

Policy Statement



Town and Village Green Registration

Sept 2011

The protection of sites from development by registering them as village greens is a topical subject. There have been a number of high profile instances of developments having been defeated at the last moment by a successful application for registration. No doubt because of this, the law relating to village green protections has spawned a growing number of court cases, and as such village green protection is seen by campaigners as a powerful tool for preventing development.

FIT acknowledges that village green registrations can be an effective means of protecting recreation sites from development, but FIT also considers that village green applications should only be used to legitimately protect genuine recreational sites that are under threat from development proposals and which benefit from no other protection.

Whilst superficially the acknowledgement of village green status for a site may be seen to align with FIT's objectives, in reality village green registration can prove to be highly detrimental to the future use and management of recreational sites. For example, in all but the most limited circumstances any built development on a village green is unlawful. This means that the flexibility of use enjoyed by a site, and in particular the ability to improve facilities used by sports clubs and members of the public, is greatly impaired.

As a consequence FIT's strong preference is that recreational land be protected through charitable or non-charitable deeds which use the law of charity and/or the law of contract to prevent incompatible uses but which still preserve the flexibility for complementary development to improve facilities.

FIT strongly opposes the use of village green applications merely as a weapon by campaigners to defeat unwanted development.

