

IMPORTANT NATURAL HABITAT IN HISTON & IMPINGTON SITES V28/V29 “Western and Central Woodland on Feldsted Farm”

These sites are designated Important Natural Habitat and A14 Mitigation Sites but not Local Green Space. Key INH information is presented in the main Neighbourhood Plan. For convenience additional information about these sites is presented here using the LGS template.

Version: 3 June 2019

INTRODUCTION

This template is for the compilation of information relevant to the designation of a particular site as a Local Green Space (LGS) in the Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Plan. It serves to inform decisions about LGS designation, to provide supporting evidence to the District planning authorities and to inform specific policies and management plans for the site. It is based on the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan and draws on other guidance documents, as explained in the Histon and Impington LGS Framework paper. It is organised into sections, as listed below, but most sites will be significant for only a couple of the criteria covered.

1. General Information
2. Planning history and legal status
3. Size, scale and “local nature”
4. Need for and proximity/accessibility of Local Green Space
5. Evidence that it “is demonstrably special to a local community”
6. Evidence that it “holds particular local significance for its beauty or tranquillity”
7. Evidence that it “holds particular local significance for its historical or cultural value”
8. Evidence that it “holds particular local significance for its recreational value”
9. Evidence that it “holds particular local significance for the richness of its wildlife”
10. Evidence that it holds particular local significance for other ecosystem services
11. Evidence about the site’s connectivity to other green areas for ecological or recreational purposes
12. Evidence that the green space holds particular local significance for any other reason

REFERENCE NUMBERS OF THESE IMPORTANT NATURAL HABITAT SITES = V28 AND V29

WORKING NAMES OF THESE INH SITES = “Western Woodland on Feldsted Farm”

“Central Woodland on Feldsted Farm”

DATE of most recent amendment / addition to the dossier = 3 June 2019

IN A NUTSHELL (recommend up to 100 words), the case for these INH and A14 Impact Mitigation sites:

The woodland and hedgerows on this arable farm support abundant birdlife, which has been ringed and monitored by local ornithologists, as well as wildflowers and insects. The woods contain a number of fabulous trees, some of which have preservation orders, and provide nesting habitat for buzzards and red kite, amongst other species. The areas of natural habitat connect the Cawcutt's Lake fields ecologically to the fields south of Milton Road and thence to Manor Farm and also to the north-east corner of the village. There was formerly an informal walking route through the farm. Part of the woodland fringes the Recreation Ground, providing not only an attractive setting for this major community facility but also potentially reducing the impacts of air pollution from the A14 on both the Rec and IVC (pollution impacts can be significant up to 1.5km from a busy road).

Contributors to this dossier (with initials to facilitate reference in the sources column):

All inputs are by first contributor, except where indicated otherwise

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	STATEMENTS ABOUT EACH TOPIC	EVIDENCE / SOURCES What evidence supports statement? References? Also provide the initials of the contributor and other relevant people for follow-up queries.
1	GENERAL INFORMATION	
1.1	Name(s) and location/address of site. <i>Some sites have several names, in which case mention all known names.</i>	
	Western Woodland on Feldsted Farm Central Woodland on Feldsted Farm	
1.2	Site location map(s) and photographs <i>The plan can be at any scale but must show location and boundaries of the site. Indicate the scale. Add explanatory text about site location and boundaries in box below.</i>	Has a map been provided? YES Have photos been provided? YES / NO Attach the map(s) and photo(s) separately.
	See also the INH Connectivity Map and A14 Mitigation Sites map in main report.	Yes - Google map with combined sites highlighted.
1.3	Ownership of site Information on land ownership can be obtained from the Land Registry or local knowledge.	
	The farm belongs to the Chivers family.	
1.4	Is the owner aware of the potential designation as LGS? Do they support the designation? <i>Support is highly desirable, but it is possible for a site to be designated as a LGS, even if there are objections from the site owners.</i>	
	Yes, they are aware and supportive.	
1.5	Organisation(s) or individual(s) proposing the site for LGS designation <i>e.g. the Parish Council itself, a specific community group, or an informal group of residents</i>	
	H+I Parish Council	
1.6	Community served by the candidate LGS <i>Does the site serve the whole village or a particular geographic sector of it or a particular interest group?</i>	
	The site serves mainly the eastern side of Histon & Impington, especially the users of The Rec, IVC schoolchildren, residents of the eastern arm of the community (south of the Milton Road) and any bird enthusiast (especially because of the birds of prey). The trees provide massive benefits to the community in terms of scenery and wildlife, as well as mitigating the perceived impacts of the A14.	
2	PLANNING HISTORY AND LEGAL STATUS	
2.1	Is there currently a planning application for this site? If permitted, could part of the overall site still be used as a Local Green Space?	
	No current planning applications for the site exist.	
2.2	Is the site currently allocated for development in the draft Neighbourhood Plan?	

	If development were permitted, could part of the overall site still be used as a Local Green Space?	
	Green belt land, not allocated for development. The important thing in the event of any future development is the maintenance of the woodland.	
2.3	Does the site have any existing legal protection of any kind and since when? Or has it ever been proposed for legal protection? e.g. <i>Local Nature Reserve, Village Green, land designated as open access in agreement with the landowner. Also Protected Village Amenity Area PVAA, which is similar to LGS but not as strong in restricting development.</i>	South Cambs PVAA - LGS Right of way and open access land - GOV.UK Cambridgeshire LNR Open Spaces Society describes options www.oss.org.uk
	Green Belt.	
3.	SIZE, SCALE AND “LOCAL NATURE” OF CANDIDATE LGS	
3.1	Area of proposed site (preferably in hectares)	(No fixed limits. Cotswold District suggests an upper limit of 20ha for LGS designation)
	9.2 hectares	
3.2	Is the site an “extensive tract of land”? Extensive tracts can’t be designated as LGS but “extensive” is not defined. How large is it in comparison to other groups of fields or areas of land in the vicinity? Does it feel like a local H&I site or something on a larger scale?	
	No. In the context of the large arable fields surrounding them, the woodlands and hedgerows comprise a small area of exceptionally high value.	
3.3	What makes the site “local in character”? <i>How does the site connect physically, ecologically, visually and socially to the local area?</i>	To avoid repetition you may be able to simply refer to other sections of this template e.g. on recreation.
	The site contains a mixed array of broad leaved trees including oaks which would have been planted in the days of significant fruit growing in the adjoining fields. Now these trees form an outstanding part of the environment around the village, particularly significant for people at IVC, users of the Recreation Ground and people travelling along the busway (by bus, cycle or foot).	
4.	NEED FOR AND PROXIMITY/ACCESSIBILITY OF GREEN SPACE	
4.1	Is there a particular need for a Local Green Space in this location? <i>e.g. is there a shortage of accessible green space in this location? Has the need been identified in other assessments or surveys?</i>	Make this specific. General shortage in H&I is described in the framework document.
	There is little natural habitat on the eastern side of the community.	
4.2	How far is the site from the community it serves? <i>It should be in “reasonably close proximity” but this is not defined.</i>	It may be helpful to attach a map or diagram showing proximity and access.
	Part of the wood can be viewed and accessed from	

	along the Guided busway.	
4.3	Are there any barriers to the community accessing the site from their homes? If so, how could they be overcome? <i>e.g. a busy road to be crossed</i>	
5.	EVIDENCE THAT IT IS SPECIAL TO THE COMMUNITY	
5.1	List the community organisations, societies, local leaders, schools, organisations concerned with health and well-being, groups of residents or other groups, who have expressed support for the protection of this site?	Attach evidence, which could be letters of support, petitions, surveys, council resolutions etc.
	The Histon & Impington A14 Action Group, formed in response to the severe long- and short-term impacts of the A14 expansion on the community, has highlighted the importance of the wooded areas of Feldsted Farm in mitigating the impacts on people in the eastern part of the village. Users of The Rec and students of IVC place huge value on the woodland for its scenic beauty, visual screening and proximity to nature/wildlife. Birdwatchers value highly the birdlife associated with these woods, especially the presence of buzzards, red kites and kestrels that nest here.	RBS
6.	EVIDENCE OF LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR BEAUTY OR TRANQUILLITY	
6.1	Is this criterion relevant for this site?	If no, go on to the next section
	Yes	
6.2	If yes, describe briefly the views and other characteristics that contribute to this beauty and/or tranquillity. Why do local people consider it to be of particular significance?	If possible, provide photographic or other evidence.
	The large trees make for beautiful scenery, enjoyable from the busway route, the Rec and IVC.	
7.	EVIDENCE OF LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR HISTORICAL, CULTURAL, SOCIAL OR EDUCATIONAL VALUE	H&I Historical Society could compile this section, where relevant.
7.1	Is this criterion relevant for this site?	If no, go on to the next section
	Yes	
7.2	Describe the associated historic buildings, memorials, gardens, landscape features (e.g. old hedgerows, trees or ponds), cultural activities or relevance to the historic development of the village (e.g. fruit and jam production).	If possible, provide references or other evidence.
	This area was all part of the massive Chivers orchards used for the production of jam.	
7.3	Is the site used for educational purposes, either by schools or by other community groups?	
	No	
7.4	Does the site have other social uses, for example as an area where people get together, for example for picnics, communal children's play or teenage socialising? <i>Consider various age groups. For example, is it a site where young people hang out together or where</i>	

	<i>older people meet up with friends.</i>	
	IVC students make informal use of the woodland near the busway for socialising after school.	
8.	EVIDENCE OF LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR RECREATION	H&I Walking Group, Histon Hobblers, Cycling Group, youth groups and others could compile this section, where relevant.
8.1	Is this criterion relevant for this site?	If no, go on to the next section
	Yes (but informal)	
8.2	Is the site used for playing sport? <i>If so, which sports, involving which sections of the community? Since when has it been used for sport? Is it free or does it require club membership?</i>	
	No	
8.3	Is the public able to physically access the site? <i>e.g. public rights of way across or adjacent to the site. Has access been allowed hitherto on a discretionary basis? Is there access to the whole site or just part of it? Is there good disabled access? (A site can still be designated even if there is no public access).</i>	
	There is no right of way but in practice the woodland alongside the busway can be entered and people do so.	
8.4	Is the site used for walking, dog-walking, foraging (berries etc), birding, nature observation, horse-riding, cycling, children's games or other informal recreation? <i>If so, how much is it used and by which parts of the community? Since when has it had these uses?</i>	
	Many walkers and dog-walkers use the strip of woodland parallel to the busway. It is a lovely natural alternative to the tarmac track.	
9.	EVIDENCE OF LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR RICHNESS OF WILDLIFE	
9.1	Is this criterion relevant for this site?	If no, go on to the next section
	YES	
9.2	What wildlife of interest to the community has been found on the site? <i>Include plants, fungi, mammals, birds, amphibians, invertebrates etc. Explain briefly the use of the site by the species concerned and the conservation requirements. Mention any population trends, supported by monitoring data or anecdotal evidence.</i>	Consider sightings within the past five years. To organise species information, a checklist of potential species will be made available. Additional species can be added, as needed. The checklist and other evidence should be provided as an attachment.
	In addition to the trees themselves, the woodland supports plentiful birdlife. With its proximity to Cawcutt's Lake across the guided busway the damp areas have contained significant numbers of amphibians- particularly toads, which have declined significantly throughout the UK. However, toad numbers were decimated during the construction of the busway. Their recovery is uncertain.	See the INH table in the main Neighbourhood Plan.
9.3	Are any of the habitats or species found on the site	For national and county priority

	considered to be of special importance? <i>e.g. habitats or species in national or regional lists of priorities or in a biodiversity action plan. Explain briefly the use of the site by the species concerned and the conservation requirements, if not already covered above.</i>	species, see CPbiodiversity . Consider sightings within the past five years. Elaborate further in an attachment, if necessary
	The belts of trees provide plenty of breeding habitat for birds, notably buzzard and red kite.	See the INH table in the main Neighbourhood Plan.
9.4	Are there trees with preservation orders in the site? If so, how many, which species and what special characteristics?	Parish Council tree warden could provide the information for this question. South Cambs Local Plan policy NH/7 (paras 6.32-6.33) on ancient woodlands and veteran trees is relevant on this question.
	Group TPO covers western woodland, which lies next to the Rec. Trees include: Ash, Beech, Horse Chestnut, Lime, Maple, Oak, Pine and Sycamore.	
9.5	What has been the involvement of community members in studying, observing or simply enjoying the wildlife of this site? <i>Have local people been monitoring the site or recording its species and, if so, for how long? Have they produced any data sets, articles, reports, blogs, talks, exhibits etc about any of the wildlife present at the site?</i>	You could attach copies of materials produced, if appropriate.
	Birds have been monitored and ringed at the site periodically over the last 5 years. This data is reported within the village newspaper.	Data available from Nigel Butcher.
10.	EVIDENCE OF LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR OTHER ECOSYSTEM SERVICES	There is unlikely to be quantitative data on ecosystem services, but you can make qualitative arguments – as specific as possible. In some cases there may be supporting anecdotal evidence (e.g. of pollinator activity).
10.1	Is this criterion relevant for this site?	If no, go on to the next section
	YES	
10.2	Does the site contribute significantly to flood prevention, absorption of rainwater or maintenance of water quality (by reducing run-off of silt, agrochemicals and other pollutants into water courses)? If so, describe briefly the function and how significant it is likely to be.	Attach supporting documents, diagrams etc, if needed.
	Not known.	
10.3	Does the site provide significant habitat for pollinators or for predators valuable in controlling plant pests (especially if near allotments, orchards, gardens)? If so, describe briefly the pollinators and/or predators concerned.	Attach supporting documents, diagrams etc, if needed.
	Not known but probable. There are field margins which contain many pollinators nectaring amongst the wild flowers.	
10.4	Does the site contribute significantly as a barrier to	Attach supporting documents,

	noise pollution or air pollution, as a windbreak, or in maintaining a favourable microclimate (e.g. a moist, cool area during hot, dry periods)?	diagrams etc, if needed.
	For people living in the eastern parts of Impington, IVC students and users of the Rec, the sites' trees provide a visual screen, blocking the 24-hour-a day traffic. They also reduce perception of noise (though actual decibels of noise are not reduced at this distance from the highway). Depending on prevailing wind and other factors, barriers of tall trees may also reduce exposure to particulate pollution, especially for people using the Rec and IVC playing fields, which are tree-lined. The beneficial effect of vegetation in deflecting, trapping or absorbing various pollutants is complex and modelling it is beyond the scope of the NP team! However, Highways England acknowledges that the A14 expansion will worsen pollution in this location and emerging research has highlighted the severe health risks, especially for children and especially where PM2.5 pollutants are involved (as here). The designation of these sites as A14 Mitigation sites in the NP allows for a precautionary approach to such health risks, as well as the other, more visible impacts of the highway.	RBS
11.	CONNECTIVITY TO OTHER GREEN AREAS	As explained in the Framework document, ecological connectivity is essential for long-term sustainability of the other local values, while connecting sites with vegetated paths greatly enhances recreational value.
11.1	Is this criterion relevant for this site?	If no, go on to the next section
	YES	
11.2	Is the site connected – or potentially connected – ecologically to other green areas? If so, which other areas? Which kinds of wildlife benefit from the connectivity? <i>The connectivity could be physically continuous, e.g. a hedgerow, or depend on sites being close enough for birds or insects to move between them. If the connectivity is weak or only potential, indicate briefly how it could be enhanced e.g. by restoring vegetation alongside a drainage ditch.</i>	Attach a map or diagram to illustrate the connectivity.
	The woodland and hedgerows provide important ecological connectivity throughout the rural area east of the villages, as well as to the Cawcutt's Lake area. The ditches connect through to the lake in Percheron Close/adjointing Pocket Park, making a good corridor for water dwelling taxa.	See INH connectivity map in main report.
11.3	Is the site connected – or potentially connected – for recreational purposes to other green areas? If so, which other areas and for which kinds of recreation? Which parts of the community use the connected	Attach a map or diagram to illustrate the connectivity, or simply cross-refer to the ecological connectivity, if the links are similar.

	<p>green areas and how much? <i>This will generally be about walking, dog-walking, running, horse-riding and cycling routes, which link green areas in a loop. If the connectivity is only potential, indicate briefly how it could be achieved e.g. by establishing an additional permissive way.</i></p>	
	<p>Not currently. However, the farm is in a key location with regard to the NP aspiration to establish walking and cycling routes to the east of the villages.</p>	
12.	<p>EVIDENCE OF ANY OTHER SPECIAL LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE</p>	
	<p>If there is any other special characteristic or local significance relevant to the site's designation as a Local Green Space but not covered above, please state it here.</p>	