible environment for everyday recreation. The space also contributes to local biodiversity, helps to break up the built environment, and improves the overall visual appeal of the street. Protecting Willan Road Green Space through Local Green Space designation will ensure that this valued community asset remains available to support residents' wellbeing, foster social connections, and provide vital access to green space in the heart of the estate.

11. Fowler Road Green Space

Fowler Road Green Space is a well-used open area situated at the junction of Fowler Road, Western Avenue, Chevron Hey, and Wemyss Road. Its central location makes it easily accessible to a wide number of residents from surrounding streets, acting as a shared green space that bridges multiple roads. The space is frequently used for informal play and dog walking, and there is a public bench installed, offering a convenient resting point for pedestrians, especially older residents or those walking longer routes. Given its position along key walking routes, the green also provides a welcome visual break from the urban landscape, contributing to both the aesthetics and environmental quality of the area. In a community where garden space is limited for many households, Fowler Road Green Space is particularly important for promoting physical activity, mental wellbeing, and social interaction. Designating this site as a Local Green Space will protect it from future development and ensure it continues to benefit local residents and enhance the area's character.

12. Kipling Road Green Space

Kipling Road Green Space is a substantial open area located within a residential part of Blacon. Although currently fenced off and not in active public use, the land offers significant potential as a community asset. Its size and location make it particularly well-suited for recreational purposes, including the development of grassroots football facilities. If formally designated and protected, the space could accommodate junior-sized football pitches and provide a vital base for youth and community sports teams in the area.

The site could also support the installation of a secure container for storing equipment such as portable goalposts and nets, ensuring the space can be used effectively and safely by local groups. The protection and activation of this land would help address the growing demand for accessible, community-run sports facilities in Blacon, particularly for young people.

Designating the Kipling Road site as a Local Green Space would prevent future development that could permanently remove this opportunity, and instead safeguard the land for future generations to enjoy structured sport, physical activity, and improved community wellbeing.

13. Meynell Place Green Space

Meynell Place Green Space is a well-used and versatile area that plays a significant role in supporting the recreational and wellbeing needs of residents in this part of Blacon.

The green space is bordered on one side by a road and row of residential properties and framed by mature trees and shrubbery on the other, providing both natural beauty and a sense of enclosure and safety. A pathway runs through the space, offering a convenient and scenic route for pedestrians and dog walkers alike.

The site includes a small children's play area equipped with a climbing frame and swings, and also features a fenced basketball court, which provides a valuable outlet for older children and teenagers to play and socialise in a safe, outdoor setting. The court supports informal sporting activity and promotes physical exercise and community engagement among young people, helping to reduce anti-social behaviour by offering a dedicated recreational outlet.

The green space also backs onto wider open fields, adding to its visual appeal and strengthening its connection with the natural landscape. As a multi-functional space that caters to a range of age groups and activities, Meynell Place Green Space is particularly valuable to local residents—especially those without access to private gardens. It supports physical activity, mental wellbeing, and informal community interaction on a daily basis.

Designating Meynell Place as a Local Green Space will ensure this essential neighbourhood asset is protected from development, allowing it to continue benefiting the Blacon community for years to come.

14. Shelley Road Green Space

Shelley Road Green Space is a valuable and well-situated open area in Blacon, bordered on one side by a row of houses and on the other by mature trees and shrubbery. It backs onto a larger expanse of open green fields, which visually extends the landscape and provides a sense of openness for nearby residents. The space lies adjacent to a main road and is positioned along a key bus route, making it highly visible and accessible to the wider community.

A well-used pathway runs alongside the green space, offering a pleasant walking route for pedestrians, dog walkers, and those accessing local amenities or public transport. The green itself provides an important visual and environmental buffer between the residential area and the traffic of Shelley Road, enhancing the local streetscape and contributing to a calmer, greener neighbourhood environment.

For nearby residents, particularly those without access to private gardens, Shelley Road Green Space is a valued location for informal play, relaxation, and everyday connection to nature. Designating this area as a Local Green Space will help protect it from future development and ensure it continues to deliver environmental, aesthetic, and community benefits to Blacon for generations to come.

15. Blacon Station Green Space

Blacon Station Green Space is a linear, historically significant area located on the former site of **Blacon Railway Station**, which once served the local community before its closure. Today, the space forms a gateway to the **Blacon Cycle Path**, a well-used traffic-free route that provides safe access for pedestrians and cyclists travelling to and from the city centre and surrounding areas.

This green corridor not only offers a practical transport link but also preserves a sense of local heritage, with the station's former location contributing to the area's character and identity. The green space is bordered by trees and vegetation, supporting local biodiversity and offering a peaceful, natural environment in contrast to the urban surroundings.

Its connection to the wider cycle network encourages sustainable travel, physical activity, and outdoor recreation, making it especially valuable to families, commuters, and recreational users. The space also provides an informal walking route and a place for rest and reflection, helping to promote mental and physical wellbeing.

Designating Blacon Station Green Space as a Local Green Space will ensure the protection of this historically and strategically important site, preserving its ecological, recreational, and transport value for the Blacon community.

16. Cairns Crescent Playing Field

Cairns Crescent Playing Field is a long-standing and highly valued open space located in the heart of Blacon. It plays a vital role in supporting the physical, social, and emotional wellbeing of local residents, serving as a hub for grassroots football, school sports, informal recreation, and community activity. The site is home to a full-sized football pitch and two 7-a-side pitches, and also includes a youth centre and a children's play area that has long been central to local family life.

Recognising community concerns over the current condition of the play area, the CWaC has committed to funding its refurbishment to ensure that it remains safe, inclusive, and accessible to all residents. Investment in the existing facility is both urgent and appropriate, given that the proposed Indoor Sports and Community Hub, subject to approval via the Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO), may take several years to move from referendum to delivery. Any future relocation of the play area as part of the development can be carefully planned and budgeted for in due course.

Formal designation of Cairns Crescent as a Local Green Space under the Blacon Community Neighbourhood Plan will safeguard this much-loved public amenity from inappropriate development and ensure its continued use for outdoor recreation and community benefit. The protection aligns with the BCNP's core objectives to enhance Blacon's green infrastructure, promote active lifestyles, and respond to the needs of residents, particularly children, young people, and families, who rely on access to high-quality, local open spaces.