

North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2033

**EVIDENCE BASE DOCUMENT:
LOCAL GREEN SPACE ASSESSMENT**



Background

North Crawley Parish Council is preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for North Crawley. Consultation carried out with local residents as part of this process has revealed that the local community values many of the open green spaces around the village and wish to see them protected from development. This assessment has been prepared to establish whether it is appropriate for these areas to be designated as Local Green Spaces.

Local Green Spaces are a designation that provides special protection for areas that are of particular importance to the local community for leisure, recreation, or amenity reasons. They were introduced by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in 2012. Paragraphs 76 and 77 of the NPPF address the purpose and criteria for designating Local Green Spaces as follows:

76. Local communities through local and neighbourhood plans should be able to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them. By designating land as Local Green Space local communities will be able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances. Identifying land as Local Green Space should therefore 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 reviewed, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.

77. The Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. The designation should only be used:

- where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
- where the green area is 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*
- where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.*

The NPPF is supported by the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), which provides additional guidance on Local Green Spaces. Relevant advice in the NPPF includes:

Paragraph 007 – LGS designation should be consistent with local planning for sustainable development and should not be used in a way that undermines this aim of plan making.

Paragraph 008 – generally LGS designation is rarely appropriate for land which is subject to planning permission for development.

Paragraph 011- if land is already protected by designation (such as Site of Special Scientific Interest or National Park), then consideration should be given to whether any additional local benefit would be gained by LGS designation.

Paragraph 014 – the proximity of a LGS to the community it serves will depend on local circumstances, including why the green area is seen as special e.g. if public access is a factor, then the site should be in easy walking distance.

Paragraph 015 – there are no hard and fast rules about how big a LGS can be because places are different and a degree of judgement will inevitably be needed.

Paragraph 017 – some areas that may be considered for designation as LGS may already have largely unrestricted public access, however land could be considered for LGS designation if there is no public access (e.g. if valued for biodiversity, historic significance and/or beauty). LGS designation in itself does not confer any rights of public access over what exists at present.

Local Green Spaces in North Crawley

The Neighbourhood Plan steering group for North Crawley identified three areas from consultation that should be considered for Local Green Space designation; Kilpin Green, Nixey’s Walk, and the recreation ground. These are shown on the Policy Map extract below:

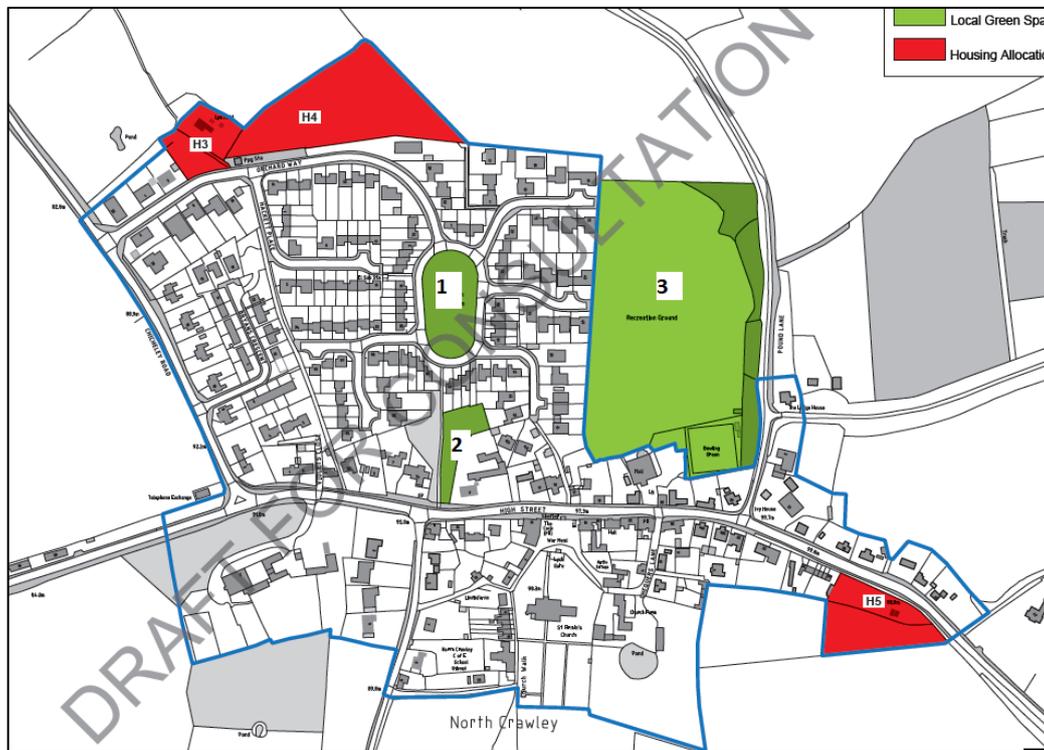


Figure 1: Policy Map extract showing proposed Local Green Space designations; Kilpin Green (1), Nixey’s Walk (2), Recreation Ground (3)

The Slipe (adjoining housing allocation H5) was previously considered as partially suitable for Local Green Space designation. However, engagement with the landowner indicated they would be resistant to this designation and therefore that an LGS designation here would not be capable of being sustained beyond the plan period in accordance with the NPPF.

The table below demonstrates how each of the LGS areas were assessed as being suitable for Local Green Space designation with reference to the criteria in paragraph 77 of the NPPF and the advice of the Planning Practice Guidance:



Site	Paragraph 77 criteria						Other criteria				Conclusion	
	Proximity	Special character					Extensive tract of land	Accessibility	Existing designations	Planning permission		Complementary and consistent with sustainable development.
		Beauty	History	Recreation	Tranquillity	Biodiversity						
KILPIN GREEN	The area is located at the centre of the largest existing residential area in North Crawley. The majority of the village's population are therefore in daily proximity to it.	Y	N	Y	Y	N	No – the area is around 0.3Ha and forms the centre-point of an established housing estate.	The site is accessible around its entire perimeter via Kilpin Green itself, with many properties fronting it directly.	None other than registration as village green.	None.	The site fulfils a valuable amenity purpose within the daily lives of North Crawley and Kilpin Green residents. It complements the existing vitality of village life and its designation as a LGS therefore contributes to sustainable development.	Kiplin Green is of local significance as an area of visual amenity in an otherwise built-up area. It provides an informal recreation opportunity for families living on Kilpin Green and has particularly benefit in this respect due to its high levels of natural surveillance, which is particularly important for young children.
NIXEY'S WALK	The area is located between Kilpin Green and the village centre. It is therefore in close proximity to the majority of the village's population.	Y	N	Y	Y	N	No – the area is around 0.12Ha and forms a 'leftover' parcel between the historic core of the village and the more modern Kilpin Green.	The site forms a thoroughfare between Kilpin Green and the village centre. It is therefore inherently accessible with a right of way already existing through it.	None other than registration as village green.	None.	The site fulfils a valuable amenity purpose within the daily lives of North Crawley and Kilpin Green residents. It complements the existing vitality of village life and its designation as a LGS therefore contributes to sustainable development.	Nixey's Walk is an important 'green thoroughfare' for pedestrians around North Crawley. It provides a visual benefit in providing a tranquil and open area between other more built-up parts of the village. It also has recreational value with the area away from the main path large enough for games or other outdoor leisure.
RECREATION GROUND	The area is well-located within walking distance of the village population and together with the institute building provides a focal point within the village.	Y	Y	Y	N	N	No – the site is the largest proposed LGS at 2.5 hectares although this is commensurate with its function as a multi-sport facility.	The site is located at the centre of the village and benefits from a public car park at its southern end as well as informal pedestrian access from both the west and east.	None other than land covenants.	None.	The site forms an important recreational purpose for North Crawley residents and offers opportunity for sport and leisure that would not be available if the land were to be developed for an alternative purpose. It provides a mix of uses within the village and therefore contributes to sustainable development	The recreation ground is by its definition of local significance in terms of leisure and recreation. It is also held in historical regard as it has long been the home of local sports teams and has a thriving institute associated with it. In visual terms, the openness of the recreation ground is important in offering views of the countryside to the north of North Crawley, which has an intrinsic natural beauty.

Conclusion

The table above demonstrates that the three areas proposed for Local Green Space designation in North Crawley all meet the necessary criteria. Each display an abundance of qualities that provide value to the local community whilst there are no circumstances that suggest a Local Green Space designation may otherwise be inappropriate.

The only criteria in the NPPF that is not addressed in the table above is the reference in paragraph 76 to LGS designations being capable of enduring beyond the plan period. Each of the proposed LGS designations is a self-contained area of land that is set within a context that is unlikely to fundamentally change beyond the plan period.

The sites will each be referenced on the Neighbourhood Plan Policy Map and included in a specific policy (L1). Once the Neighbourhood Plan has passed examination and referendum, and is made part of the Development Plan they will be afforded protection under the terms of paragraph 76. The plan itself includes a review mechanism, which will cover the Local Green Spaces. These will also be reviewed should any subsequent revision of the NPPF amend the criteria or other national policy governing Local Green Space designation.