

# **LOCAL GREEN SPACES IN HISTON & IMPINGTON**

## **INFORMATION ON CANDIDATE SITE “Crossing Keeper’s Copse”**

Version 28 May 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 NUMBER OF THIS LOCAL GREEN SPACE = V22**

**WORKING NAME OF THIS LOCAL GREEN SPACE = Crossing Keeper’s Copse**

**DATE of most recent amendment / addition to the dossier = 28 May 2019**

### **IN A NUTSHELL (recommend up to 100 words), the case for this Local Green Space:**

The Copse is a 1.7 ha broad-leaved woodland, located at the heart of Impington and heavily used by residents for walking, dog-walking, enjoying nature, getting together for a chat, resting and snacking during longer hikes and bike rides - and even as Santa’s Grotto at Christmas! It is also highly valued for its ecological functions of mitigating the noise, air pollution and visual impacts of the B1049. It connects ecologically with woodland and other habitat to the east and south. It’s a scarce habitat type in the village and the District and the whole woodland is subject to a group TPO. It is vitally important for people in the south of the villages, as there is an extreme shortfall of natural green space in Impington west of the B1049.

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

All inputs are by first contributor, except where indicated otherwise

Robert Bensted-Smith (RBS)

	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.
<b>1</b>	<b>GENERAL INFORMATION</b>	
1.1	Name(s) and location/address of site. <i>Some sites have several names, in which case mention all known names.</i>	
	Crossing Keeper's Copse Triangle of woodland between New Road, Bridge Road and the Busway.	
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.
	Map from Google Maps (street map and satellite imagery). Perimeter and area in hectares shown.	Map - Yes Photos - Yes
1.3	Ownership of site Information on land ownership can be obtained from the <a href="#">Land Registry</a> or local knowledge.	
	Most of the site is owned by the H&I Parish Council. The strip adjacent to Bridge Road is owned by Histon FC Holdings.	
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. The Parish Council is aware and supportive. Histon FC Holdings was written to, responded to the consultation and did not object to LGS status.	
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 copse is heavily used by residents from all of Impington, especially from the segment of the village which lies west of Bridge Road and south of the Baptist Church. It is also used regularly as a meeting place by IVC students. On some occasions it serves the whole of Histon & Impington, for example at Christmas when Santa's grotto is set up here. Cyclists and walkers also use the corner of the	

	copse as a place for a mid-journey rest and snack.	
<b>2</b>	<b>PLANNING HISTORY AND LEGAL STATUS</b>	
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?	
	There has been no planning application.	
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?	
	It is not allocated for development. The Parish Council would like to enhance experience of nature (e.g. a nature trail) and youth group usage and potentially improve the condition of the crossing-keeper's hut, without expanding its footprint. NP Policy HIM19 for the Station area retains the Crossing Keeper's Copse LGS as an important natural feature of the heart of Impington.	
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>	<a href="#">South Cambs PVAA - LGS</a> <a href="#">Right of way and open access land - GOV.UK</a> <a href="#">Cambridgeshire LNR</a> Open Spaces Society describes options <a href="http://www.oss.org.uk">www.oss.org.uk</a>
	The whole Copse is covered by a group Tree Preservation Order. The adopted Local Plan has a policy E/8 for the Station area, which includes the statement that "All schemes must integrate with surrounding uses, respect the character and maintain the vitality and viability of Histon and Impington village centre, and retain the significant wooded area known as 'The Copse'." The Copse had LGS status in the draft Local plan until December 2017, when it was changed it to PVAA without any consultation or justification. The Parish Council aims to reverse this change. The site is much too small and much too important to the community in its natural state for any part to be lost to development. Furthermore the width and density of the woodland are crucial factors for its functions as wildlife habitat (Section 9 below) and mitigator of the impacts of the B1049 (Section 10.4 below).	
<b>3.</b>	<b>SIZE, SCALE AND "LOCAL NATURE" OF CANDIDATE LGS</b>	
3.1	Area of proposed site (preferably in hectares)	(No fixed limits. Cotswold District suggests an upper limit of 20ha for LGS designation.)
	1.71 ha (estimated from Google maps)	
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?	
	Not extensive.	
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 Copse is an important feature of Impington. One corner lies at the Busway crossing, which is considered to be the centre of Impington. The Station Stores and the only pub in the south of the village (The Railway Vue) are both next to the Copse. Across the B1049 is the Recreation Ground and beyond that IVC, so many schoolchildren walk past or through the Copse every day.	
<b>4.</b>	<b>NEED FOR AND PROXIMITY/ACCESSIBILITY OF GREEN SPACE</b>	
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.
	Even in the context of H&I's severe deficit of green spaces, quantified by the SCDC 2013 study, the southern part of the village has an extreme shortage of publicly accessible natural areas. This woodland is of critical importance.	SCDC 2013 study of open spaces relative to the Council's standards for the minimum requirement.
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.
	Its central location means that it is within walking distance of hundreds of households in Impington. Access is open from Station Road, New Road and the 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>	
	People coming from the east of the B1049 have to cross that road. There is a crossing with traffic lights for pedestrians right next to the Copse.	
<b>5.</b>	<b>EVIDENCE THAT IT IS SPECIAL TO THE COMMUNITY</b>	
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 site has a large and diverse user group. The choice of this site for the Christmas Grotto is evidence enough that the site plays a special part in the lives of children growing up here. It was one of the LGS sites selected by Histon &	Enviro Volunteers posts on the Crossing Keeper's Copse (an occasional record of their activities) <a href="https://hisimpenviro.wordpress.com/p">https://hisimpenviro.wordpress.com/p</a>

	<p>Impington Sustainability Group in their Mental Health Week event in May 2019, entitled “Celebrating Our Green Spaces”. The activity at the Copse was run by H&amp;I Enviro Volunteers and involved tree identification and a barbecue. The Enviro Volunteers regularly carry out work to maintain the Copse (see link opposite).</p> <p>At the stand outside Tesco 19 people specified the Copse as one of their favourite green spaces. Comments included, “Crossing Keeper-s hut and old railway track brings back many happy memories of using the trains” and “it is a woodland experience on the way to the playground and a great place for community Christmas”.</p>	<a href="#">roject-locations/the-copse-and-railway-keepers-hut/</a>
<b>6.</b>	<b>EVIDENCE OF LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR BEAUTY OR TRANQUILLITY</b>	
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.
	<p>With regard to beauty, the mature woodland provides an attractive, natural setting where people walk (especially dog-walking) or relax and picnic.</p> <p>The Copse is adjacent to the B1049, so not particularly tranquil. However, it has an important role in mitigating the impact of the B1049 on people living to the west of that road (see Section 10.4).</p>	Photos in winter
<b>7.</b>	<b>EVIDENCE OF LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR HISTORICAL, CULTURAL, SOCIAL OR EDUCATIONAL VALUE</b>	<b>H&amp;I Historical Society could compile this section, where relevant.</b>
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.
	The Copse and Crossing Keeper’s hut are associated with old Histon Railway Station. With the development of the busway, this area has become once again a gateway into H&I. This drives the Parish Council’s plan to enhance the attractiveness of the area for both residents and visitors, thereby improving people’s well-being and increasing economic activity. In this vision, the mature woodland and wildlife of the Copse are a vital component.	
7.3	Is the site used for educational purposes, either by schools or by other community groups?	
	Occasional activities by Enviro Volunteers, such as	

	the recent tree identification activity in the Mental Health Week event mentioned above. However, the Parish Council is considering setting up a nature trail, which would serve an educational purpose.	
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 older people meet up with friends.</i>	
	The Copse, especially the corner nearest to Station Stores, is used frequently by IVC students, residents, cyclists and walkers as a place to relax and have a snack and picnic. Within the Copse, logs are also laid out for group gatherings. At Christmas the Crossing Keeper's hut is decked out as Santa's Grotto and Santa drops by.	
<b>8.</b>	<b>EVIDENCE OF LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR RECREATION</b>	<b>H&amp;I Walking Group, Histon Hobblers, Cycling Group, youth groups and others could compile this section, where relevant.</b>
8.1	Is this criterion relevant for this site?	If no, go on to the next section
	YES	
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>	
	The whole site is accessible. Boundary markers show where the strip owned by Histon FC Holdings is located, but there is no physical distinction from the rest of the woodland.	
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>	
	The site is heavily used, especially for dog-walking and nature appreciation. Every dog in Impington loves this site!	
<b>9.</b>	<b>EVIDENCE OF LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR RICHNESS OF WILDLIFE</b>	
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	Consider sightings within the past five

	<p>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></p>	<p>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.</p>
	<p>Song thrush is one of the red listed bird species breeding in the wood.  The chorus of birdsong in the Copse is evidence of the abundance of birds, but we do not have any systematic studies of the species nesting there.</p>	
9.3	<p>Are any of the habitats or species found on the site 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></p>	<p>For national and county priority species, see <a href="#">CPbiodiversity</a> . Consider sightings within the past five years. Elaborate further in an attachment, if necessary</p>
	<p>Broad-leaved woodland is a priority habitat and is in extremely short supply in H&amp;I and in South Cambridgeshire (0.72% of land cover in District). Tree species include Ash, Beech, Horse Chestnut, Lime, Maple, Oak, Pine, Robinia and Sycamore.</p>	<p>The DEFRA Magic Map is at <a href="http://magic.defra.gov.uk/">http://magic.defra.gov.uk/</a>  Land cover analysis  <a href="https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/news/nr/land-cover-atlas-uk-1.744440">https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/news/nr/land-cover-atlas-uk-1.744440</a></p>
9.4	<p>Are there trees with preservation orders in the site? If so, how many, which species and what special characteristics?</p>	<p>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.</p>
	<p>All the mature trees in the Copse are protected by a group Tree Preservation Order.</p>	<p><a href="https://gismaps.scambs.gov.uk/connect/analyst/mobile/#/main?mapcfg=HisImpPC">https://gismaps.scambs.gov.uk/connect/analyst/mobile/#/main?mapcfg=HisImpPC</a></p>
9.5	<p>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></p>	<p>You could attach copies of materials produced, if appropriate.</p>
	<p>The Parish Council has installed nesting boxes and log seats.  The Enviro volunteers regularly coppice the site and do maintenance, such as ivy cutting, spreading woodchips on footpaths, putting up nesting boxes etc.</p>	<p>Enviro Volunteers posts on the Crossing Keeper's Copse (an occasional record of their activities)  <a href="https://hisimpenviro.wordpress.com/project-locations/the-copse-and-railway-keepers-hut/">https://hisimpenviro.wordpress.com/project-locations/the-copse-and-railway-keepers-hut/</a></p>
<b>10.</b>	<p><b>EVIDENCE OF LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR OTHER ECOSYSTEM SERVICES</b></p>	<p>There is unlikely to be quantitative data on ecosystem services, but you can make qualitative arguments – as</p>

		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 significant	
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.	
10.4	Does the site contribute significantly as a barrier to noise pollution or air pollution, as a windbreak, or in maintaining a favourable microclimate (e.g. a moist, cool area during hot, dry periods)?	Attach supporting documents, diagrams etc, if needed.
	The Copse is an important barrier, mitigating the impacts of the increasingly busy B1049 on residents living west of that road: noise, air pollution (Nitrogen oxides and PM10 and PM2.5) and visual impacts are all of serious concern to residents. This role of the woodland is made even more important by the fact that the road is elevated at this point, which maximises all three kinds of impact. Maintaining the full size and density of the woodland is essential for these benefits to the health and well-being of the community.	
11.	<b>CONNECTIVITY TO OTHER GREEN AREAS</b>	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.
	Ecologically, the site is part of the southern cluster	The wider map of the site, copied from

	of in inter-connected sites woodland and fields designated Important Natural Habitat in the Neighbourhood Plan. It connects with the patches of mature woodland on Feldsted Farm, east of the B1049. The lines of trees either side of Bridge Road, plus the adjacent fields (east) and gardens (west) provide some connectivity southwards to the woodland near Holiday Inn driveway and to the Impington Coppice woods.	Google maps, shows the proximity to woodland and open land on the other side of the B1049.
11.3	<p>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 green areas and how much?</p> <p><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>	Attach a map or diagram to illustrate the connectivity, or simply cross-refer to the ecological connectivity, if the links are similar.
	<p>In terms of walking, the Copse is adjacent to the Busway path, and hence to all its connections. Walkers may combine the Copse with Histon Woods or the fields near Cawcutt's Lake and the Holiday Inn.</p> <p>Cycling groups often pause here, taking advantage of the Copse and the Station Stores to rest and refresh themselves.</p>	
12.	<b>EVIDENCE OF ANY OTHER SPECIAL LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE</b>	
	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.	