

# Local Green Space Assessment of Proposed Sites, to accompany the Publication Local Plan

*Planning*

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### Introduction

There is one Local Green Space (LGS) designation in the borough in the adopted Local Plan, at Udney Park Playing Fields, which has been made since this designation was introduced in national policy in 2012.

The preparation of a new Local Plan commenced with a [Direction of Travel consultation](#) in 2020, which asked “Are there any sites that you would like to be identified for designation as ‘Local Green Space’?”. The consultation responses are summarised as follows:

- Stag Brewery Playing Fields
- Udney Park Playing Fields, Langham Road open space, River towpaths and open space leading down to the Thames
- Heathfield Recreation ground and its future extension should have the highest level of protection you can give it
- Crane Park and the Shot Tower
- Two respondents suggested Cambridge Gardens and Warren Gardens
- Westerly Ware, Pensford Field, North Sheen Rec, Raleigh Road rec.
- Ham Library garden
- Several other sites were nominated for POS, Village Green and pocket park status.

To inform the new Local Plan, a review of all the land designated as Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land (MOL), LGS and Other Open Land of Townscape Importance (OOLTI) was then carried out, providing an up to date, objective and evidence-based assessment of how the currently protected areas contribute to the purposes / criteria set out in the relevant national/regional or local policy guidance. The [Open Land Review \(Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land, LGS and Other Open Land of Townscape Importance\) \(2021\)](#) assessed and identified a number of *potential* sites for consideration as LGS. Table 5.2 in the overarching report of the Open Land Review 2021 summarised the existing designations that apply to the proposed sites, overall performance and recommendation. While some of the assessed sites may qualify for LGS designation, where there is already an existing MOL designation, there would be little to no additional benefit gained by a LGS designation. The Council took forward those sites which have scored strongly overall against the LGS criteria set out in the NPPF, and which do not already benefit from an MOL designation.

The draft Local Plan ‘Pre-Publication’ (Regulation 18) (2021) proposed the following sites to be designated as Local Green Space:

- North Sheen Recreation Ground
- Raleigh Road Recreation Ground
- Ham Village Green
- Ham Library Gardens
- Warren Gardens
- Pensford Field Kew

The consultation responses relating to Local Green Space are summarised as follows:

- The Mortlake Brewery Community Group applied to the Council to have the playing fields designated as LGS but there has been no positive response and would like to know the reason.
- A comment that the Udney Park Playing Fields Trust welcome the retention of the site as an asset of community value and as LGS.
- Habitats & Heritage support the new LGS designations, and ask to consider Teddington Library Gardens as an additional LGS.

The same sites are proposed to be designated as Local Green Space in the draft Local Plan ‘Publication’ (Regulation 19) (2023). This assessment of the sites builds on the potential site

assessments set out in the Open Land Review 2021 (by consultants Arup in 2021), and sets out the Council’s assessment in accordance with the Local Plan, and in line with the NPPF and [national Planning Practice Guidance](#). Photos in the site assessments below are taken from the Open Land Review 2021. Site visits were undertaken in late 2022.

For clarity, it is relevant to note here in regard of the sites not being taken forward for LGS:

- Sites covered by MOL – Cambridge Gardens, Twickenham; Udney Hall Gardens (Langham Road Open Space); Heathfield Recreation Ground; Crane Park; Westerley Ware Recreation Ground, Kew.
- Ellerman Avenue is proposed as Other Land of Townscape Importance in the new Local Plan.
- The application of the Mortlake Brewery Group for a LGS on the Stag Brewery site was considered in the preparation of the adopted Local Plan, and the Inspector’s report (2018) considered there was insufficient robust evidence that suggests any part of the Stag Brewery site should be designated at this moment in time. The Green Belt, MOL, LGS and OOLTI Review (2021) therefore states that the Stag Brewery site was considered for partial local green space (LGS) designation, however the ‘land is allocated within the current Local Plan and there is a current planning application.’ The playing fields are designated as Other Open Land of Townscape Importance (OOLTI) and it is recommended that the playing fields should be retained and/or re-provided and upgraded within the planning application. The Open Land Review 2021 therefore did not recommend this site for further consideration as LGS; the position remains at the time of writing as there continue to be live planning applications.
- Teddington Library Garden is within High Street (Teddington) Conservation Area 37 and within the curtilage of a [listed building](#) (Grade II), therefore due to this strong heritage protections, there would not be any additional local benefit by designating the site as LGS.

**Site Assessments and Recommendations for Potential Local Green Space**

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North Sheen Recreation Ground

i) Green Space information	
Name of Green Space	North Sheen Recreation Ground
Address of Green Space	Dancer Road, Richmond, TW9 4LB
Description of Green Space	This is a large and exceptional site primarily bounded by regular back of residential properties. There are multiple entrances to the Recreation Ground, all of which are wheelchair accessible. There is an excellent range of recreational amenities within the site; the most prominent of which is the playing field which dominates most of the green space. Two children's play areas and a modern café/community building comprise the south side of the area.
Area of Green Space	3.08 ha



<b>ii) Demonstrably Special criteria</b>			
<b>Beauty</b>	The site is attractive and well looked-after. There is a good variety of natural features providing a very good contribution to the setting of the local area.	<b>Tranquillity</b>	Contrary to their proximity to the park, there is very limited visual and audible disturbance from the road and railway line to the west. There are low rise residential properties surrounding the site which provide self-containment without excluding the surrounding neighbourhood.
<b>Historical Significance</b>	The recreation ground was opened in 1909 and was originally part of an orchard belonging to the Popham Estate. During the Second World War the recreation ground was used for allotments and there was an underground public shelter opposite what is now the pavilion. Soldiers who lived locally and who fought in the First World War are memorialised in the park.	<b>Richness of Wildlife</b>	The area contains a number of mature trees and hedgerows. The well-established 'Friends of North Sheen Recreational Ground' have planted a small wildflower meadow which adds to the diversity of wildlife.
<b>Recreational Value</b>	The site is publicly accessible via several entrances. There is an outstanding range of formal and informal uses in good condition. The uses on the site include two children's playgrounds, playing fields with markings, a half basketball court with ring, table tennis table, outdoor gym equipment, Kew Park Rangers Football Foundation building, open lawn, paths and benches.	<b>Other:</b>	Currently designated as OOLTI and has been awarded a Green Flag.
<b>Significance to the local community</b>	The Recreation Ground is an outstanding Green Space with a range of amenities for all age groups. The space is popular with dog-walkers and is the venue for Kew Park Rangers- a sporting and community asset. The presence of the 'Friends' group in the park is notable and the value of the park to the local area can't be understated.		
<b>Meets the criteria for inclusion</b>	Yes		

# Raleigh Road Recreation Ground

i) Green Space information	
Name of Green Space	Raleigh Road Recreation Ground
Address of Green Space	Raleigh Road, Richmond, TW9 2DU
Description of Green Space	The site is smaller in scale and is comprised of a main green space and a mid-size playground for children of all ages. The park can be accessed from a residential street and boundaries a Nursery School to the east which is separated by a hedge.
Area of Green Space	0.33 ha



<b>ii) Demonstrably Special criteria</b>			
<b>Beauty</b>	This is an attractive green space in an otherwise built-up residential area. The natural features on site are valuable to the local area and provide a very good contribution to the sense of place.	<b>Tranquillity</b>	There are low rise residential properties surrounding the site which provide the site with a sense of quiet, though this may be compromised when the play area is very busy.
<b>Historical Significance</b>	None	<b>Richness of Wildlife</b>	The area contains habitats in the form of mature trees and hedgerows.
<b>Recreational Value</b>	The site is well-signposted locally and is publicly accessible, albeit only by one entrance. The play area is large and in very good condition and its proximity to the nursery ensures that it is well-used. The play area has recently been upgraded and equipment is now accessible to wheelchair users. Paths have been extended to improve accessibility.	<b>Other:</b>	Currently designated as OOLTI. TPO Area group Wood on east of site.
<b>Significance to the local community</b>	The site serves to fill a gap in park catchment in the local area. It is well looked after and well-used by families and dog-walkers. Investment in the play area has resulted in regular use of the high-quality equipment.		
<b>Meets the criteria for inclusion</b>	Yes		

Ham Village Green

i) Green Space information	
<b>Name of Green Space</b>	Ham Village Green
<b>Address of Green Space</b>	Ham Street, Richmond, TW10 7HW
<b>Description of Green Space</b>	The site is an attractive, flat open space in the centre of Ham. It is bounded by minor roads with Ashburnham Road to the south, Woodville Road and Wiggins Lane to the north and Ham Street to the east. Ham Close, which is a site allocated for major regeneration, sits to the west of the Village Green. The Village Green provides green space amenity to residents and would continue to fulfil this role if the homes are redeveloped. It is therefore not considered that a redeveloped site would be incompatible with a LGS designation.
<b>Area of Green Space</b>	0.99 ha





<b>ii) Demonstrably Special criteria</b>			
<b>Beauty</b>	The site is very attractive. There is a good variety of natural features including mature trees and hedgerows. The site is well-kept and provides a very good contribution to the setting of the local area and sense of place given the low boundary edges.	<b>Tranquillity</b>	There is some visual and audible disturbance by the adjacent minor roads. There is limited screening and self-containment, however, the area is generally quiet and tranquil.
<b>Historical Significance</b>	The site on which Ham Village Green now sits is closely linked to Ham Manor Farm which has a rich historical significance. The farm has a royal connection and was owned and passed down the Tudor line throughout the 15 <sup>th</sup> and 16 <sup>th</sup> centuries. This farmland was gradually sold off and reduced from 306 to 70 acres. The area which is now Ham Close became the home to servicemen following the end of the Second World War. The farm remained on this land until 1957 when the development of Ham Close commenced.	<b>Richness of Wildlife</b>	The area contains areas of ecological value as well as mature trees and hedges. A Wildflower Meadow alongside Wiggins Lane attracts pollinators and a range of small mammals, birds and invertebrates. Bats have also been found to use the trees as part of a flight corridor.
<b>Recreational Value</b>	The site is publicly accessible with uses including an accessible children’s play area, an outdoor gym and open lawns separated by flat and accessible paths with multiple well-placed benches. Exercise classes are also advertised as taking place on the green.	<b>Other:</b>	Currently designated as OOLTI, Archaeological Priority Area and Proposed Area for Tree Planting.
<b>Significance to the local community</b>	The Village Green serves a to fill gap in park catchment for the local area. It is a good quality space with a range of amenities for different age groups and is notably well-used by school-age children. In 2014, Community mosaics were unveiled by Sir David Attenborough which add to the local character of the space. The rich historical significance of the site is referenced on attractive information boards.		
<b>Meets the criteria for inclusion</b>	Yes		

Ham Library Garden

i) Green Space information	
Name of Green Space	Ham Library Garden
Address of Green Space	Ham Street, Ham, TW10 7HR
Description of Green Space	The site is enclosed by a hedge and the library sits in the centre of the site. A path leads around the building and there are bins and benches for public use. The site's very small 0.19 hectare footprint also includes the library building- meaning that the green space footprint is very small (approx. 0.15 ha).
Area of Green Space	0.19 ha



<b>ii) Demonstrably Special criteria</b>			
<b>Beauty</b>	The site is attractive. There is a good variety of natural features including mature trees, newly planted trees, hedgerows, and planters.	<b>Tranquillity</b>	The site is located in a residential area adjacent to a row of shops on a minor road. There is some visual and audible disturbance from associated activities of the shops and road traffic. There is a degree of self-containment and screening.
<b>Historical Significance</b>	The library was built in 1952, around same time as several local schools so is synonymous with Ham for many older locals. The garden is on the site of a former orchard which is reflected in the small orchard planted in the garden today.	<b>Richness of Wildlife</b>	The area contains habitats in the form of trees, hedgerows, flowerbeds, and planters. There are also bird boxes and a stag beetle logger on the site.
<b>Recreational Value</b>	The site is publicly accessible and has multiple benches and well laid-out paths for walking through the site. There are a range of gardening and volunteering opportunities in the site as well as a communal herb garden and mini orchard.	<b>Other:</b>	Currently designated as Archaeological Priority Area.
<b>Significance to the local community</b>	In the absence of a dedicated community centre, a group of volunteers identified the library as an important community hub and began developing the garden in 2007. The garden is well-used and well-maintained and has won awards from London-in-Bloom and has been visited by local politicians. The improvement of the garden has also added to the attractiveness of the library. Ham & Petersham’s Neighbourhood Plan describes the value of the library to the local area and goes on to note the importance of small and incidental green space in residential areas.		
<b>Meets the criteria for inclusion</b>	The garden consists of relatively little green space and is so closely linked with the amenity of the library building that it is difficult to judge the site based on the merits of its green space alone. However, Ham Library Garden does play a role in providing recreational value to the local area and should be considered as meeting the minimum criteria to take forward as LGS.		

Warren Gardens

i) Green Space information	
Name of Green Space	Warren Gardens
Address of Green Space	Denton Road, Twickenham, TW1 2HH
Description of Green Space	The narrow, landscaped site is bounded by Cambridge Garden tennis courts to the north, the Thames path and river Thames to the east, residential properties and private communal gardens to the west and a pedestrian through-way to Denton Road to the south. The site appears to primarily be used as a footpath and there are no benches or bins.
Area of Green Space	0.25 ha



<b>ii) Demonstrably Special criteria</b>			
<b>Beauty</b>	The site is not especially attractive but has some good natural features and strongly benefits from proximity to the river and the adjacent Cambridge Gardens (designated as MOL). Some of the brickwork and stone-walls look well-worn and there are few places to stop and appreciate the river views once in the gardens.	<b>Tranquillity</b>	There is limited audible and visual intrusion. The site provides a peaceful space by the riverside. There is some screening and self-containment, however the private balconies of the Richmond Bridge Estate to the rear of the gardens intrude somewhat on the tranquillity of the gardens. The proximity of the site to this development may be the reason for the lack of benches and stopping space in the gardens.
<b>Historical Significance</b>	The gardens are by the site of a Belgian munitions factory – which acted as the centre of ‘the Belgian village on the Thames’ during the First World War. After the factory was decommissioned, the building was repurposed as the world-famous Richmond Ice-Rink which ran until 1992 when it was demolished to make room for luxury riverside flats. From the 17 <sup>th</sup> Century until 1930, the site was comprised of Cambridge House and 30 acres of grounds (upon which the munitions factory was built). Warren Gardens occupy the narrow space between the Thames path and the luxury flats. In 2017, a permanent memorial to the Belgian Refugees who lived in East Twickenham was unveiled in the gardens.	<b>Richness of Wildlife</b>	The area contains habitats in the form of mature trees, hedgerows and planted shrubbery in raised stone beds. Habitats & Heritage, a local charity, are reportedly working on a Wildlife Haven on the south side of the gardens. This would encourage biodiversity and engage schools and volunteer groups. This is somewhat compromised by fly-tipping around the site which suggests that security could be strengthened.
<b>Recreational Value</b>	The site is accessible with primary use being for walking along the riverside. Importantly, the site is used as part of the Green Corridor, which links open space throughout the Twickenham-Richmond Thameside area. Coupled with Cambridge	<b>Other:</b>	Currently designated Thames Policy Area and View Protected Indicative Zone. It is also within the Richmond Hill Conservation Area.

	Gardens to the north, Warren Gardens also acts as a buffer along the river for pedestrians.		
<b>Significance to the local community</b>	The garden’s use as a Green Corridor is an important asset for the local community. Funding of £482 was allocated from the Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy to the Warren Gardens Wildlife Haven in 2021/22. The local history is also significant; however, the luxury housing development, proximity to the more valuable Cambridge gardens and existing Thames path somewhat limit the value of the site. However, due to the prominence of the river views, green corridor usage and historical significance, the green space should be recommended for LGS designation.		
<b>Meets the criteria for inclusion</b>	This is an atypical Local Green Space but has amenity value and enough historical significance to be taken forward as an LGS.		

Pensford Field

i) Green Space information	
<b>Name of Green Space</b>	<b>Pensford Field</b>
<b>Address of Green Space</b>	17-19 Pensford Avenue, Kew, TW9 4H
<b>Description of Green Space</b>	The site is bounded by regular backs of residential properties on all sides along Pensford Avenue, Nylands Avenue, Atwood Avenue and North Road. The site is accessed via a short path that leads to a gate and stile. There are a range of natural and designed habitats with paths and benches for public use.
<b>Area of Green Space</b>	0.56 ha



<b>ii) Demonstrably Special criteria</b>			
<b>Beauty</b>	The site is attractive and There is an excellent variety of natural features. It provides a limited contribution to the setting of the local area given that the nature reserve is surrounded on all sides by residential properties and is somewhat difficult to access.	<b>Tranquillity</b>	The site forms part of a quiet residential area. It is almost entirely self-contained due to the residential setting. There is some noise from the adjacent tennis courts, however, the space is very tranquil.
<b>Historical Significance</b>	The field is a remnant of a historic orchard and from 1920 until 1990, Pensford Field was assigned for sports use by local schools.	<b>Richness of Wildlife</b>	The area contains several impressive habitats including mature trees, hedgerows, wildflowers, a pond, an orchard, and a space designed for reptile hibernation.
<b>Recreational Value</b>	The site is not sign-posted and due to its residential setting and lack of wheelchair or pram accessibility, recreational value to the wider community is limited. Access to the site is also restricted by a heavy gate with a coded lock. It is unclear at what times the gate is locked. Once in the site however, there are a number of benches, paths and information boards, as well as a nature trail.	<b>Other:</b>	The site is designated as OSNI and SINC of local importance.
<b>Significance to the local community</b>	The Pensford Field Trust are responsible for managing and developing the habitats within the site. This work is valued by local residents as it is well-used and in good condition. The habitats within the site are also of value and provide educational opportunities for local school children. Their significance to the local community can be measured by the regular up-keep and improvement of the pond, loggeries and other habitats.		
<b>Meets the criteria for inclusion</b>	Yes		