

Epperstone Parish Draft Neighbourhood Plan 2016 – 2033

Local Green Spaces – Supporting Evidence



Epperstone Parish Council

March 2019

1.0 Introduction

This supporting paper sets out the background to those sites proposed for designated as Local Green Spaces in the Epperstone Neighbourhood Plan and the reasons for doing so. It has been prepared for the purposes of, and to accompany, the “submission” version of the Epperstone Neighbourhood Plan. It takes account of the responses received during pre-submission consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan.

2.0 Policy Context

The National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF)¹ introduced the concept of Local Green Space (LGS) designation. LGS designation is a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of importance to local communities. As paragraph 99 of the NPPF states, “*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*”.

Additional guidance is provided in the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) section on “open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and local green space²”.

3.0 Process for Designation

Whilst the NPPF establishes the concept of LGS designation and provides some guiding principles; it gives local communities preparing a Neighbourhood Plan some discretion to determine how to implement this at the local level.

A four-stage approach was adopted by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. This approach had regard to relevant national guidance on identifying and designating LGS as contained in the NPPF and NPPG as well as the good practice document, “Making local green space designations in your neighbourhood plan³” prepared by Locality.

Step 1: Identification of ‘Long List’ of potential sites.

A long list of 16 potential LGS sites was developed.

This ‘long list’ followed an audit and assessment of all green spaces in the Parish. This was led by the Epperstone Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. It was based on local knowledge, the outcomes from the community consultation events as well as evidence of what exists already - for example, those open spaces that were identified as important to the character and appearance of Epperstone village as part of the Epperstone Conservation Area Appraisal.

¹https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779764/NPPF_Feb_2019_web.pdf

² <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/open-space-sports-and-recreation-facilities-public-rights-of-way-and-local-green-space>

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

Step 2: Assessment against the NPPF criteria

These 16 sites were then assessed further to consider their suitability for LGS designation. To allow comparative assessment of the sites, a form was created based on the criteria in the NPPF. These are that the sites are:

- reasonably close proximity to the community it serves
- demonstrably special to a local community
- 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.

These criteria were used to create an LGS evaluation form. This enabled a consistent and transparent methodology for identifying LGSs in the Parish. Each potential site was assessed.

The Group, like most groups undertaking LGS analysis, faced challenges. In particular, the sheer number of potential local green spaces in the Parish of some significance. National planning policy enables a local plan to protect those of local significance. In addition, the absence of a statutory or commonly used definition of these terms, particularly what constitutes, 'special' or comprises an 'extensive tract of land'. A common-sense approach was taken, while at the same time having regard to good practice and the experiences of LGS designations in approved neighbourhood plans.

The Group was also mindful of the fact that the sites already have some protection through their Green Belt designation. National planning guidance on LGS designation suggests that where land is already protected by another designation consideration should be given as to whether any additional local benefit would be gained by LGS. It decided that there would be. An important factor here was that there had been examples of green spaces which the community considered to be special that have been lost to development of a type which is appropriate in the Green Belt. This includes new housing and garden extensions. The intention is that their designation would give them additional protection over that provided through their Green Belt designation.

A site had to score four or more against the agreed criterion to be considered for inclusion in the Plan as a LGS.

Step 3: Independent Review

All the proposed sites were then reviewed for their appropriateness for designation as LGS by the independent consultant helping prepare the Plan, acting in a 'critical friend' role.

Step 4: Wider Consultation

Satisfied that the sites met in principle, the criteria for LGS designation and should be formally proposed for designation in the Neighbourhood Plan, they were then "tested"

through the Plan process. Key milestones were when the proposed sites were set out for comment at the drop-in events held in July 2016 and July 2017, and the formal consultation on the original draft Plan undertaken over the summer of 2017 and revised draft in 2018/2019.

Steps were taken to inform land owners about proposals to designate any of their land as LGS as part of this consultation. This included providing a copy of the draft Plan to all known households and businesses in the Parish.

4.0 Local Green Space Site - Assessment Forms

The following section details how each of the sites meets the Local Green Space criteria set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. An indicative photograph is also provided for each of the sites.

Reference	1
Site Name	Allotment Site off Chapel Lane.
Address/location	Off Chapel Lane, Epperstone.
Description	Allotment Site.
	
Compliance with NPPF Criteria/Why is it special?	
Is it in close proximity to the community it would serve? I.e. within 400m	Yes, on the edge of the village of Epperstone.
Does the site have local significance?	Yes, popular and long-established allotment site on the edge of the village.
Is it beautiful?	Of limited beauty.
Does it have historic significance?	Not in particular.
Does it have recreation value? including playing fields, in/formal	Yes, well used and popular allotment site.
Is it tranquil? Is it a peaceful place away from noise and bustle	Yes, offers pleasant views towards and from the Village.
Does the site have wildlife value? Biodiversity?	Yes, some wildlife and wildflowers, plus the crops grown on the site.
Is the site local in character? (i.e. serves local community and not extensive)	Yes, on the edge of the village and relatively small in size.

Does site contribute to LP strategic requirements for provision of homes, employment or services?	No.
Other	No.

Reference	2
Site	Land around Church of the Holy Cross.
Address/location	Off Main Street, Epperstone Village.
Description	Churchyard and cemetery adjacent to Church of the Holy Cross – a Grade 1 Listed Building. Includes grassed areas as well as some seating.
	
Compliance with NPPF/Why is it special?	
Is it in close proximity to the community it would serve? I.e. within 400m	Yes, located at the heart of the Village of Epperstone off Main street.
Does the site have local significance?	Yes, an important and prominent green space, which is important to the character and amenity of the Parish. Its historic association with the development of the village adds to its value.
Is it beautiful?	Yes, an attractive local green space containing, pathways, gravestones and seating areas. There are several mature trees at the edge and within the churchyard. Important to the setting and character of the village and the adjacent Listed Building.
Does it have historic significance?	Yes, used as church grounds/graveyard for many centuries. It is adjacent to one of the oldest known buildings located in the village.
Does it have recreation value? including playing fields, in/formal	Of some, mainly informal. Walking and sitting. Publicly accessible.
Is it tranquil? Is it a peaceful place away from noise and bustle	Yes. A quiet area of reflection. Offers some pleasant views.
Does the site have wildlife value? Biodiversity?	Yes, of some value - supports birds, small animals and flowers.
Is the site local in character? (i.e. serves local community and not extensive)	Yes, a relatively small site located in the centre of the village of Epperstone.

Does site contribute to LP strategic requirements for provision of homes, employment or services?	No.
Other	No.

Reference	3
Site	Area of meadow land, including Dovecote, opposite "The Cottage".
Address/location	Off Main Street, Epperstone Village.
Description	Part of a field which contains the 'Dovecote' a Grade 2 Listed Building.
	
Compliance with the NPPF/Why is it special?	
Is it in close proximity to the community it would serve? I.e. within 400m	Yes, in the heart of the village.
Does the site have local significance?	Located in a prominent location in the heart of the village, it is important to the setting of the village and a strong physical and visual and physical link to the surrounding countryside. It provides pleasant views to the surrounding countryside and a link to the countryside. It is important to the feel, character and identity of the Village.
Is it beautiful?	Yes, of some beauty.
Does it have historic significance?	It important to the setting of the 'Dovecote' a Grade 2 Listed Building as well as the visual amenity of the village of Epperstone (a Conservation Area). It provides a link and association with the historical form, function and development of Epperstone.
Does it have recreation value? including playing fields, in/formal	Limited.
Is it tranquil? Is it a peaceful place away from noise and bustle	Yes.
Does the site have wildlife value? Biodiversity?	Yes, but limited. Supports some trees, hedges and wildlife.

Is the site local in character? (i.e. serves local community and not extensive)	Yes, a relatively small site, off Main Street. Located in the centre of the village of Epperstone.
Does site contribute to LP strategic requirements for provision of homes, employment or services?	No.

Reference	4
Site	Playing fields surrounding the Village Hall, including Bourne Wood.
Address/location	Off Gonalston Lane, Epperstone.
Description	Mainly grassed but some trees, hedges and shrubs. It has a number of recreational facilities including football and cricket pitches as well as a tennis court. There is a children's play area. Includes a small wood (Bourne) as well as the Village Hall.



Compliance with the NPPF/Why is it special?	
Is it in close proximity to the community it would serve? I.e. within 400m	Yes, located on the edge of the village of Epperstone next to the village hall.
Does the site have local significance?	Yes, it is the primary formal (and most well used) open space in the Parish.
Is it beautiful?	Not in particular.
Does it have historic significance?	Not in particular.
Does it have recreation value? including playing fields, in/formal	Yes, both formal (e.g. tennis courts, children's play area, cricket etc.) and informal (e.g. walking and seating). Very well used.
Is it tranquil? Is it a peaceful place away from noise and bustle	Yes, nice views towards the Village and the surrounding countryside.
Does the site have wildlife value? Biodiversity?	Yes, but limited, supports some wildlife and wildflowers, especially the woods.
Is the site local in character? (i.e. serves local community and not extensive)	Yes.
Does site contribute to LP strategic requirements for provision of homes, employment or services?	No.
Other	No.

Reference	5
Site	The green spaces both sides of Main Street from West Manor Park to the mini roundabout on the A6097
Address/location	On either side of Main Street as you enter Epperstone Village from the west.
Description	Two linear areas of open space on both sides of Main Street. Mainly grassed but some trees. Includes seating area.



Compliance with the NPPF/Why is it special?	
Is it in close proximity to the community it would serve? I.e. within 400m	Yes, on the western edge of Epperstone Village immediately adjacent to the built-up area.
Does the site have local significance?	Yes, it is a prominent, well-known and highly prized space. It is important to

	the character and identity of the Parish as well as for informal recreation.
Is it beautiful?	Yes, visually attractive. An attractive green space with a large number of mature trees. The magnificent canopy adds to its value.
Does it have historic significance?	Yes, has acted to the 'gateway' to the village for many centuries.
Does it have recreation value? including playing fields, in/formal	Yes, both formal and informal – popular for sitting and walking etc. Well used by joggers and people walking dogs etc. It provides the main pedestrian link to the A6097 from the west of the village.
Is it tranquil? Is it a peaceful place away from noise and bustle	Yes, in a generally quiet location. It as a popular place for residents and visitors to sit and reflect. It offers attractive views both into and away from the village.
Does the site have wildlife value? Biodiversity?	Yes, of some value - supports birds, small animals and flowers. Habitat for flora and fauna.
Is the site local in character? (i.e. serves local community and not extensive)	Yes, relatively small and on the edge of the Village.
Does site contribute to LP strategic requirements for provision of homes, employment or services?	No.
Other	No.

Reference	6
Site	Epperstone Community Meadowland.
Address/location	Off Main Street, Epperstone.
Description	Former sports field, the land will provide a community meadow land as part of a Section 106 agreement linked to the adjacent Epperstone Manor development.
	
Compliance with the NPPF/Why is it special?	
Is it in close proximity to the community it would serve? I.e. within 400m	Yes. In the south-west corner of Epperstone village immediately behind the Epperstone Manor development.
Does the site have local significance?	Yes, long-standing recreation and amenity area. The land was entrusted to the Parish Council for the benefit of the local community. It is now a public green space with a footpath linking the field to West Manor Park.
Is it beautiful?	Of some beauty.
Does it have historic significance?	Not particularly.
Does it have recreation value? including playing fields, in/formal	It will provide opportunities for informal recreation including walks and seating areas. Crossed by a public footpath.
Is it tranquil? Is it a peaceful place away from noise and bustle	Yes, on the edge of the village and away from the main road. Provides pleasant and panoramic views of the surrounding countryside.
Does the site have wildlife value? Biodiversity?	Yes, supports some trees and hedges. The meadow land attracts and supports birds, insect, flowers and other animals.

Is the site local in character? (i.e. serves local community and not extensive)	Yes.
Does site contribute to LP strategic requirements for provision of homes, employment or services?	No.
Other	It was formally signed over by Newark and Sherwood District Council on the 3rd of August 2018.

A map showing the Local Green Spaces is contained in the Neighbourhood Plan. This and a more detailed one is also available on the Parish Council website at <http://www.epperstoneparishcouncil.uk/community/epperstone-parish-council-13819/neighbourhood-plan/>.