

Local Green Spaces

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All hyperlinks to external documents correct as at 27-Dec-2020.

1 Local Green Spaces: introduction

1.1 This document has been prepared to support the emerging Ashwell Neighbourhood Plan (the ANP). It provides an assessment of the open spaces within the neighbourhood area the ANP area), to ascertain whether they meet the criteria for designation as Local Green Space (LGS) and, if so, to make recommendations for their designation.

1.2 Figure 1.1 shows a map of the Neighbourhood Area.

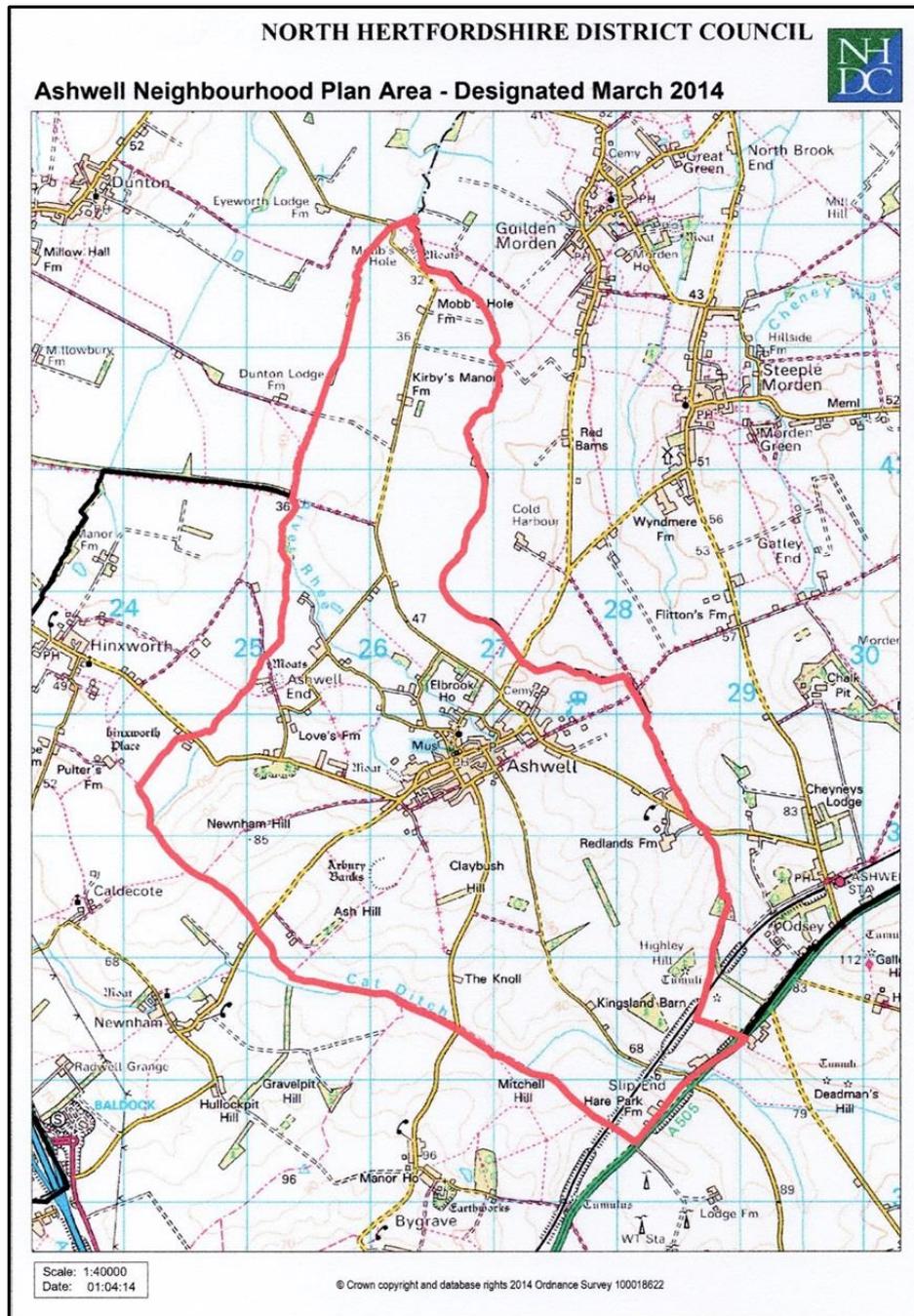


Figure 1.1 Map of the ANP area

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Policy Context

- 1.3 The assessment has been carried out in accordance with the paras 99 to 101 of the National Planning Policy Framework dated February 2019 (NPPF 2019)¹. It has also had full regard to the guidance provided in the National Planning Policy Guidance² and the Locality Toolkit for Local Green Space designations³.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 1.4 Paras 99 to 101 of the NPPF 2019 relate to LGS:
- "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. Designating land as Local Green Space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period. (para 99)*
- The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:*
- (a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
 - (b) 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; and*
 - (c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. (para 100)*
- Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts." (para 101)*
- 1.5 The online planning practice guidance⁴ is maintained by central government and provides further detail on how the NPPF 2019 should be interpreted and used when preparing planning policy documents and determining planning applications.

Locality Toolkit

- 1.6 The Locality Toolkit 'Neighbourhood Planning - Local Green Space. A Toolkit for Neighbourhood Planners' was used to guide the assessment process. Two particularly pertinent paragraphs are set out below:
- "One of the basic conditions for neighbourhood plans is achieving sustainable development. The social, community, economic and environmental benefits of green spaces help to make local places sustainable.*

¹https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf (27/12)

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>, see Planning practice guidance categories (27/12)

³ <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/making-local-green-space-designations-neighbourhood-plan/> (27/12)

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance> (27/12)

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The impacts of development on green spaces as part of new development will often be significant factors in considering whether development is sustainable. Planning for green spaces needs to be considered as an integral part of the wider planning for the area.

Care is required to ensure that green space policies are not being misused, for example through making designations to stop development, rather than to ensure proper green space provision".

2 Identification of potential Local Green Spaces

- 2.1 As a starting point, the Working Group has developed a long list of sites to analyse and to understand whether or not they might be further assessed as suitable for Local Green Space designation.
- 2.2 Sources of green space information are:
- Comments received from the Community Surveys
 - Local knowledge
 - North Hertfordshire Open Space Review and Standards, 2016⁵
- 2.3 A total of 25 spaces were identified along with a series of verges and green lanes (that collectively made up a 26th space), for evaluation, which are listed in Stage 1 Assessment of potential sites.

⁵ [https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/files/osc4-north-hertfordshire-open-space-review-standards-2016pdf\(27/12\)](https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/files/osc4-north-hertfordshire-open-space-review-standards-2016pdf(27/12))

3 Methodology

3.1 To understand which sites within the ANP area should be designated as LGS, the methodology comprises three stages:

- Desktop evaluation against initial criteria to produce a shortlist.
- Critical evaluation of shortlisted sites against NPPF criteria to identify proposed site(s).
- Full description of the proposed Local Green Space(s).

3.2 The resulting shortlist of one site will be included in the ANP.

Stage 1 - Desktop evaluation

3.3 STAGE ONE of this evaluation involved a desktop assessment of each of the 25 green spaces (plus verges) against a series of initial criteria to assist in narrowing down the list to those sites that might be suitable for LGS designation.

3.4 The criteria applied are as follows:

Criterion		Assessment outcome
1	Development (which would result in the loss of that space) and has construction of that development commenced?	YES – site not suitable for LGS designation. NO – site can proceed to STAGE TWO.
2	Is it agricultural land that is not adjacent to a built-up areas or where there is no public or permissive right of way over it?	YES – site not suitable for LGS designation. NO – site can proceed to STAGE TWO.
3	Is it a verge or other small piece of land on or adjacent to the highway?	YES – unlikely to be suitable for LGS designation, but could be included in Green Infrastructure policy. NO - site can proceed to STAGE TWO.
4	Is it a strip of land where the only public interest is that a public right of way passes across it?	YES – unlikely to be suitable for LGS designation, but could be included in Green Infrastructure policy. NO - site can proceed to STAGE TWO.
5	Is the site already protected? Main designations are set out in Figure 3.2	YES – if LGS is unlikely to offer any additional benefit,

		<p>designation as an LGS is unlikely to be suitable. However the site could be included in Green Infrastructure policy.</p> <p>NO - site can proceed to STAGE TWO.</p>
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Figure 3.1 Stage 1 criteria

3.5 Some green spaces already have a protective designation assigned to them, for instance Arbury Banks is a National Listed Monument. The Stage One analysis sets out where this is the case, to understand if an LGS designation would offer any additional benefit. If it would not, then the area has been excluded from the LGS process. Additional commentary is provided, however, where the site might be considered through a different policy of the neighbourhood plan, for instance as part of the wider network of Green Infrastructure.

3.6 Some of the main designations considered are set out below.

Village Green Status

Village Greens receive considerable statutory protection under the following two statutes, the Inclosure Act 1857 and the Commons Act 1876.

Section 12 of the Inclosure Act 1857 makes it a criminal offence to:

- wilfully cause injury or damage to any fence on a green; or
- wilfully take any cattle or other animals onto a green without lawful authority; or
- wilfully lay any manure, soil, ashes, rubbish or other material on a green; or
- undertake any act which causes injury to the green (e.g. digging turf); or
- undertake any act which interrupts the use or enjoyment of a green as a place of exercise and recreation (e.g. fencing a green so as to prevent access).

Section 29 of the Commons Act 1876 makes it a public nuisance to:

- encroach on a green (e.g. extending the boundary of an abutting property so as to exclude people from that area); or
- enclose a green (i.e. by fencing it in, whether or not the effect is to exclude public access); or
- erect any structure other than for the purpose of the better enjoyment of the green; or
- disturb, occupy or interfere with the soil of the green (e.g. camping) other than for the purpose of the better enjoyment of that green.

The above statutes are considered to provide a greater degree of protection than that of LGS designation.

As a result, spaces which are designated as Village Greens should not be designated as LGS.

School Playing Field

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<p>These are protected by Section 77 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (SSFA 1998) which controls the disposal of land that has been used for playing fields for the purposes of a maintained school in the last 10 years and by Schedule 1 to the Academies Act 2010 which applies to any school.</p> <p><i>In cases where school playing fields are a potential site for LGS designation, it was considered that if Section 77 of the Act applies LGS designation is not required.</i></p>
<p>Allotment</p> <p>Statutory Allotment sites need the consent of the Secretary of State and other criteria to be satisfied before disposal or loss of plots to development. See: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/allotment-disposal-guidance-safeguards-and-alternatives .</p> <p><i>Despite this, allotments can be designated as Local Green Spaces, where they are demonstrably special.</i></p>
<p>Conservation Area</p> <p>A conservation area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. It is protected by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and local and national planning policy. Development within such areas should protect and enhance the area.</p> <p><i>However, this was not considered to give the same degree of local protection to the space as LGS designation.</i></p>
<p>Cemetery/ burial ground</p> <p>Cemeteries, churchyards or burial grounds have special significance to individuals but, to be designated as a Local Green Space, “particular” significance is expected, going beyond the everyday reverence which is paid to such places.</p> <p>Historic England advises that cemeteries, churchyards and burial grounds are part of a network of green spaces in towns and cities called Green Infrastructure. They offer special places for quiet, reflection and contemplation; and like other green spaces have an important role in mitigating effects of climate change.</p> <p><i>Therefore unless very special circumstances exist, such spaces are not considered suitable for LGS designation.</i></p>
<p>Local Nature Reserve</p> <p>Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are a statutory designation made under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 by principal local authorities. They are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally. They offer people opportunities to study or learn about nature or simply to enjoy it.</p>

Figure 3.2 Protective designations

- 3.7 The Stage One criteria were applied to each of the potential sites and the outcome is detailed in 'Stage 1 Assessment of potential sites' of this document. This stage produced a shortlist of 14 sites.

Stage 2 - Evaluation of 14 shortlisted sites against the NPPF 2019 criteria

- 3.8 Para 100 of the NPPF 2019 states that The LGS designation should only be used where the green space is:
- In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves.
 - 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.
 - Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.
- 3.9 The Working Group visited the sites and undertook research into their use and value locally. The 'Stage 2 assessment of 14 shortlisted sites' provides an overview as to whether each site meets the criteria, and should therefore proceed to Step Three, with a fuller description.
- 3.10 The Stage Two evaluation against the NPPF criteria led to 13 sites being removed from the shortlist leaving one site, the Foresters' Allotments (non-statutory) proposed for LGS designation.

Stage 3 - Full description of the proposed Local Green Space

- 3.11 A full description (including photographs and maps) of the site proposed as LGS: the Foresters' Allotments, has been developed and is included in 'Shortlisted Local Green Spaces: Foresters' Allotments' below.

4 Conclusion

- 4.1 This report has evaluated a series of sites to determine whether they are suitable for designation as LGS. A robust methodology has been used, which has resulted in one site being identified: the Foresters' Allotments. The landowner has been identified and contacted as part of the Regulation 14 consultation on the draft ANP.

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Stage 1 Assessment of potential sites

Sites shaded in grey are not to proceed to Stage Two.

No.	Name of Green Space	Green Space Typology Category ⁶	Commentary	Proceed to Stage 2?
1	Arbury Banks	Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspaces	The 'North Hertfordshire Open Space Review and Standards 2016' includes this site. Arbury Banks is one of six Iron Age hillforts on the Hertfordshire chalk scape from Hexton to Royston that also includes Wilbury Hill Camp at Letchworth. It is a Nationally Listed Monument and therefore is felt to be adequately protected. It is an important part of the Local Green Infrastructure Network for Ashwell, however, and is therefore identified in Policy ASH11.	NO
2	Ashwell Bury Garden and Park	None	Ashwell Bury is a Grade II listed property with 20 th century gardens of 2 hectares, designed by Gertrude Jekyll, situated within a further 4 hectares of parkland. The gardens and park are listed. The house was built in the mid 19 th century and extended in the late 19 th century. It was remodelled from 1922 to 1923 by Sir Edwin Lutyens. Jekyll's detailed layout and planting plans are dated 1908-1909. Due to its listed status, the additional designation of LGS is not assessed as required.	NO

⁶ Taken from North Hertfordshire Open Space Review & Standards 2016, typology of green space.

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No.	Name of Green Space	Green Space Typology Category ⁶	Commentary	Proceed to Stage 2?
3	Ashwell Cemetery, Station Road	Cemeteries and Churchyards	<p>The 'North Hertfordshire Open Space Review and Standards 2016' includes this site.</p> <p>The cemetery is the setting for an arts and crafts Chapel of Rest which is in fine condition. The burial ground itself is of great local significance and is reserved for those who have lived in Ashwell for some time or have strong connections with the Parish.</p> <p>It also provides a view across open fields from deeper in the village, contributing to its feeling of rural tranquillity.</p> <p>However, even taking all these factors into account the site is probably not special enough for LGS registration.</p>	NO
4	Ashwell Quarry Nature Reserve	Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspaces	<p>The 'North Hertfordshire Open Space Review and Standards 2016' includes this site.</p> <p>This part privately owned nature reserve, located in a disused quarry, is managed by the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust. Located some distance from the development boundary.</p> <p>It is not assessed as being under threat and therefore does not warrant an LGS designation. It is an important part of the Local Green Infrastructure Network for Ashwell, however, and is therefore identified in Policy ASH11.</p>	NO
5	Ashwell Quarry Springs	Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspaces	<p>The 'North Hertfordshire Open Space Review and Standards 2016' includes this site.</p>	NO

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No.	Name of Green Space	Green Space Typology Category ⁶	Commentary	Proceed to Stage 2?
			<p>This site is on the other side of Hinxworth Road to the Quarry Nature Reserve. It lies on the spring line extending both west, and east toward Ashwell Springs and beyond.</p> <p>Like the Quarry it is not assessed as being under threat and therefore does not warrant an LGS designation. It is an important part of the Local Green Infrastructure Network for Ashwell, however, and is therefore identified in Policy ASH11.</p>	
6	Ashwell School Playing Field, Bear La./ Ashwell St.	Outdoor Sports Facilities	<p>The 'North Hertfordshire Open Space Review and Standards 2016' includes this site.</p> <p>This land forms part of the school grounds and is protected by NPPF para 72. An LGS designation is therefore not felt to offer any additional protections.</p>	NO
7	Ashwell Springs	Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspaces	<p>The 'North Hertfordshire Open Space Review and Standards 2016' includes this site.</p> <p>A 0.48 hectare biological Site of Special Scientific Interest, located in the village. The site consists of a series of freshwater springs, which form a source for the River Cam.</p> <p>As an SSSI, the site is protected and therefore LGS designation would not offer additional protection. It is an important part of the Local Green Infrastructure Network for Ashwell, however, and is therefore identified in Policy ASH11.</p>	NO
8	Ashwell Street: Partridge Hill to Station	Green Corridors	Identified as a Green Corridor, Native trees, hedges and wild flower verges provide an East / West pathway for insects, small mammals bats and birds to	NO

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No.	Name of Green Space	Green Space Typology Category ⁶	Commentary	Proceed to Stage 2?
	Road and East to parish boundary		cross securely between the village to the North and open monoculture farming to the South. Not suited for LGS designation, but part of the wider network of Green Infrastructure (Wildlife Corridors), covered in policy ASH11.	
9	Allotments, Small Gains Lane	Allotments	The 'North Hertfordshire Open Space Review and Standards 2016' includes this site. These are not statutory allotments but are Parish Council owned. Situated at the South Eastern edge of the village, they are popular and well-used despite the difficult growing conditions in the last few years. Horticulture is an important part of Parish culture: the Ashwell Horticultural Society is very well supported and some of its members have plots on this site. There is also a field for football and cricket practice use by the Accies Football club and Ashwell Cricket club respectively. The area provides a transition between the village and open farmland beyond.	YES
10	Elbrook Meadow (Ashwell Show site)	Amenity Green Space & Recreation	This is a field adjacent to the village settlement boundary to the North but outside it. It is used for the Ashwell Show held on August Bank Holiday. It is a major social event not only for the village but for the surrounding area too.	YES
11	Cottage Garden and area opposite, Swan Street	Amenity Green Space & Recreation	The cottage garden is in Swan Street, a quiet, traffic-free part. It provides a calm space for relaxation not really afforded by the recreation ground. The cottage garden is supported by a group of volunteers who celebrated its 50 th	YES

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No.	Name of Green Space	Green Space Typology Category ⁶	Commentary	Proceed to Stage 2?
			<p>anniversary in 2019 with an exhibition and display in the garden. The site is owned by a village trust.</p> <p>The space opposite is privately owned and complements the Cottage Garden.</p>	
12	Dixies Meadow, land off High Street	Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspaces	<p>The 'North Hertfordshire Open Space Review and Standards 2016' includes this site.</p> <p>Being close to the heart of the village the site enhances the feeling of open rural space, is a reminder of the pre-enclosure landscape of Ashwell and provides viewers from the High Street with an important view of Grade I listed St Mary's church.</p> <p>The part of the field bordering the High Street is used for parking during the annual "Ashwell at Home" event: a celebration of the community in the Parish and a major draw, with visitors who have travelled considerable distances.</p> <p>The remainder of the field is wildflower meadow colonised by a wide range of local flora and fauna.</p>	YES
13	Elbrook House	None	Designed landscape. The house and grounds are outside the settlement boundary and not adjacent to it, so LGS designation would offer little more protection than it already has.	NO
14	Green space adjacent to Village Hall in West End	Provision for Children and Young People	The 'North Hertfordshire Open Space Review and Standards 2016' includes this site.	YES

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No.	Name of Green Space	Green Space Typology Category ⁶	Commentary	Proceed to Stage 2?
	(Ashwell playgroup play area)		A small area, some 5 yards wide by about 25 yards long, outside the Village Hall, off West End. This offers a safe and secure play space for the playgroup attended by children of the Parish.	
15	Land at Walkdens, off Station Road	Amenity Green Space & Recreation	The 'North Hertfordshire Open Space Review and Standards 2016' includes this site. A space provided as part of the Walkdens extension for recreation and relaxation, available for use by all but mostly frequented by residents nearby.	YES
16	Land off West End between the Coach House and the wall next to the drive to the Village Hall	Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspaces	The 'North Hertfordshire Open Space Review and Standards 2016' includes this site. An attractive open space beyond the wall skirting the western boundary of West End. It provides a visual transition between village and farmland beyond and enhances the setting of historic buildings (some of which nationally listed) in the immediate area. The space is privately owned and not open to the public.	YES
17	Merchant Taylors Green, Gardiners Lane	Amenity Green Space & Recreation	A small area opposite the Doctors' Surgery entrance owned by the Parish. The Parish Council would like to develop the recreation / relaxation potential further.	YES
18	Quaker Burial Ground, Angell's Meadow	Cemeteries and Churchyards	The 'North Hertfordshire Open Space Review and Standards 2016' includes this site.	YES

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No.	Name of Green Space	Green Space Typology Category ⁶	Commentary	Proceed to Stage 2?
			A small site but of considerable local (recent) historical importance. There was a Quaker community in Ashwell from the 17 th century to the mid 19 th century. There is still a small presence in the village. This goes beyond the usual local reverence and affection for cemeteries.	
19	Recreation Ground, Lucas Lane / Station Road	Outdoor Sports Facilities	<p>The 'North Hertfordshire Open Space Review and Standards 2016' includes this site.</p> <p>A sports and recreation space inside the village offering green space to all. It is well used by sports clubs (cricket club with two teams, two football clubs) and other groups (e.g. playgroups). There is play equipment for young and older children. The pavilion on the ground is multi-purpose and provides public toilets.</p> <p>The ground is also a venue for one-off events.</p> <p>This site provides a transition from village to paddocks and then open fields and therefore gives a feeling of space and connectedness to the surrounding landscape.</p> <p>The Parish owns this site.</p>	YES
20	River Cam / Rhee green corridor from Ashwell Springs to Ashwell Bury (The Springs extension)	Green Corridors	<p>The 'North Hertfordshire Open Space Review and Standards 2016' includes this site.</p> <p>This area comprises the fields known as Church Mead on the Churchyard's northern boundary, Hill Close north of the river, Dovehouse Close also known as The Pound, and the area to the south east of the river and north of the gardens of the properties in Hodwell.</p>	YES

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No.	Name of Green Space	Green Space Typology Category ⁶	Commentary	Proceed to Stage 2?
			<p>It provides a wildlife access route along the banks of the Rhee to the Springs in the centre of the village. It is also a secure northward flight path for pipistrelle and natterer bats to access the surrounding country from their roosts in the Church.</p> <p>The Church Mead, the meadow bordering the east boundary of Mill Street is uncultivated and has a range of local flora and fauna.</p> <p>The area greatly enhances the setting of Grade I listed St Mary's church and nationally listed buildings in Mill Street and Hodwell, contributing the typical English rural character of this part of the village.</p>	
21	Small Gains Lane	Green Corridors	<p>Identified as a Green Lane, that is: flanked by native trees, hedges and wild flower verges that provide an ecological corridor between housing and open farmland.</p> <p>Not suited to LGS, but part of network of green infrastructure covered in Policy ASH11.</p>	NO
22	Foresters Allotments, Back Street	Allotments	<p>The 'North Hertfordshire Open Space Review and Standards 2016' includes this site.</p> <p>These are not statutory allotments as the land is owned by the Ancient Order of Foresters. Situated at the South Western side of the village, they are popular and well-used despite lack of a water supply and the difficult growing conditions in the last few years. Horticulture is an important part of Parish culture: the Horticultural Society is well supported and some of its members have plots on this site.</p>	YES

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No.	Name of Green Space	Green Space Typology Category ⁶	Commentary	Proceed to Stage 2?
			The Foresters Allotments are in a significant archaeological area. A community test pit project included several sites on or close to the Allotments and finds were made dating right back to the Palaeolithic.	
23	Small Gains field and all weather tennis courts, off Ashwell Street and Small Gains.	Outdoor Sports Facilities	<p>The 'North Hertfordshire Open Space Review and Standards 2016' includes this site.</p> <p>This consists of two distinct areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cycle Club site rented from a private landowner off Small Gains Lane/Station Road. ■ Tennis club site rented from the same private landowner off Ashwell Street. <p>The Ashwell Tennis and Ashwell Cycle clubs lease the site. They are both well used; the cyclo-cross area is popular with young people who enjoy less structured sporting activities.</p> <p>There are no other similar facilities in the area that are available to the public.</p>	YES
24	St Mary's Churchyard	Cemeteries and Churchyards	<p>The 'North Hertfordshire Open Space Review and Standards 2016' includes this site.</p> <p>The church is a nationally listed building, Grade I. Dating back to the 14th century it dominates the village and was highly praised by John Betjeman, who was known for his knowledge of and love for English ecclesiastical architecture.</p>	NO

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No.	Name of Green Space	Green Space Typology Category ⁶	Commentary	Proceed to Stage 2?
			As it has a Grade I listing the site is protected and therefore LGS designation would not offer additional protection.	
25	United Reform Church, Churchyard, High Street	Cemeteries and Churchyards	<p>The 'North Hertfordshire Open Space Review and Standards 2016' includes this site.</p> <p>The URC is at the eastern end of a high-density part of the village and affords a welcome visual contrast to the housing that abuts directly onto the footway as the High Street goes west. It hosts a wide and pleasing variety of wild and semi-wild flowers and plants.</p> <p>As such it makes a tranquil area that can be enjoyed whether going to a service or one of the many functions in the hall, or just as a break on a sunny day.</p> <p>People in the village appreciate the way the site enhances its surroundings, adding to an already attractive mix of character housing, a number of which are listed.</p> <p>This goes beyond the usual reverence and affection for cemeteries.</p>	YES
26	Verges	None	<p>A list of verges has been identified as contributing the character of the parish.</p> <p>Whilst these are not assessed as meeting the criteria required to designate them as LGS, they are identified as part of the Local Green Infrastructure Network for Ashwell and therefore identified in Policy ASH11.</p>	NO

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Stage 2 assessment of 14 shortlisted sites

Sites shaded grey are not proposed for Local Green Space designation

Site No.	Site Name	Close to the community?	Special?					Local in Character?	Commentary
			Beauty	Historic	Recreation	Tranquil	Wildlife		
9	Allotments, Small Gains Lane	Yes			Yes			Yes	NO: A village resource providing healthy exercise and supporting the village's strong interest in horticulture. Owned by the Parish, therefore LGS registration is not considered a priority, given the limited resources available.
10	Elbrook Meadow (Ashwell Show site)	Yes			Yes			Yes	NO: despite its social significance, the fact that it is used only once a year means that registration is not a priority.
11	Cottage Garden and area opposite, Swan Street	Yes			Yes	Yes		Yes	NO: An attractive and tranquil space open to all in the village centre where recreational space is limited.

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Site No.	Site Name	Close to the community?	Special?					Local in Character?	Commentary
			Beauty	Historic	Recreation	Tranquil	Wildlife		
									The Cottage Garden is owned by the Village Trust, so registration is not considered a priority given the limited resources available.
12	Dixies Meadow, land off High Street	Yes	Yes				Yes	Yes	NO: A highly valued natural green space at the village's heart with a view of Grade I St Mary's church. However, the landowner has strong objections and there are indications that support for designation is mixed. The site is also outside the current settlement boundary
13	Green space adjacent to Village Hall in West End (Ashwell playgroup play area)	Yes			Yes			Yes	NO: this is a valued space but probably safe as it is too small to be developed, and the Village Hall Trust is thought to own the land.

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Site No.	Site Name	Close to the community?	Special?					Local in Character?	Commentary
			Beauty	Historic	Recreation	Tranquil	Wildlife		
15	Land at Walkdens, off Station Road	Yes			Yes			Yes	NO: the site has recreational value but probably not enough to justify registration as an LGS.
16	Land off West End between the Coach House and the wall next to the drive to the Village Hall	Yes	Yes						NO: it is considered that this site has attributes consistent with NPPF criteria but not to the extent that they would justify registration as an LGS.
17	Merchant Taylors Green, Gardiners Lane	Yes			Yes	Yes			NO: owned by the Parish, therefore LGS registration is not considered a priority, given the limited resources available.
18	Quaker Burial Ground, Angell's Meadow	Yes		Yes				Yes	NO: this site would need considerable research to make a strong case for registration as an LGS. It requires restoration and there may also be some resistance from the site owner.

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Site No.	Site Name	Close to the community?	Special?					Local in Character?	Commentary
			Beauty	Historic	Recreation	Tranquil	Wildlife		
19	Recreation Ground, Lucas Lane / Station Road	Yes			Yes			Yes	NO: an important sporting and recreational space. However, owned by the Parish, therefore LGS registration is not considered a priority, given the limited resources available.
20	River Cam / Rhee green corridor from Ashwell Springs to Ashwell Bury (The Springs extension)	Yes	Yes					Yes	NO: this area was thought to have high value both from the point of view of wildlife and aesthetics and therefore deserved to be shortlisted. However research has not unearthed any information that could be used to justify registration.
22	Foresters Allotments, Back Street	Yes			Yes			Yes	A village resource providing healthy exercise and supporting the village's strong interest in horticulture. There is evidence from excavation pits that the site has historical significance.

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Site No.	Site Name	Close to the community?	Special?					Local in Character?	Commentary
			Beauty	Historic	Recreation	Tranquil	Wildlife		
									Registration as an LGS is seen as a priority. Although the landowner objects, the site meets the criteria and there is support from the village.
23	Small Gains field and all weather tennis courts	Yes			Yes			Yes	<p>NO: A village resource providing healthy exercise and popular with young (cycle) and older (tennis) people. There are no similar facilities nearby.</p> <p>However, the landowner has strong objections and support from other quarters is unlikely. The site is also outside the settlement boundary.</p>
25	United Reform Church, Churchyard, High Street	Yes	Yes					Yes	<p>NO: This is a valued space but probably safe as the site is not likely to be put forward for development. Therefore LGS registration is not considered a priority, given the limited resources available.</p>

Shortlisted Local Green Spaces: Foresters' Allotments

Summary

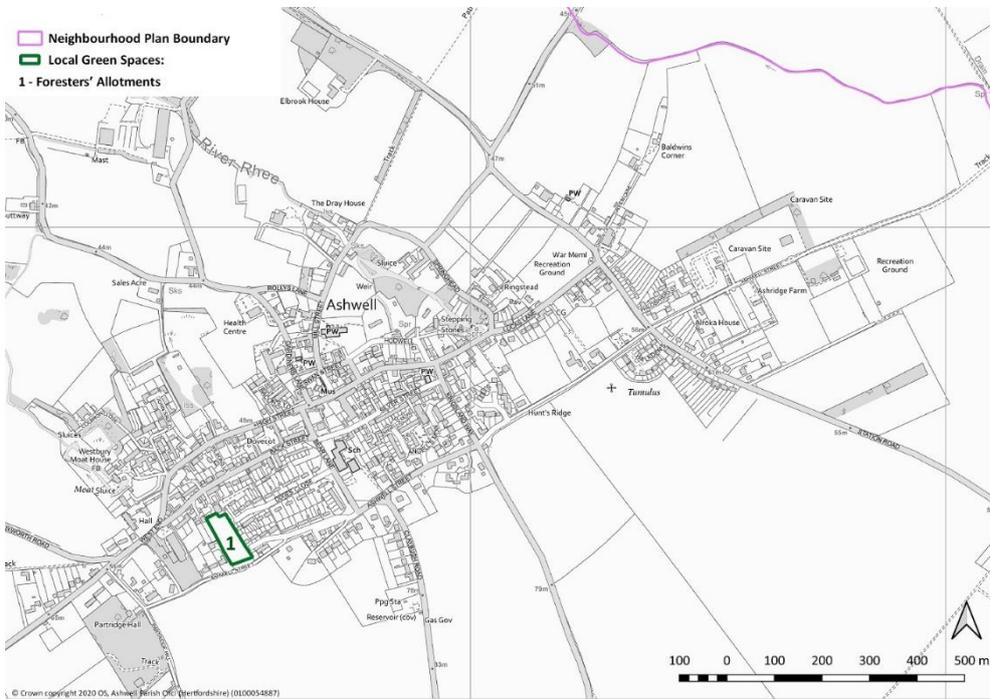
Name and address	Description/purpose/ quality/ ownership/ management going forward	
<p>Foresters Allotments Grid Ref: TL26477 39346</p>	<p>Large scale site map:</p> 	
Any statutory designations	Site allocations	Planning permissions
No	No	No
NPPF CRITERIA Close to the community	Demonstrably special to the local community	Local in Character/not extensive tract of land
<p>The site is inside the village settlement boundary, within the community it serves.</p>	<p>Recreation: horticulture has physical and mental health benefits that are at least equivalent to playing sport. It is also a recreation that can benefit everyone, regardless of age or physical limitations. There is considerable demand for plots in the village and limited provision.</p> <p>Tranquil: though not really intended for quiet contemplation, the area is a tranquil place with abundant, varied greenery in the midst of the village.</p>	<p>Yes: The site lies less than 300m to the south west of the village centre and is easily accessible. Parishioners have used the site as allotments since at least the second world war. A number of current plot holders are members of the Ashwell Horticultural Society.</p> <p>The site is not an extensive tract. it is just under half a hectare in area and confined by clear boundaries on all four sides.</p>

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	Historic significance: finds consistent with burial mounds and a henge.	
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Full justification

Item	Details
1	General information
1.1	Name and description of site: The Foresters' Allotments, off Back Street, Ashwell. A rectangular plot of approximately 0.5 hectares between Back Street in the north and Ashwell Street in the south.
1.2	Site location plan. 
1.3	Organisation or individual proposing site for designation: Ashwell Parish Council, 6a Back Street, Ashwell, Herts, SG7 5PE.
1.4	Ownership of site: The Ancient Order of Foresters, Foresters House, 29/33 Shirley Road, Southampton, SO15 3EW.
1.5	Is the owner of the site aware of the potential designation? Yes, notified by letter of 24-Mar-2020.
1.6	Does the owner support the designation? No.
1.7	Photographs of site:

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Item	Details
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="320 280 778 315">■ From Ashwell Street looking north.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="320 1093 1077 1128">■ From the Foresters' Cottages off Back Street, looking south. 
1.8	<p>Community served by the potential Local Green Space?</p> <p>Yes, the allotments are located within 300m of the village centre. Anyone in the Parish may apply for a plot, subject to availability.</p>

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Item	Details
1.9	Are there any barriers to the local community accessing the site from their homes? No, access on foot is possible from both Ashwell Street in to the south and Back Street to the north. Car parking is possible in Back Street and in Ashwell Street.
2	Planning History
2.1	Is there currently a planning application for this site, or part of it? No
2.2	Is the site allocated for development in the Local Plan? No
3	Size, scale and "local nature" of proposed Local Green Space
3.1	Area of proposed site? Approx. 0.5 hectares
3.2	Is the proposed site "local in character"? The site lies less than 300m to the south west of the village centre, bordered by housing on the east and west boundaries. It is easily accessible from Back Street to the north and Ashwell Street to the south. Though use as a thoroughfare is not encouraged, the site is not locked and accessible at all times. It has been used as allotment gardens by Parishioners since at least the second world war and levels of plot take-up are high. A number of plot holders are members of the Ashwell Horticultural Society and their produce is routinely displayed in the Society's shows.
3.3	Is the site an "extensive tract of land"? No, it half a hectare in area and confined by clear boundaries on all four sides.
4	Need for Local Green Space?
4.1	Is there a need for a local green space in this location? Horticulture and gardening is a major activity in the Parish, particularly in the village. The Horticultural Society has been a feature of local life since the early 1900s and is well supported today. Although the Parish has a recreation ground and other small areas of green space suitable for sitting and contemplation, there is limited space available for cultivation apart from private gardens. There is a small site outside the eastern boundary of the village but this is often over-subscribed and in practice can only be reached by car by the great majority of residents, bearing in mind the need to carry tools, etc. There is no argument about the physical and mental health benefits of growing food and flowers for people of all ages. This activity is in demand in our Parish and needs to be supported.
5	Evidence to show that "the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves"
5.1	How far is the site from the community it serves? The site is inside the village settlement boundary, within the community it serves.

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Item	Details
6	Evidence to show that the green area is “demonstrably special to a local community”
6.1	Evidence of support from local community groups and individuals. The following have written in support of the designation (detail available on request): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 16 plot holders ■ 19 other parish residents ■ Regulation 14 consultation resulted in 106 responses to the Plan, 96% were in favour of listing the allotments as Local Green Space
6.2	Evidence of support from community leaders. The following support designation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ashwell Parish Council Chairman and councillors ■ Arbury Ward District Councillor ■ Chairwoman of the Ashwell Horticultural Society
6.3	Evidence of support from Parish or Town Council. Minute of Parish Council virtual meeting, 06-May-2020
6.4	Evidence of support from other groups. No.
7	Evidence to show that the green area “holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty,” (if applicable)
7.1	Is this criterion relevant to this site? (Yes / No) No.
7.2	Describe why the community considers that the site has a particular local significance for its beauty. Not applicable.
7.3	Site visibility. Not applicable.
7.4	Is the site covered by any landscape or similar designations? Not applicable.
7.5	Is the site (or the type of site) specifically mentioned in any relevant landscape character assessments or similar documents? Not applicable.
7.6	Does the site contribute to the setting of a historic building or other special feature? Not applicable.
7.7	Is the site highlighted in literature or art? Not applicable.
8	Evidence to show that the green area “holds a particular local significance for example because of its historic significance” (if applicable)
8.1	Is this criterion relevant to this site? (Yes / No)

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Item	Details
	Yes.
8.2	<p>Are there any historic buildings or remains on the site?</p> <p>A community test pit project included several sites on and close to the Allotments, and finds were made dating right back to the Palaeolithic. This is consistent with the construction of burial mounds and a henge along the line of Ashwell Street. The Allotment site was almost certainly then part of a burgage plot extending from the High Street.</p>
8.3	<p>Are there any important historic landscape features on the site?</p> <p>No.</p>
8.4	<p>Did the site play an important role in the historic development of the village or town?</p> <p>No.</p>
8.5	<p>Did any important historic events take place on the site?</p> <p>No.</p>
8.6	<p>Do any historic rituals take place on the site?</p> <p>Not yet known, though the nature of the finds indicate that this may have been the case.</p>
9	Evidence to show that the green area "holds a particular local significance, for example because of its recreational value (including as a playing field)", (if applicable)
9.1	<p>Is this criterion relevant to this site? ((Yes /No)</p> <p>Yes.</p>
9.2	<p>Is the site used for playing sport?</p> <p>No. Horticulture is not regarded as a sport but is considered to have physical and mental health benefits that are at least equivalent to playing sport. It is also an activity that can benefit everyone, regardless of age or physical limitations.</p>
9.3	<p>Is the public able to physically access the site?</p> <p>Yes. The site is not locked and easily accessible from both Back Street and Ashwell Street.. The site is intended for use by plot holders, and anyone local may take one on, subject to availability.</p>
9.4	<p>Is the site used by the local community for informal recreation? If so, since when?</p> <p>Yes, since at least 1940. It is becoming increasingly popular among families with young children as it offers them an opportunity to connect with the natural environment.</p>
10	Evidence to show that the green area "holds a particular local significance, for example because of its tranquillity" (if applicable)
10.1	<p>Is this criterion relevant to this site? (Yes/ No)</p> <p>To some extent. The area is a tranquil place in the midst of the village with abundant, varied greenery. It is not really intended for quiet contemplation and there are few places to sit. However, the calming effects of working with the soil are well known.</p>
10.2	<p>Do you consider the site to be tranquil?</p> <p>Yes, on the southern boundary Ashwell Street is an unsurfaced bridleway with almost no vehicular traffic. The north boundary is set back from Back Street behind terraced</p>

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Item	Details
	housing. Back Street has little through traffic. There is residential housing and gardens on east and west boundaries.
10.3	Is the site within a recognised tranquil area? No.
11	Evidence to show that the green area "holds a particular local significance, for example because of the richness of its wildlife"; (if applicable)
11.1	Is this criterion relevant to this site? (Yes/ No) No.
11.2	Is the site formally designated for its wildlife value? Not applicable.
11.3	Are any important habitats or species found on the site? Not applicable.
11.4	What other wildlife of interest has been found on the site? Not applicable.
11.5	Is the site part of a long-term study of wildlife by members of the local community? Not applicable.
12	Evidence to show that the green area "holds a particular local significance, for any other reason"; (if applicable)
12.1	Is this criterion relevant to this site? (Yes/ No) No.
12.2	What are the other reasons why the site has a particular local significance for the local community? Not applicable.
13	Landowner consultation and property management
13.1	The questions in section 1 seek to establish landownership and whether there is landowner support for LGS designation. The NPPG advises that the qualifying body (in the case of neighbourhood plan making) should contact landowners at an early stage about proposals to designate any part of their land as LGS. (Paragraph: 019 Reference ID: 37-019-20140306, Revision date: 06 03 2014): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Proposed LGS was first identified as a possible candidate in January 2020. ■ Landowner notified 24-Mar-2020.
13.2	Have property management considerations been discussed between the landowners and Qualifying Body. If so when? No.
13.3	Would designation place any restrictions or obligations on landowners? If so, is there a risk that these may be unduly onerous?

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Item	Details
	<p>None beyond the restrictions that the NPPF places on designated LGS. As far as can be established from the site manager the landowner does not plan to make any changes to the management or use of the site nor would this be required if the site had LGS status..</p> <p>Therefore the impact of designation is not considered to be duly onerous on the landowner.</p>
13.4	<p>Who will manage the LGS after designation?</p> <p>The landowner.</p>