

Haynes Green Infrastructure Plan

Appendix 3

Local Green Space Assessment

1. Background

The Local Green Space Designation was introduced by the National Planning Policy Framework (2011) as “a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities”. Paragraph 77 of the NPPF sets out the criteria that green space must meet in order to be designated as ‘Local Green Space’:

“The Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. The designation should only be used:

- Where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves
- Where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife
- Where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land”.

In addition to these criteria, National Planning Practice Guidance states:

“Local Green Space designation will rarely be appropriate where the land has planning permission for development. Exceptions could be where the development would be compatible with the reasons for designation or where planning permission is no longer capable of being implemented”.

Other existing designations, such as Green Belt or Conservation Area status, do not necessarily preclude or support designation as Local Green Space, but it is necessary to consider whether the additional designation is necessary and would serve a useful purpose.

The Pre-Submission Central Bedfordshire Local Plan makes provision for Local Green Spaces to be designated through a Neighbourhood Plan. Therefore the Haynes Neighbourhood Plan includes this assessment of green spaces for consideration as LGS, and provides recommendations for those that should be designated through the Neighbourhood Plan. The assessment follows a process developed by the Greensand Trust and the Bedfordshire Rural Communities Council, working alongside Central Bedfordshire Council, included in full as **Annex 1** of this document.

2a. The Assessment – Stage 1

The first stage is a desktop assessment which results in a shortlist from the list of greenspaces created as part of the GI Plan. Because a space has to meet all of the criteria to be proposed for designation, those that do not meet one or more can be rejected at this stage. It is possible to identify whether a site has an existing planning permission, is allocated in a development plan or has an existing designation that would mean LGS designation would add little or no additional protection as part of desktop research.

Where it is possible to identify where the site does not meet any of the other criteria in Stage 2 during desktop analysis it is possible to reject the space at Stage 1. **Table 1** below demonstrates this process, with **Figure 5** (within the main GI Plan document) showing the location and relative size of each site.

Table 1 – Desktop Analysis

Label	Name	Not subject of a Planning Permission	Not allocated for development	Not already Designated	Pass to Stage 2?
1	Keyse's Spinney CWS	✓	✓	✓	X Possible to exclude at this stage on basis of being remote from community.
2	Lark Hill CWS	✓	✓	✓	X Possible to exclude at this stage on basis of being remote from the community.
3	Haynes Church End Churchyard	✓	✓	✓ Consecrated.	X
4	Grange Meadow CWS	✓	✓	✓	X Possible to exclude at this stage on basis of being extensive (18.31ha).
5	Northwood End Farm Access Area	✓	✓	✓	✓
6	Plummers Copse (AKA Millennium Wood or Plummers Wood)	✓	✓	✓	✓
7	Haynes Silver End Road Allotments	✓	✓	✓	✓
8	Haynes Lower School Playing Field	✓	✓	✓	✓
9	Haynes Recreation Ground (including	✓	✓	✓	✓

	Community Garden and Play Area)				
10	Warden Great Wood CWS	✓	✓	✓	X Possible to exclude at this stage on basis of being extensive – although area within parish is small this is an indistinguishable fragment (2.05ha) of a much larger woodland (67.53ha)
11	Haynes Allotments – Northwood End Road	✓	✓	✓	✓ Additional area adjacent also identified – different in character so put forward for field assessment as 11a.
12	Orchard – Haynes Park	✓	✓	✓ Although within Registered Park and Garden this designation is not considered sufficient to negate LGS consideration.	X Possible to exclude at this stage on basis of being remote from the community.
13	Orchard	✓	✓	✓	✓
14	Orchard	✓	✓	✓	✓
15	Orchard	✓	✓	✓	✓
16	Haynes Park	✓	✓	✓ Although Registered Park and Garden this designation is not considered sufficient to negate LGS consideration.	X Possible to exclude at this stage as extensive (28.27ha)
17	Bessie's Field and Gravel Pit	✓	✓	✓	✓
18	Woodland adjacent to Greyhound	✓	✓	✓	✓
19	School Copse	✓	✓	✓	✓

20	Old Orchard and War Memorial (Silver End Road)	✓	✓	✓	✓
21	Haynes West End 'Village Green'	✓	✓	✓	✓
22	Deadmans Cross Green Area	✓	✓	✓	✓
23	The Old Green	✓	✓	✓	✓

2b. Assessment Stage 2

Further analysis, including field visits carried out in 2018 and early 2019, looked at those sites that had been passed at Stage 1. The sites being proposed as LGS are also illustrated in **Figure 1** of this appendix (Figure 5b in the main report) and the detailed justification is recorded in the individual site summaries (Section 4 below).

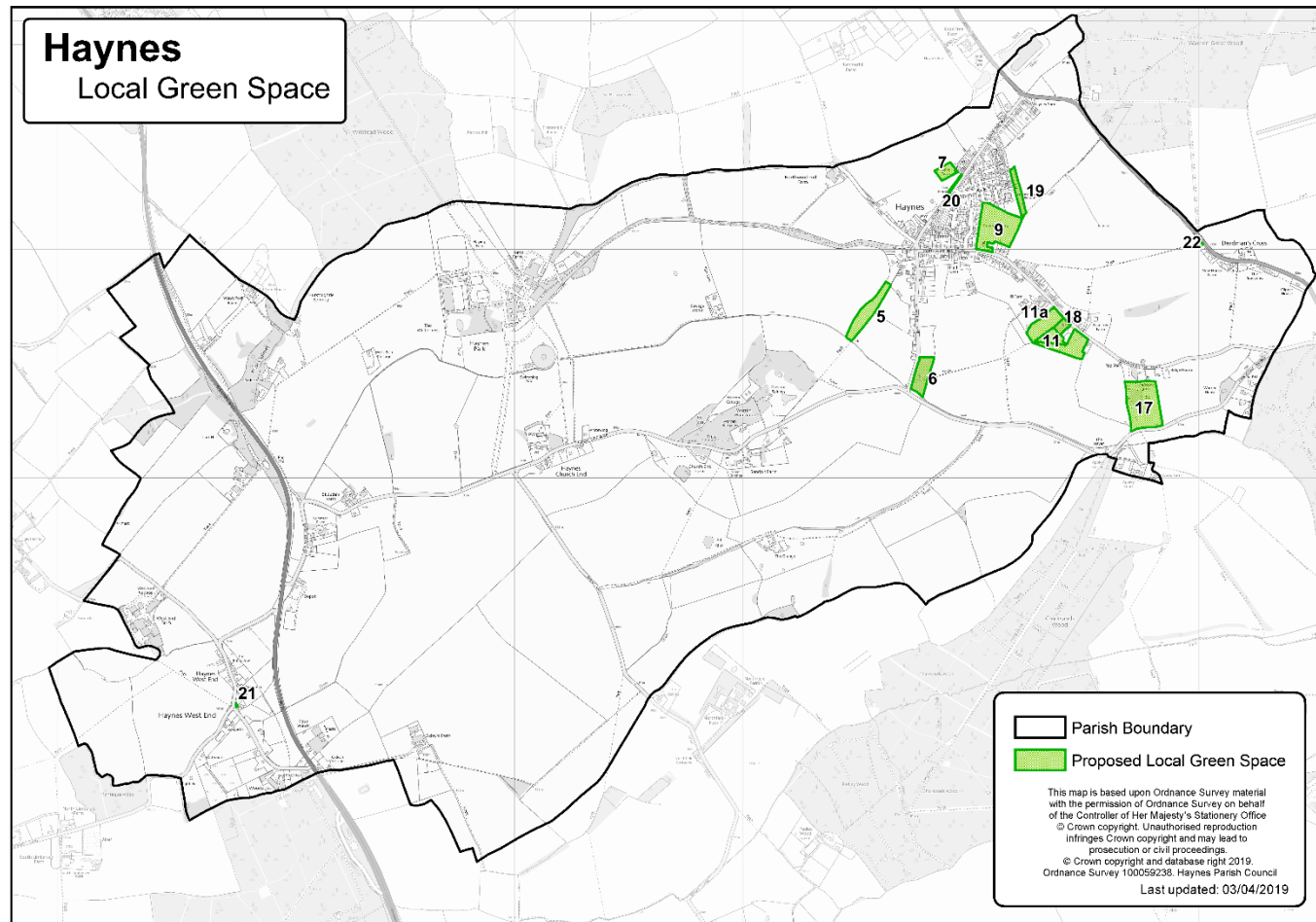
Table 2: Stage 2 – Field Survey results

Site No.	Name	Not Extensive	Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special and Locally Significant*	Recommend Designation?
5	Northwood End Farm Access Land	✓	✓	✓ a, c, d, e	Yes
6	Plummers Copse	✓	✓	✓ a, c, d, e	Yes
7	Haynes Silver End Rd Allotments	✓	✓	✓ c, f	Yes
8	Haynes Lower School Playing Field	✓	✓	X Insufficient evidence.	No
9	Haynes Recreation Ground	✓	✓	✓ c, d	Yes
11	Haynes Allotments Northwood End Rd	✓	✓	✓ a, c, d	Yes
11a	Field surrounding Northwood End Allotments	✓	✓	✓ a, c, d, e	Yes
13	Orchard	✓	✓	X	No
14	Orchard	✓	✓	X	No
15	Orchard	✓	✓	X	No
17	Bessie's Field and Gravel Pit	✓	✓	✓ a, b, c, d, e	Yes
18	Woodland adjacent to Greyhound PH	✓	✓	✓ a, e	Yes
19	School Copse	✓	✓	✓ c, d, e	Yes
20	Old Orchard and War Memorial	✓	✓	✓ b	Yes
21	Haynes West End 'Village Green'	✓	✓	✓ c	Yes
22	Deadmans Cross Green Space	✓	✓	✓ c, e	Yes
23	Old Village Green	✓	✓	X	No

* The matrix should record which of the 'Locally Significant' sub-criteria (a-f) the site meets the requirement with, and be accompanied by a written commentary to justify this. Only one of the sub-criteria needs to be met for a site to be scored positively.

a beauty b historic c recreation d tranquillity e wildlife f other

Figure 1 – Candidate Local Green Spaces



2c. Reasons for Rejection:

It was possible to reject several sites on the basis of extensiveness or (lack of) proximity at the desk study stage: Sites 1 and 2 and 12 were rejected on these grounds. Although slightly closer to some dwellings than the recommended 1.2 miles, they are a significant distance from the main village core at Silver End. Sites 4 (18.31ha) and 10 (67ha) were rejected on the basis of being extensive. While there is no guide figure, the size and nature of the sites and the context of the parish are taken into account.

Site 3 was rejected on the basis of the churchyard being consecrated and considered to have significant protection.

Further sites were rejected at the field survey stage, usually on the basis of not being able to demonstrate that the community specifically values or that they are demonstrably special.

3. Next Steps

This assessment has resulted in a list of sites recommended for designation as Local Green Spaces, as part of the Haynes Green Infrastructure Plan. As noted above, the power to designate is through the Neighbourhood Plan, and not the Green Infrastructure Plan.

Therefore the role of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is to:

- a) Discuss with landowners
- b) Assess the list of proposed LGS and the justification for them, and include in the Neighbourhood Plan those that they feel are appropriate;

It should be noted that although landowner consent is not required to designate, it is considered fair and appropriate to discuss with landowners prior to designation. Any discussion should highlight what LGS designation means to the site in question.

Further information on the sites and the reasons for proposed designation are included in the individual site summaries below.

4. Individual Site Summaries

The following summaries cover all of the sites proposed for Local Green Space designation, and include the justifications for their designation.

Site 5: Northwood End Farm Access Land



View of Northwood End Farm Access Land

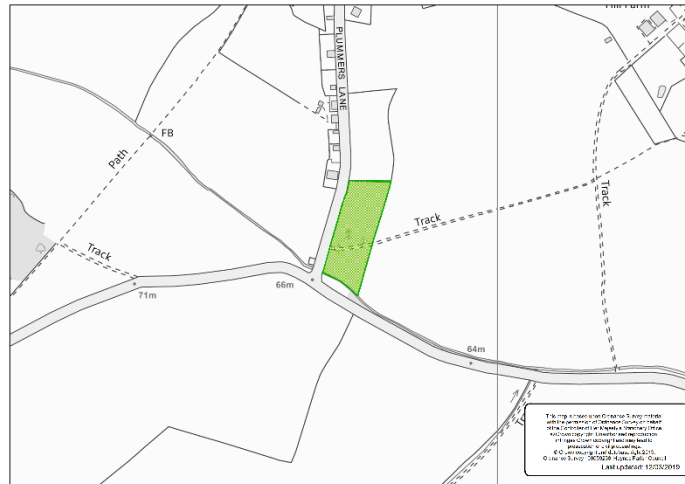


View from Access Land



Site Owner	The site is rented by one local farmer from another. It is provided as access land as part of an agri-environment agreement due to terminate in 2019/20. It is understood that if an appropriate future opportunity to enter into a similar agreement is not found it may not continue as access land.
Location	West of Plummers Lane, immediately adjacent to Haynes Silver End.
Status/Designations	Open access under an agri-environment agreement due to terminate in 2019/20.
Size	1.27ha
Description	An open, uncultivated field surrounded by cultivated farmland on the top of a slope.
Boundaries	Although the photographs don't demonstrate this well, the site is clearly demarcated with fences and/or banks. It is visibly distinct from the surrounding land when viewed from the nearby road.
Distance from Village	Adjacent.
Uses	Quiet recreation – walking, dog walking. Admiring the views.
Quality	Moderate/high – there are few facilities but the land is well managed.
Facilities	A bench and an information panel. The bench is situated at the highest point of the site offering views of the valley below and more distant landscapes.
Visual Attractiveness	Very high – it is distinct when viewed from the road as an uncultivated piece of land, and the panoramic views are stunning. The site is the focal point of one of the 'key views' in the GI Plan.
Historical Significance	None identified.
Recreational Value	High – a piece of green space close to the village. The CBC Leisure Strategy has identified deficits in this type of greenspace in the parish. A public footpath runs through the site, and there are connections with the wider permissive path network. Mentioned in community consultation as a 'favourite place' and as part of several 'favourite walks'.
Tranquillity	High.
Wildlife Value	Moderate – the field is uncultivated but dogs run loose in the area.
Recommend as a LGS?	Yes, especially on the basis of its recreational value and the importance as a viewpoint.

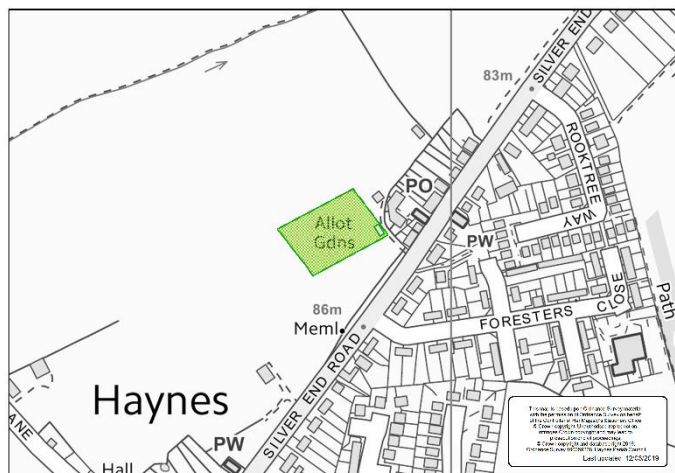
Site 6: Plummers Copse



Site Owner	The Woodland Trust
Location	South of Silver End/Northwood End, immediately adjacent to Plummers Lane
Status/Designations	None

Size	0.98ha
Description	A relatively young woodland planted at the time of the Millennium with recreation in mind – includes paths, a large central glade and a mix of species.
Boundaries	The wood has very clear hedged/wooded edges. The sections of hedgerows have been laid to strengthen the edge and add to aesthetic value.
Distance from Village	250m, although visitors wishing to avoid walking on the road have to walk c750m on nearby footpaths.
Uses	Quiet recreation, observing wildlife, walking, dog walking.
Quality	Very high. The site is well managed, and features such as hedgelaying add to the quality. The site has a local volunteer warden.
Facilities	An interpretation panel and benches.
Visual Attractiveness	High – the young woodland is mature enough to feel like a woodland, with trees well over head height. The site is also an important piece of woodland in the landscape.
Historical Significance	Moderate – although a relatively young woodland it was planted to mark the Millennium.
Recreational Value	High – especially given deficits in natural green space identified locally. Significant mention in community consultation as a ‘favourite place’ and as part of several ‘favourite walks’.
Tranquillity	High
Wildlife Value	Moderate/High – will increase as woodland matures.
Recommend as a LGS?	Yes – especially on the basis of recreational value, visual attractiveness and wildlife value.

Site 7: Haynes Silver End Allotments



Site Owner	Not ascertained
Location	Immediately to west of Haynes Silver End
Status/Designations	Allotments
Size	0.41ha
Description	A rectangular allotment site immediately adjacent to the village, in an open countryside setting.
Boundaries	Although not clear from the photograph, the allotments are distinct from the surrounding arable land.
Distance from Village	Immediately adjacent.
Uses	Growing of vegetables and fruit.
Quality	Moderate. Some plots were not being cultivated at the time of visit, but it was noted this was winter.
Facilities	A shed is used to sell produce.
Visual Attractiveness	Moderate – the site itself is a little nondescript, but the location is attractive.
Historical Significance	Not known.
Recreational Value	Moderate/High – although not all plots are in use those that do use the allotments do value them.
Tranquillity	Moderate – general tranquillity occasionally interrupted by traffic on main road through village.
Wildlife Value	Low.
Recommend as a LGS?	Yes, on basis of recreational value.

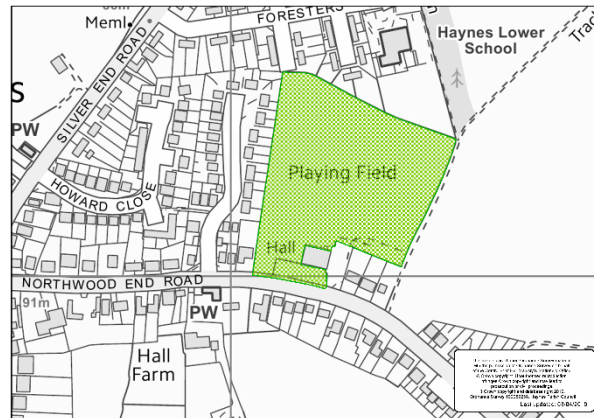
Site 8: Haynes Lower School Playing Field

No map created as not proposed.

No photograph taken because children were at play during visit.

Site Owner	Central Bedfordshire Council
Location	Immediately adjacent to Haynes Lower School on eastern side of Silver End
Status/Designations	None
Size	0.44ha
Description	A rectangular school playing field.
Boundaries	Fences with hedges/trees. A public footpath runs alongside the eastern boundary within site 19 (School Copse)
Distance from Village	Immediately adjacent
Uses	Play and sports
Quality	High – well managed.
Facilities	School adjacent.
Visual Attractiveness	Moderate/High – well enclosed.
Historical Significance	None identified.
Recreational Value	High for children at school, otherwise low as not accessible.
Tranquillity	High (except at break time!)
Wildlife Value	Moderate – hedges and trees around edge provide some habitat.
Recommend as a LGS?	No – insufficient evidence from wider community that it is valued.

Site 9: Haynes Recreation Ground



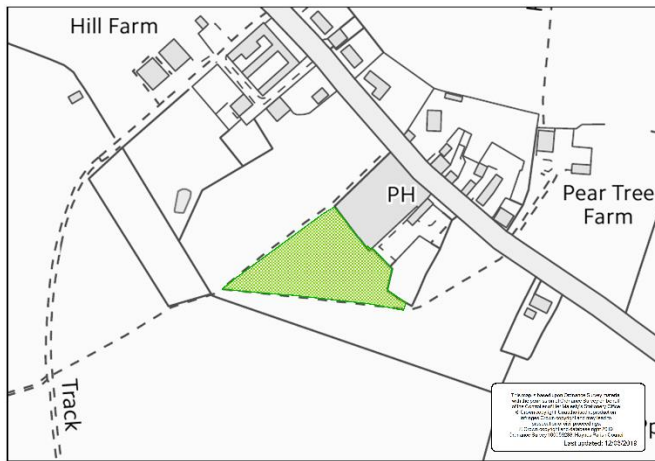
Play Area and Community Garden, Haynes Recreation Ground



Site Owner	Haynes Parish Council
Location	Immediately north of the Northwood End Road on eastern side of village.
Status/Designations	Recreation Ground.
Size	2.85ha
Description	A recreation ground with open green space used for sports, also including a Community Garden (being developed over period of visits) and play area, with village hall and car park adjacent.

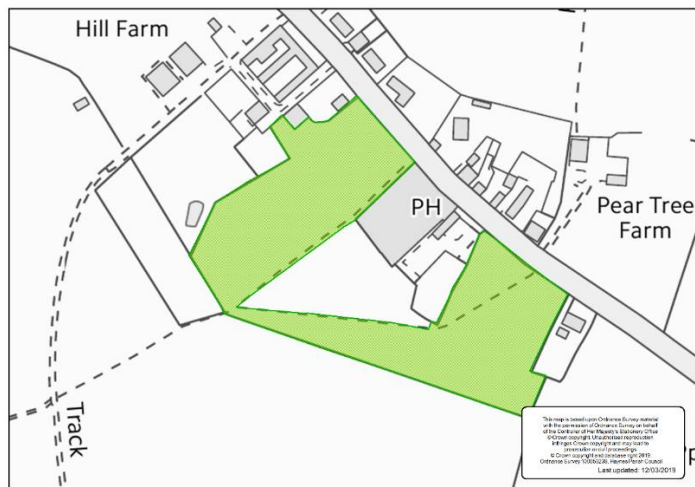
Boundaries	Fence or Fence/hedge all round.
Distance from Village	Immediately adjacent
Uses	Sports, quiet recreation, play.
Quality	High – the new Community Garden is a way of creating more of a ‘village green’ feel
Facilities	Car park adjacent. Play equipment, short section of path, bench and flower beds (Community Garden)
Visual Attractiveness	Moderate. An open green space. Community Garden has added to appeal of area adjacent to road.
Historical Significance	None identified.
Recreational Value	High – used by a wide range of people for a range of activities. Mentioned as a ‘favourite place’ in community consultation.
Tranquillity	Moderate/High – some noise from road and school at times affecting northern and southern ends.
Wildlife Value	Moderate – hedges around perimeter offer most habitat value.
Recommend as a LGS?	Yes, particularly on basis of recreational value.

Site 11: Allotments – Northwood End Road



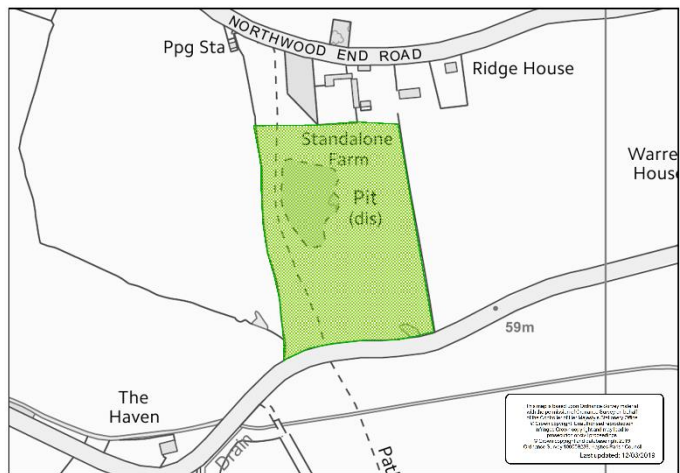
Site Owner	Not known. Potentially Central Bedfordshire Council?
Location	Behind the Greyhound Public House south of the Northwood End Road.
Status/Designations	Allotments
Size	0.52ha
Description	A triangular shaped allotment side on the edge of open countryside at the top of a hill.
Boundaries	Fenced all round.
Distance from Village	Immediately adjacent.
Uses	Allotment gardening – growing fruit and vegetables.
Quality	High – well managed, most/all plots in use.
Facilities	Water supply.
Visual Attractiveness	High – well-managed allotments in attractive open setting with panoramic views.
Historical Significance	None identified.
Recreational Value	High for allotment users.
Tranquillity	High
Wildlife Value	Moderate
Recommend as a LGS?	Yes, on basis of recreational value and setting.

Site 11b – Field surrounding Northwood End Allotments



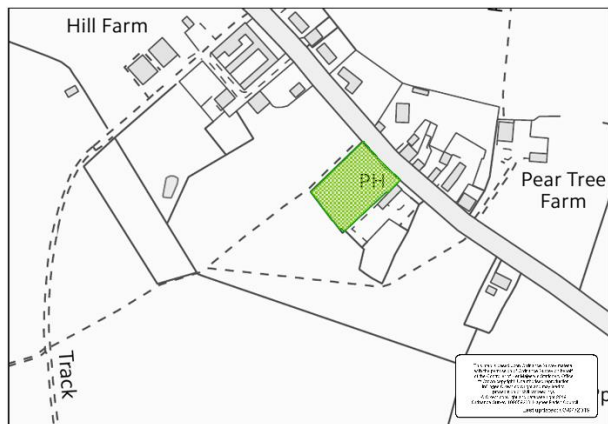
Site Owner	Private ownership
Location	Immediately adjacent to Northwood End Road, surrounding allotments.
Status/Designations	None
Size	2.28ha
Description	Pasture surrounding allotments.
Boundaries	Hedges with fence around allotment,
Distance from Village	Immediately adjacent
Uses	Quiet recreation
Quality	High – attractive meadow, appears well-managed.
Facilities	None
Visual Attractiveness	High – attractive meadow with attractive views
Historical Significance	Hedgerows appear to be of reasonable antiquity.
Recreational Value	High – two popular footpaths pass through, adjacent to allotments.
Tranquillity	High
Wildlife Value	High – hedgerows appear to be of reasonable antiquity and species rich. Oak trees in hedgerow.
Recommend as a LGS?	Yes, particularly on basis of recreational and landscape value.

Site 17: Bessie's Field & Gravel Pit



Site Owner	Private ownership
Location	An area wedged between the Northwood End Road and road to south.
Status/Designations	None
Size	2.79ha
Description	A former quarry and surrounds, now vegetated with scrub and mature trees.
Boundaries	Fences/hedges/road.
Distance from Village	Within 500m of Northwood End
Uses	Quiet recreation – walking, dog walking – public footpath passes through.
Quality	High – relatively wild unmanaged feel contributes to feeling of being in a more remote location.
Facilities	None
Visual Attractiveness	High – ‘wild’ space, with intimate enclosed view in places and good views from higher up on site.
Historical Significance	Moderate/High – former quarry.
Recreational Value	High – public footpath well used. Mentioned in community consultation as a ‘favourite place’ and part of ‘favourite walks’.
Tranquillity	High – a real sense of enclosure in much of the site.
Wildlife Value	High – the former gravel pit has been allowed to re-vegetate over the years. There are areas of meadow, scrub and woodland. There was evidence of significant badger activity when visited.
Recommend as a LGS?	Yes, particularly on the basis of its recreational, landscape and wildlife value.

Site 18: Woodland next to Greyhound PH



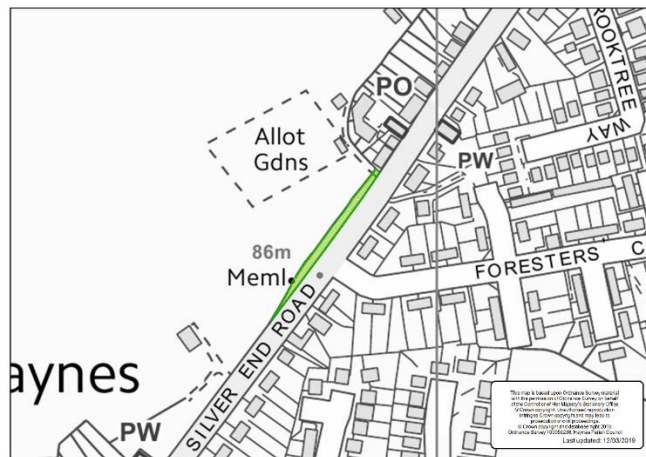
Site Owner	Privately owned
Location	Immediately adjacent to Northwood End Road
Status/Designations	None
Size	0.27ha
Description	A small area of woodland, partly cleared.
Boundaries	Fence/hedge.
Distance from Village	Immediately adjacent
Uses	Part of village 'gateway' providing wooded feel.
Quality	Moderate – no evident management, part cleared.
Facilities	None
Visual Attractiveness	High – forms part of wooded gateway to village
Historical Significance	Moderate – some older trees.
Recreational Value	Low – no access.
Tranquillity	Moderate – occasional disturbance from traffic.
Wildlife Value	Moderate – some older trees.
Recommend as a LGS?	Yes, on basis of contribution it makes to visual appearance of village 'gateway'.

Site 19: School Copse



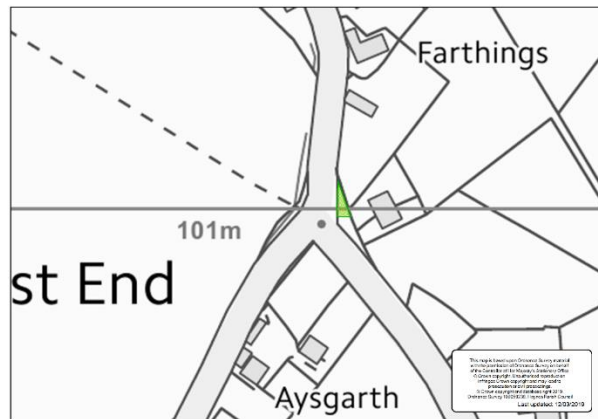
Site Owner	Central Bedfordshire Council
Location	On eastern edge of Silver End, adjacent to school.
Status/Designations	None
Size	0.50ha
Description	A relatively long, narrow copse of relatively young woodland.
Boundaries	Footpath/fence/woodland edge
Distance from Village	Immediately adjacent
Uses	Quiet recreation – walking, dog walking. Used by some as route to school.
Quality	Moderate/High
Facilities	None
Visual Attractiveness	Moderate/High – forms an important element of woodland in landscape on village edge.
Historical Significance	None identified.
Recreational Value	High – footpath is well-used.
Tranquillity	High (except during school breaks!)
Wildlife Value	Moderate/High – woodland does not appear to be of any significant antiquity but includes mixed broadleaved species.
Recommend as a LGS?	Yes, on basis of recreational value.

Site 20: Old Orchard and War Memorial



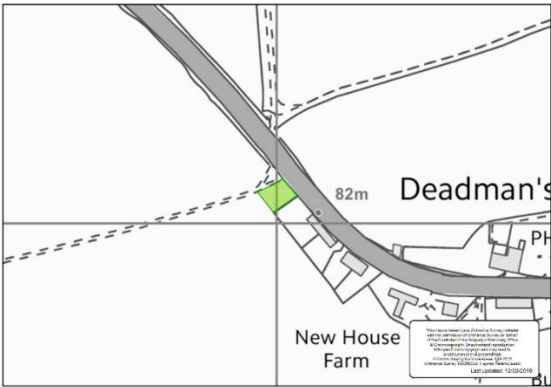
Site Owner	Haynes Parish Council
Location	Immediately adjacent to Silver End Road on village edge.
Status/Designations	None
Size	0.06ha
Description	A long, narrow area of grassed verge, containing war memorial and village sign.
Boundaries	Road, hedge.
Distance from Village	Immediately adjacent
Uses	Quiet recreation, landscape.
Quality	High – well-managed.
Facilities	Benches.
Visual Attractiveness	Moderate/High – although small and attractive border to the village on a key road route.
Historical Significance	High – former orchard, includes war memorial.
Recreational Value	Moderate – size and roadside location restricts wider use.
Tranquillity	Moderate – occasional disturbance from traffic.
Wildlife Value	Moderate – hedgerow adjacent.
Recommend as a LGS?	Yes, on basis of historical significance and contribution to village streetscape.

Site 21: Haynes West End 'Village Green'



Site Owner	Central Bedfordshire Council (Highways)
Location	Immediately adjacent to road through Haynes West End
Status/Designations	Includes Highway verge
Size	0.01ha
Description	A small grassed area adjacent to the road incorporating a noticeboard and village interpretation panel.
Boundaries	Road, private drive, trees
Distance from Village	Within Haynes West End
Uses	Visual amenity and quiet recreation
Quality	High – well managed, adds to roadside amenity.
Facilities	Interpretation panel, noticeboard and postbox
Visual Attractiveness	High – well looked after.
Historical Significance	None identified
Recreational Value	Moderate/High – close to permissive and public footpath network, includes interpretation panel.
Tranquillity	Moderate – occasional vehicle disturbance from adjacent road, general background noise from A6 nearby.
Wildlife Value	Moderate – adjacent mature trees
Recommend as a LGS?	Yes, on basis of importance to community of Haynes West End.

Site 22: Deadman's Cross Greenspace



Site Owner	Central Bedfordshire Council (Highways)
Location	Immediately adjacent to A600 at Deadman's Cross
Status/Designations	None
Size	0.04ha
Description	A small uncultivated meadow adjacent to A600, surrounded by farmland.
Boundaries	Road/hedges/garden fence, south western edge has no physical boundary but change in cultivation is still distinct.

Distance from Village	Immediately adjacent to Deadman's Cross houses
Uses	Quiet recreation – includes Greensand Ridge Walk footpath and village interpretation panel
Quality	Moderate
Facilities	Interpretation panel. Bus stop adjacent.
Visual Attractiveness	Moderate/High – important green space on edge of Deadman's Cross, but greatest value is in the panoramic views from this site due to its elevated position with no trees blocking views to south-west, west and north-west.
Historical Significance	None identified
Recreational Value	Moderate/High – footpath passes through, adjacent to Greensand Ridge Walk. Only green space in Deadman's Cross.
Tranquillity	Low – A600 adjacent is quite busy
Wildlife Value	Moderate
Recommend as a LGS?	Yes, on basis of it being the only green space in Deadman's Cross and therefore having recreational value despite its size.

Annex 1

Process for Identifying Potential

‘Local Green Spaces’ in Central Bedfordshire

Background

The following has been developed (using local experience in Bedfordshire and best practice from elsewhere in the country) as a methodology for identifying spaces that should be considered for designation as Local Green Spaces (LGS) according to the criteria set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and subsequent Government guidance (Planning Practice Guidance: Local Green Space designation).

The approach is currently being piloted in Central Bedfordshire, as part of the Neighbourhood Planning support offered by Central Bedfordshire Council (in Central Bedfordshire, currently LGS can *only* be designated through a Neighbourhood Plan). It is, however, not restricted to Central Bedfordshire in terms of applicability.

The LGS Designation:

The National Planning Policy Framework (2011) introduced the Local Green Space designation as “a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities”. Paragraph 77 of the NPPF sets out the criteria that green space must meet in order to be designated as ‘Local Green Space’:

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- Where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife
- Where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land”.

In addition to these criteria, National Planning Practice Guidance states:

“Local Green Space designation will rarely be appropriate where the land has planning permission for development. Exceptions could be where the development would be compatible with the reasons for designation or where planning permission is no longer capable of being implemented”.

Other existing designations, such as Green Belt or Conservation Area status, do not necessarily preclude or support designation as Local Green Space, but it is necessary to consider whether the additional designation is necessary and would serve a useful purpose.

The draft Central Bedfordshire Local Plan makes provision for Local Green Spaces to be designated through a Neighbourhood Plan. Therefore this GI Plan includes an assessment of green spaces for consideration as LGS, and provides recommendations for those that should be designated through the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Process

The criteria to be used are listed below, along with guidance on how they can be addressed and key questions to support an assessment. All criteria must be met, therefore simple scoring matrices based on ‘Yes/No’ answers are illustrated. Some elements can be assessed via desktop research, which means that it is possible to carry out an initial sift of a list of potential sites against these ‘Stage 1’ questions and create a shortlist for on-site evaluation (Stage 2). It may also be possible to sift out other spaces during the Stage 1 analysis where it is clear that they would not meet one of the Stage 2 criteria, however if there is any doubt then the space should be carried forward for field analysis.

The scoring of sites against the criteria, to cover the eventuality of multiple sites being proposed for designation where it is felt they all meet the criteria, was considered. However, with several of the key questions being straight ‘yes/no’ questions, a scoring system would be relatively limited in scope. Ultimately the requirement is for a high level of rigour in answering the questions, and only ‘passing’ those sites that demonstrably meet the criteria without question. It is not appropriate to artificially restrict the number of LGS being designated in any particular parish or area – if a site meets the criteria then it should be put forward for designation, recognising that some parishes will include several sites that meet the criteria, and others very few or even none.

In carrying out an assessment, evidence of how a site does/does not meet the criteria must be recorded, along with site plans (at an appropriate scale, showing clear boundaries for the site) and photographs.

The Criteria – Stage 1 (Desktop Analysis)

If any of the key questions in Stage 1 is answered with a “yes” then the space should not be recommended for designation.

1. Land is not the subject of a planning permission for development.

Local Green Space designation will rarely be appropriate where the land has planning permission for development. Exceptions could be where the designation would be compatible with the planning permission or where planning permission is no longer capable of being implemented. (NPPG Paragraph: 008)

Information on planning permissions is available from local authority websites/Planning Portal

Key question:

Does the proposed space have an existing planning permission?

2. Space is not allocated or proposed for development in the Local or Neighbourhood Plan.

(Unless it can be shown that the Local Green Space could be incorporated within the site as part of the allocated development)

Local Green Spaces should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. (NPPF Paragraph 76)

Designating any Local Green Space will need to be consistent with local planning for sustainable development in the area. In particular, plans must identify sufficient land in suitable locations to meet identified development needs and the Local Green Space designation should not be used in a way that undermines this aim of plan making. (NPPG Paragraph: 007)

The space should be capable of enduring beyond the plan period. (NPPF Paragraph 76)

Further information on the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan is available from: <https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk>

Key question:

Is the proposed space a Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan allocation or proposed site?

3. The space is not covered by another designation of equal weight

If the space is already covered by another designation of equal weight such as SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest), Scheduled Ancient Monument, Registered Historic Park or Garden or Green Belt then it is not appropriate to put it forward for LGS designation as this will not add any greater degree of protection.

Key question:

Is the proposed space covered by an existing designation of equal or greater weight?

Stage 1 Assessment Matrix – Example

The following provides an example of a matrix recording assessment against the criteria for ‘sample’ sites:

	No current Planning Permission?	Not allocated for Development	Not already Designated	Pass to Stage 2
Site 1	✓	✓	✓	Yes
Site 2	✓	✗	✓	No
Site 3	✓	✓	✗	No
Site 4	✗	✓	✓	No
Site 5	✓	✓	✓	Yes
Site 6	✓	✓	✓	Yes

In the example above only sites 1, 5 and 6 are progressed to Stage 2 assessment.

Stage 2 – Field Analysis

4. The space is not an extensive tract of land and is local in character

Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green area is not an extensive tract of land. Blanket designation of open countryside adjacent to settlements will not be appropriate. (NPPG Paragraph: 015). Proportionality is an important consideration – for example, a site of less than 10ha could still be considered extensive, particularly in the context of a small village or where it resembles the open countryside in character (agricultural use does not

preclude designation). However, this does not imply that for larger settlements larger sites automatically qualify – this will only be the case where all of the criteria are demonstrably met.

Key questions:

Does the proposed space have clearly defined edges?

Does the space feel local in character and scale?

How does the proposed space connect physically, visually and socially to the local area?

Is the space clearly distinct from surrounding farmland?

5. The space is within close proximity of the community it serves

The proximity of a Local Green Space to the community it serves will depend on local circumstances, but it must be reasonably close. For example if public access is a key factor, then the site would need to be within easy walking distance of the community served. (NPPG Paragraph: 014). If it is important because of its landscape value, views need to be accessible from the community/settlement.

As with the criteria above, 'close proximity' can be a relative concept and will depend on the settlement, terrain and accessibility. Therefore a specific maximum distance from where people live is not suggested,

Key questions:

How close is the space to the community it serves?

Where are the nearest centres of population?

How does it relate to accepted access standards e.g. Natural England's ANGSt, Local Authority Greenspace/Leisure Strategy

6. The space is demonstrably special to the local community and holds particular local significance.

Local green spaces may be designated where those spaces are demonstrably special to the local community, whether in a village or a neighbourhood in a town. (NPPG Paragraph: 009). The space must also be demonstrably locally significant by meeting at least one of criteria a-f below:

Key questions:

Is the proposal to designate supported by any of the following: A friends group, local community groups, a parish plan, the Town/Parish Council, the Ward member(s)?

Is the space the focus of locally important events and/or activities?

Has the community previously demonstrated its views about the space?

a. The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its beauty

Does the space contribute to the visual attractiveness of the townscape or character / setting of the settlement?

Is the space covered by other landscape or townscape designations? (e.g. Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Conservation Area, Local Landscape Designation)

b. The proposed space is of particular local historic significance

Further information on heritage is available from: Central Bedfordshire Historic Environment Record

Does the proposed space or elements of the space have local historical significance? (e.g. Conservation Area)

Are there any historic buildings or structures in the space? (e.g. listed building or scheduled monument)

Is the space important in terms of the context of a historic building, structure or feature?

Are there any important historic landscape features on the space? (e.g. veteran trees or old hedgerows)

Does the space have a cultural (e.g. historic literature or art) connection?

c. The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its recreational value

What variety of recreational activities does the space support? (e.g. the space is used for playing sport or for informal recreation). How is it accessible for recreation? (e.g. public or permissive footpaths?)

Is the space already identified in the Council's Leisure Strategy or Outdoor Access Improvement Plan?

Note: There is no need to designate linear corridors as Local Green Space simply to protect rights of way, which are already protected under other legislation. (NPPG Paragraph: 018) but linear corridors can be proposed if they meet the criteria.

d. The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its tranquillity

Why is the space considered to be tranquil? Has any tranquillity mapping been carried out covering the area?

Is the space used for quiet reflection? Is there background noise?

e. The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its wildlife

Are there records of wildlife, especially species or habitats considered to be rare or threatened? Has the site been designated because of its wildlife value e.g. County Wildlife Site, Local Nature Reserve (note – if the site has SSSI or NNR status then LGS designation will not add any further protection, and it should not have passed Stage 1).

f. The proposed space is of particular local significance for another reason

There may be a reason why the space is considered to be of particular local significance but not covered by the above, nevertheless considered to be of significance.

The answers to these questions should be recorded systematically for each site, along with photographs and maps/plans. A matrix should be created as a quick and simple reference guide.

Stage 2 - Example matrix:

Note only those 'sample' sites that made it through the Stage 1 assessment are included.

	Not Extensive	Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special/Locally Significant*	Recommend for Designation?
Site 1	✓	✗	✓ (b)	No
Site 5	✓	✓	✓ (c)	Yes
Site 6	✗	✓	✗	No

* The matrix should record which of the 'Locally Significant' sub-criteria (a-f) the site meets the requirement with, and be accompanied by a written commentary to justify this. Only one of the sub-criteria needs to be met for a site to be scored positively.

Site (5) is therefore (in this example) the only space recommended for designation

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