

LOCAL GREEN SPACES IN HISTON & IMPINGTON

INFORMATION ON: “Rowley’s Field (Long Meadow)” LGS/INH

With additional information on “Croft Close Set-aside” (INH only, not LGS)

3 June 2019

The October 2018 draft NP proposed both Rowley’s Field (Long Meadow) and Croft Close Set Aside to have LGS and INH status. A single dossier was compiled, because of the close connections between the two. Following the consultation, it was decided that Croft Close Set Aside would not be designated LGS, but remains INH. However, we have not attempted to divide the dossier of supporting information into two.

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

This dossier covers two LGS sites, which are closely connected and depend on each other for their shared values and uses.

REFERENCE NUMBER OF THIS LOCAL GREEN SPACE = V5 Rowley’s Field (Long Meadow)
V2 Croft Close set-aside (INH only)

WORKING NAME OF THESE SPACES = “Rowley’s Field - Long Meadow” and “Croft Close Set-aside”

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

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

Rowley’s Field (Long Meadow) is a much loved and much used, tranquil, wildlife-rich site, situated on the NW fringe of the village, with magnificent old trees standing in the fields. Together with Croft Close Set-aside (INH), the site supports a number of Biodiversity Action Plan priority species (Bullfinch, Linnet, Yellowhammer, Grass Snake and others). The site and adjacent bridleways are heavily used by dog-walkers, walkers and horse-riders from all over H&I. Young people also use the area for socialising. The adjacent part of Rowley’s Field was the traditional ‘gathering area’ for the Feast Parade.

This site is connected with the Croft Close Set Aside site via Abbey Farm (a Scheduled Ancient Monument) and Histon Manor, which make an important contribution to the biodiversity value of the area.

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

All inputs are by first contributor, except where indicated otherwise

David Chandler (DC)

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.
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>	
	Rowley's Field (Long Meadow) - and adjoining Horse Chestnut field on Meadow Farm. Croft Close set-aside. Rowley's Field is the first field NE of Park Lane and W of Abbey Farm/Histon Manor. The adjacent Horse Chestnut field is to its NW. Croft Close set-aside is N of Abbey Farm, W of Croft Close and bounded by Gunn Lane to the N.	DC
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 Attach the map(s) and photo(s) separately.
	See appendices, and above.	DC
1.3	Ownership of site Information on land ownership can be obtained from the Land Registry or local knowledge.	
	Rowley's Field (Long Meadow) is owned by Mrs Rowley. The Horse Chestnut Field is owned by Mr. Stroud. Croft Close Set Aside is owned by Mrs Rowley.	DC
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>	
	Originally both Rowley's Field (Long Meadow) and Croft Close Set Aside were proposed to be both LGS and INH. Mrs Rowley objected to LGS status for Croft Close Set-Aside but was supportive of LGS status for Rowley's Field (Long Meadow). The revised Plan therefore omits LGS status for Croft Close Set Aside. Communication with Mrs Rowley is through her nephew. Mr Stroud was contacted verbally during NP preparation and in writing for the consultation. He commented on the NP but made no comment on the LGS.	
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>	
	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>	
	Rowley's Field and the Horse Chestnut Field, are heavily used by walkers, dog walkers and runners. Horse-riders also use the bridle way. Croft Close set-aside is used by dog walkers. Residents of west Histon are major users of the site, as it is on their doorstep. However, many users (especially dog walkers) come here from all over H&I, including by car or along the busway track, due to the paucity of large, open, tranquil areas for walking in H&I.	DC RBS
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 planning applications for either site.	DC RBS
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?	
	Neither site is allocated for development in the NP (they are Green Belt).	DC RBS
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
	It is all Green Belt. Part of the southern boundary, along Park Lane, is designated Important Countryside Frontage in the Local Plan. The purpose of LGS status for Rowley's Field (Long Meadow) is to ensure that no exceptional development proceeds in this area and that the great values this site has for the H&I community are maintained. The purpose of INH status for Rowley's Field (Long Meadow) and Croft Close Set-Aside is to ensure that their biodiversity values, including the connectivity between and beyond them, are recognised and maintained in future uses.	RBS
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)
	Estimated:	DC

	Horse Chestnut Field: 2.3 ha Rowley's Field: 2.0 ha Croft Close set-aside: 4.5 ha	RBS
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. Essentially, it comprises the wildlife-rich border between the village and huge arable fields (well over 100 hectares), which have bordering hedges but no other wooded habitat. In this context, each site is just a small area that has exceptionally high value for the community.	DC RBS
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.
	About a third of H&I homes are within 500m of this site and, although it is private land, it has many decades of public use. Rowley's Field with its large trees is a much loved place, while parts of Histon Manor and Abbey Farm (which join these candidate sites) are of historic interest. The site also has one of the village's oldest trees (see 7.2).	DC
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.
	In the context of H&I's extreme shortage of natural green space and of informal recreation areas (including for children), this easily accessed area is essential for the health and well-being of a large part of the community. Note: Croft Close set-aside is less easy to access than Rowley's Field. All access is at the discretion of the owners.	RBS DC
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.
	The sites are accessed from Park Lane, Croft Close (informally) and Gun Lane (and formerly via the track past Abbey Farm house, but the current owners discourage that). This means that the site is within walking distance for the majority of users. Because of its strong appeal and the lack of comparable alternatives, some users come from the southern part of the village, almost 2km away.	RBS DC
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>	

	There are no busy roads to be crossed. Many people have to cross Park Lane but it is not a busy road.	DC RBS
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.
		<i>Many users but what is best way to compile evidence of support</i>
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	DC
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 sites includes a variety of habitats including small patches of woodland, old hedges, impressive large trees, a veteran/ancient tree (see 7.2) and a drainage ditch. They are peaceful and two of the few open spaces where the noise of the A14 (2km away) is insignificant. This is especially important for a community plagued by the 24-hours-a-day drone of A14 traffic.	DC RBS
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	DC
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 hedgerow between Abbey Farm and Croft Close set-aside includes one of the village's oldest trees - a large, hollow oak. It has been burnt and played on, but is still alive, and estimated to be around 500 years old. In its early years Henry VIII was on the throne... It is a veteran if not an ancient tree and as such, should be protected. The broader area from Gun's Lane to the Manor is described in Wikipedia as follows: "Possibly the oldest surviving area of interest is Gun's Lane, which is named after a family who once lived in the lane. ^[12] Today this is just a bridleway but it was for centuries the Cambridge to Ely causeway, which was the main road into the Fens and the Isle of Ely . ^[3] The Iron Age ringfort that once stood at Arbury may well at one time have guarded one end of this road. ^[citation needed] "	DC <i>RBS - check with Pene if it has "ancient" status. - also check about Etheldreda church site</i>

	<p>During the Norman conquest of England, William the Conqueror passed this way with his army as he chased a rebel Saxon, Hereward the Wake, into the Fens.^[12]</p> <p>Early settlement appears to have been centred around what is now Church End. Originally there were two churches here – St Etheldreda's and St Andrew's^[13] – with each church belonging to a separate manor, but only St Andrew's remains today.^[11] [...] Close by is Histon Manor House. Originally this was on a site with a moat which is still visible today, but at some point the house was moved to higher ground nearby, possibly to avoid flooding.”</p>	
7.3	Is the site used for educational purposes, either by schools or by other community groups?	
	No.	RBS
7.4	<p>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?</p> <p><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></p>	
	Rowley’s Field (Long Meadow) has long been a gathering place for young people. Traditionally the adjacent part of Rowley’s Field as where the Feast Parade assembled before beginning its procession through the village, until that practice ended.	DC RBS
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	DC
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 formal sport. Many runners use Rowley’s Field and the Horse Chestnut Field.	
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>	
	A bridleway forms the W border of the Horse Chestnut field. Another bridleway runs adjacent to the NE edge of Croft Close set-aside. Both Rowley’s Field and Croft Close set-aside are commonly accessed, though there are no rights of way. Access	DC RBS
	is courtesy of the owners, who have kindly tolerated access for many years. Disabled access is limited.	

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>	
	Main uses of the sites and adjacent bridleways are walking, dog-walking, and horse-riding. Scores of dog-walkers use Rowley's Field every day. There is some foraging, mainly for blackberries, in the hedgerows, especially on adjacent Gun's Lane. Some people use the area for bird-watching, especially Croft Close set-aside. Rowley's Field is also used for informal recreation by children and young people.	DC RBS
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	DC
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.
	Notable species include Badger (presumed resident - footprint, 22/3/18), Barn Owl (occasional use), Bullfinch (resident), Kingfisher (occasional use), Little Egret (regular) and Grass Snake (recorded within last five years). This is in addition to a wide variety of birds, including those in the next box (9.3) and species recorded by Finn Holding (mostly listed for the connected habitat of Gun's Lane but they move throughout).	DC Finn's blog on Gun's Lane (ecologically part of the block of inter-connected habitat) in 2010 is here: https://thenaturephile.com/2010/11/26/guns-lane-2/ This site has links to Finn's species lists month by month.
9.3	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>	For national and county priority species, see CPbiodiversity . Consider sightings within the past five years. Elaborate further in an attachment, if necessary
	The following priority species in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biodiversity Action Plan have been recorded on the sites since 2013: Song Thrush (presumed breeding), Bullfinch (presumed breeding), Linnet (possible breeder), Yellowhammer, Reed Bunting, House Sparrow, and Grass Snake, with older records of Turtle Dove, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker and probably Water Vole. Barn Owl, an additional species of interest in the BAP, has also been recorded.	DC See Cambridgeshire and Peterborough BAP.

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.
	Yes. In Rowley's Field (Long Meadow) TPO's cover many striking individual trees (especially horse chestnut) and groups of trees in the north-western central and south-eastern parts of the LGS, plus the line of horse chestnuts parallel with Park Lane. In Croft Close Set-Aside, there is one individual oak tree with a TPO. Two groups of trees with TPOs (e.g. ash, blackthorn, oak, field maple, willow) lie on the south-west corner - the Abbey Farm boundary. TPO's cover significant parts of the woodland on Abbey Farm, which connects Croft Close Set-Aside and Rowley's Field.	RBS https://gismaps.scambs.gov.uk/connector/analyst/mobile/#/main?mapcfg=HismpPC
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.
	David Chandler (Histon resident and freelance writer) has bird records from Croft Close set-aside dating back to 1997. More recently Mark Prina (Histon resident and reserve warden for A Rocha UK) and Finn Holding (Histon resident) have also observed and recorded birds here.	DC RBS
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	DC
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.
	It is land that isn't covered in concrete or tarmac so will absorb rainwater, thereby helping to reduce flood risk. Much of Rowley's Field and the Horse Chestnut Field are categorised as 'Flood Zone 3', meaning that they have a high probability of flooding.	DC See flood risk category map: https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/

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.
	No detailed information available but the sites are very likely to provide habitat for bees, butterflies, moths and other pollinators. This would help maintain biodiversity of the site and also benefit adjacent gardens.	DC RBS
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.
	Not known.	
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	DC
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.
	Habitat fragmentation is a very significant threat to biodiversity. Landscape connectivity facilitates the movement of species between sites and habitats. Maintaining and enhancing landscape connections is therefore, an important, albeit not always easy to deliver, conservation action. These sites are connected by Abbey Farm which is adjacent to Histon Manor. Gun's lane, which runs alongside Croft Close Set-aside, is an ancient trackway with valuable hedgerows connecting Histon to the Westwick area and then Rampton. Gun's Lane is alongside Cottenham Road Farm, which flows into Buxhall Farm and Mill Lane Farm, and then into Manor Farm. Actions that improve connectivity (eg maintaining/improving and planting hedgerows, and creating/maintaining rough field margins) should be encouraged wherever possible.	DC
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?	Attach a map or diagram to illustrate the connectivity, or simply cross-refer to the ecological connectivity, if the

	<p>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>	links are similar.
	<p>See above. These sites are an important part of the walking route network described in the Neighbourhood Plan. In the NP the aspirational route between Croft Close and Rowley's Field would complete a loop and be especially beneficial for the community, if the owners were to authorise it.</p>	DC RBS
12.	EVIDENCE OF ANY OTHER SPECIAL LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE	
	<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>	