

NORTH KINGSTON FORUM



North Kingston Forum Neighbourhood Plan

Ref. NK16 and Appendix D: Local Green Space review

Introduction

The purpose of the Local Green Spaces (LGS) designation is to protect locally valued areas of green space from inappropriate development.

The health and wellbeing benefits provided by our local parks, allotments, private gardens and green spaces generally have never been more important over the past few years as experienced during the Sars Cov-2 pandemic. The North Kingston communities currently have access to a number of green spaces but, as there is much pressure for housing in London and Kingston, we fear their loss. To ensure these community assets are retained, The North Kingston community have identified a number of these assets, on both council and private land, which exhibit immense social and environmental value to the residents of North Kingston and further afield in the borough.

A recent report produced by the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) in 2022¹ revealed that between 2012 - 2021, over 6,000 LGS have been designated in England, most have been produced by communities themselves through a Neighbourhood Plan and corresponds with a tangible need amongst those communities. Analysis of a selection of LGS revealed that over 80% of designations were in part due to their recreational value.

The importance Neighbourhood Planning plays in the designation of Local Green Spaces		
Development Plan Documents	Total number of designated Local Green Spaces	Percentage
Made Neighbourhood Plans	5401	82.9
Adopted Local Plans	1114	17.1
All Plans	6515	100

¹ https://www.cpre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Feb-2022_CPPE_Local-Green-Spaces-full-report-1.pdf

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The CPRE report illustrates the important role that the LGS designation as a Planning Policy tool can help communities protect this precious amenity. Maintaining, improving and broadening the use of the LGS designation must be seen as a critical part of 'Levelling Up'.

Planning Overview

The Local Green Space designation was introduced in the 2012 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)² following a pledge made in the Coalition Agreement as a mitigation for the restrictions on town and village green applications in the Growth and Infrastructure Act 2013.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF December 2023)³ states that local communities, through local plans, can identify Local Green Space for specific protection.

Paragraphs 102 to 107 of the NPPF introduce a Local Green Space designation (LGS) to protect local green areas of particular importance to local communities. Once designated, the LGS is subject to the same strong development restrictions as Green Belt, and new development here is ruled out other than in special circumstances.

Paragraph 106 of the NPPF set out the criteria that green space must meet in order to be designated as Local Green Space:

"The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the space is:

- a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity, or richness of its wildlife; and
- c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land."

² <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20180608095821/https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

³ <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20230830172251/https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

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Assessment

The NK Forum has undertaken a review of the key green spaces within the Forum area, to identify potential sites to be designated as Local Green Space. This is a qualitative assessment and no weightings have been applied to the different criteria. The review uses the following descriptors and key:

✓ Limited Contribution ✓✓ Contribution ✓✓✓ Significant Contribution

Table 1. NPPF Local Green Space designation criteria and descriptor			
a)	in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves		The land must not be isolated from the community and would normally be within easy walking distance of the community served.
b)	demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance		Evidence must be provided of the land's value to and use by the local community to show the land holds a particular local significance. The land must fulfil one or more of the below criteria*.
	i.	Beauty	This relates to the visual attractiveness of the site, and its contribution to landscape, character and or setting of the settlement. LGS would need to contribute to local identity, character of the area and a sense of place, and make an important contribution to the physical form and layout of the settlement. It may link up with other open spaces and allow views through or beyond the settlement which are valued locally.
	ii.	Historic significance	The land should provide a setting for, and allow views of, heritage assets or other locally-valued landmarks.
	iii.	Recreational value	It must have local significance for recreation, perhaps through the variety of activities it supports, and be of value to the community.
	iv.	Tranquillity	Areas that provide an oasis of calm and a space for quiet reflection.
	v.	Richness of wildlife	This might include the value of its habitat. It may require some objective evidence, such as a designation, like a wildlife site or Local Nature Reserve.
c)	local in character and is not an extensive tract of land		e.g. blanket designation of open countryside adjacent to settlements will not be appropriate.
* Criteria description taken from The Open Spaces Society "Local Green Space Designation" Information Sheet no.C20 (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/open-space-sports-and-recreation-facilities-public-rights-of-way-and-local-green-space#Local-Green-Space-designation)			

Key: **Table 2. Assessment against LGS criteria**

✓ Limited Contribution	✓ ✓ Contribution	✓ ✓ ✓ Significant Contribution
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Name	Current Designation	Area (ha)	Ward	Publicly Accessible	Beauty	Historic significance	Recreational value	Tranquillity	Richness of wildlife	Comments
Latchmere Recreation Ground	Local Open Space	3.64	Tudor	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓	Covenant in place; active volunteer Friends group.
Dinton Fields	Local Open Space	2.4	Kingston Gate	✓			✓ ✓ ✓	✓	✓	Held in the Achieving for Children portfolio; managed by Kingstonian Youth/ Dinton Field Trust and Surrey FA.
Elm Road Recreation Ground	Local Open Space; Field in Trust	0.81	Kingston Gate	✓ ✓ ✓	✓	✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓	Important to Canbury Ward.
Canbury Gardens	MOL	5.86	Canbury Gardens	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓	Victorian gardens; riverside location.
Hawker Centre playing fields	MOL	3.4	Tudor	✓ ✓			✓ ✓ ✓	✓	✓	Part of Hawker Centre with covenant in place; adjacent to Site of Importance for Nature Conservation.
1 st Kingston Hill Scouts green space	Private land	0.46	Tudor	✓			✓ ✓ ✓		✓ ✓	Green field for recreational use.

Key:

Table 2. Assessment against LGS criteria		
✓ Limited Contribution	✓ ✓ Contribution	✓ ✓ ✓ Significant Contribution

Name	Current Designation	Area (ha)	Ward	Publicly Accessible	Beauty	Historic significance	Recreational value	Tranquillity	Richness of wildlife	Comments
St Luke's Vicarage garden	Private land	0.07	Canbury	✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓	Land owner requested the garden be removed from the list for designation
Green space adj. Barnfield Riding School	RBK Council		Tudor	✓					✓	Small unused grassed area.
WWII V2 Rocket memorial site	War memorial		Kingston Gate	✓ ✓ ✓	✓	✓ ✓ ✓		✓		Area with a commemorative stone marking a local historic event.
Pocket parks: Tudor Drive/ Richmond Road; Tudor Drive/ Latchmere Lane; Hollybush Road/ Cardinal Ave	RBK Council (Highways)		Tudor	✓ ✓ ✓	✓		✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓	Small open areas with seating.
Tudor estate back lanes	Private land		Tudor	✓ ✓					✓	Tracts of private land between rear gardens of the Tudor style housing.
Tudor estate open verges	RBK Council (Highways)		Tudor	✓ ✓ ✓	✓		✓			Open grassed areas alongside roads in the Tudor estate.

Table 2. Assessment against LGS criteria		
Key:	✓ Limited Contribution	✓✓ Contribution ✓✓✓ Significant Contribution

Name	Current Designation	Area (ha)	Ward	Publicly Accessible	Beauty	Historic significance	Recreational value	Tranquillity	Richness of wildlife	Comments
Tudor Drive verges	RBK Council (Highways)		Tudor	✓✓✓	✓					Open grassed verges along Tudor Drive
Richmond Road verges	RBK Council (Highways)		Tudor	✓✓✓	✓					Open grassed verges along Richmond Road
Allotments	Statutory allotment status		Tudor	✓			✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	Parkfields and Wolsey Drive are statutory. Park Rd has temporary status.
Canbury and Tudor riverside			Canbury Gardens and Tudor	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	Including Royal Park Gate open green space

Ref. Open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and local green space (March 2014), para.010 – Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/open-space-sports-and-recreation-facilities-public-rights-of-way-and-local-green-space>)

Note that the review does not include the following:

School playing fields. These are already protected as playing field land.

Public rights of way. Local Green Space designations are not required to protect a public right of way.

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Recommendations with Reasoned Justifications

The North Kingston Forum proposes to designate the following as Local Green Space:

i. Latchmere Recreation Ground

Latchmere Recreation Ground is a 9-acre area, popular with dog walkers, young families and footballers attending Kinston Little League, who run Saturday sessions on the Rec. As well as an open field, the recreation ground includes a small playground and public toilets. There is an active volunteer group – Friends of Latchmere Rec. (FoLaR)⁴ – who has developed a masterplan for Latchmere Rec. based on feedback from community consultations. Recent innovations have seen the Friends group working with the Royal Borough to create a wildlife pond and woodland area along with a Sensory Garden. The well organised and regular Junior Park Run is a popular event followed by superb refreshments from the new Tandems cafe. NK Forum fully supports FoLaR's endeavours, which reflect the local residents' needs and desires.

The history of the land dates back to the early 19th century as part of the Dysart Estate. Ownership was eventually conveyed to the Municipal Borough of Kingston-upon-Thames in 1904 as part of the settlement for the Richmond, Petersham and Ham Open Spaces Act 1902. The *indenture* contains *covenants* constraining the use of the land and preventing unrelated building development.

ii. Elm Road Recreation Ground

Elm Road Recreation Ground is a Field in Trust, protected since July 2012 under the "Queen Elizabeth II" programme. The grounds contain a large, recently refurbished playground which is very popular with local school children. There is also a free to use casual 5-a-side football area along with a large grass area which is very popular with local dog walkers. The park benefits from community work conducted by the Save the World Club Community Projects who, working with local adults and children, has seen the introduction of arts projects depicting scenes from different communities from around the world adding character to this space. A local resident recently organised a match funded donation working with Kingston Council to install a well-loved Ping Pong table.

iii. Dinton Field

Dinton Field is held in the Achieving for Children portfolio. The Dinton Field Trust were awarded a 25-year lease on 1st April 2006, due to end 31st March 2031. The site is managed by Kingstonian Youth/Dinton Field Trust and as well as a playing field there is a

⁴ <https://www.folar.co.uk/?fbclid=IwAR0Of3s7lkPHFFjkF9atVTZGn2hjyn1HjUHAQEsTDQAsLPfe4SgaLZvCyD8>

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club house/pavilion, managed by Kingstonian Youth Trust, and a nursery which opened in January 2009. Local schools use the site on an ad-hoc basis for their sports days etc.

iv. Canbury Gardens

Canbury Gardens is a hugely important local amenity. It is the only formal park in the Neighbourhood area and is well used by local residents and others visiting the Borough. Dating from the Victorian age, the gardens were designed by the borough surveyor Henry Macauley and opened in 1890. In 1891 Charles Nuttall a former mayor of Kingston paid for a bandstand to be erected in the gardens. It was dismantled in the 1950's but rebuilt and relaunched in 1994. A local residents group supported by the Canbury and Riverside association (CARA), raised over £80,000 from the National Lottery, RBK, the Kingston Society, Boaters Inn and other local organisations. The new bandstand design by a local architect Tony Leitch, followed the style of the original. A local residents group organises a full season of Sunday concerts from May to September. The park runs along the River Thames and includes lawns, tennis courts, a Multi User Gym Area (MUGA) and the bandstand. A Pavilion is available for community events, beautifully restored and maintained by the Canbury Community Trust (a group of local residents). Canbury Gardens is maintained by the council and cared for by the Friends of Canbury Gardens⁵. Events such as film evenings, music concerts and rowing, sailing, canoeing and Dragon Boat racing provide popular summer entertainment. There is also a well-run community garden which gives local residents and youngsters first-hand experience of growing food for the table and the importance of biodiversity in that process. Canbury Gardens is currently designated as Metropolitan Open Land and a proposed (but not recommended) Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)⁶.

v. Hawker Centre playing field

The Hawker Centre's playing fields are available for community recreational use – mainly football. They offer much-needed youth provision in the Forum area. Also used by local schools e.g. The Kingston Academy for weekly outdoor P.E. lessons. The Hawker Centre playing fields are within an area that is currently designated as Metropolitan Open Land and adjacent to the Royal Park Gate Site of Importance to Nature Conservation.

vi. St Luke's Vicarage Garden

Has been removed from the policy list as requested by the landowner.

⁵ <https://friendsofcanburygardens.org/>

⁶ Review of Sites for the importance of Nature Conservation - Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames - LUC report April 2021

vii. 1st Kingston Hill Scouts green space

Privately owned with restricted access. Community facility with wide ranging outdoor sports opportunities including archery, camping, a multi-activity centre all helping young people gain DoE awards and life skills in general.

viii. WWII V2 Rocket memorial site

Small site with a memorial stone commemorating eight civilians who were killed here by a V-2 rocket in 1945. The damage to homes made it the most severe and widespread incident of World War II in the Borough. The memorial was erected to commemorate the 50th anniversary of VE and VJ day 1995.⁷

ix. Park Road allotments

x. Wolsey Drive allotments

xi. Parkfields allotments

The Forum area has three allotment sites: Park Road, Wolsey Drive and Parkfields. All are well used and have membership waiting lists. Park Road and Wolsey Drive allotments are managed by Tudor Allotment Association (TAA). The council managed Parkfields and TAA managed Wolsey Drive have statutory status and so are protected under the Allotments Act 1925. NK Forum fully supports an application for the TAA managed Park Rd allotment site to gain statutory designation, and for all three sites to retain their statutory protection under the Allotments Act 1925. It is understood that the National Allotment Society holds a copy of a national allotments survey returned by Kingston Council in 1996, and that the three sites serve the majority of allotment interest in North Kingston. There is also a community garden located on the Parkfields site which is being developed by permaculturists.

xii. Canbury and Tudor riverside (including Royal Park Gate open green space)

⁷ <https://www.londonremembers.com/memorials/last-v2-rocket-in-kingston-upon-thames>

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North Kingston is proud to be bordering the River Thames. The riverside path stretches from Kingston Bridge to the border with Richmond upon Thames. It incorporates very well utilised foot and cycle paths and has infrastructure to support numerous water-based activities such as rowing and sailing. The area is a nature zone in itself, with shrubs, grass, trees and wildlife habitat. There is also a children's playground next to the Royal Park Gate estate. Two sections of the riverside path fall within Metropolitan Open Land parcels. Royal Park Gate Open Space is designated as a Local Site of Importance to Nature Conservation (SINC)*.

*See the additional notes on Metropolitan Open Land combined with Local Green Spaces designation below.

Additional Notes

Metropolitan Open Land combined with Local Green Spaces designation.

Metropolitan Open Land is strategic open land within the urban area with the same protection as Green Belt areas and is protected from inappropriate development by land-use planning policies.

As outlined by the Open Spaces Society⁸, if land already protected by policy on Metropolitan Open Land, then consideration should be given to whether any additional local benefit would be gained by designation as Local Green Space. The Local Green Space designation helps to identify areas that are of particular importance to the local community in areas where protection from development is the norm but where there could be exceptions. This is especially important for Canbury Gardens and the Canbury and Tudor Riverside.

The extensive and beautiful riverside vistas and amenities are crucial to the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors alike. Local volunteer groups including the Canbury Area Riverside Association, Friends of Canbury Gardens, Kingston Biodiversity Network, Canbury Gardens Community Gardeners are all very active in keeping the riverside alive. The Thames Landscape Strategy is currently developing a new project 'Rewilding Arcadia' and the Canbury Gardens riverside is one of the six strategic sites proposed for rewilding⁹ helping to reclaim its floodplain back in a managed and sustainable way to restore the natural processes and habitats that once governed life along the Thames. The Thames Landscape Strategy has been used extensively to shape

⁸ <https://www.oss.org.uk/need-to-know-more/information-hub/local-green-space-designation/>

⁹ <https://thames-landscape-strategy.org.uk/what-we-do/rewilding-arcadia/>

planning outcomes in Kingston¹⁰, as will the Kingston Riverside Supplementary Planning Document 2018¹¹. The National Cycle Network route 4 runs the length of the northern section of Kingston riverside from Kingston Town Centre to the Richmond border¹².

Allotments statutory designation

The Allotments Act 1925 serves to facilitate the acquisition and maintenance of allotments, and to make further provision for the security of tenure of tenants of allotments.

In summary: Whether to designate land is a matter for local discretion. For example, green areas could include land where sports pavilions, boating lakes or structures such as war memorials are located, allotments, or urban spaces that provide a tranquil oasis. Here are some images of our selected sites as further justification:

¹⁰ <https://thames-landscape-strategy.org.uk/who-we-are/vision/the-review-of-the-thames-landscape-strategy/>

¹¹ <https://www.kingston.gov.uk/downloads/file/711/canbury-gardens-design-report-masterplan->

¹² <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/find-a-route-on-the-national-cycle-network/route-4/>

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i: Latchmere Recreation Ground



The Latchmere Recreation Ground residents' group Folar are working with the local community and Council to improve the facilities available and accessibility for all.

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ii: Elm Road Recreation Ground



viii: VII War Memorial



vii: 1st Kingston Hill Scouts green Space



iii: Dinton Field



v: Hawker Centre Playing Field

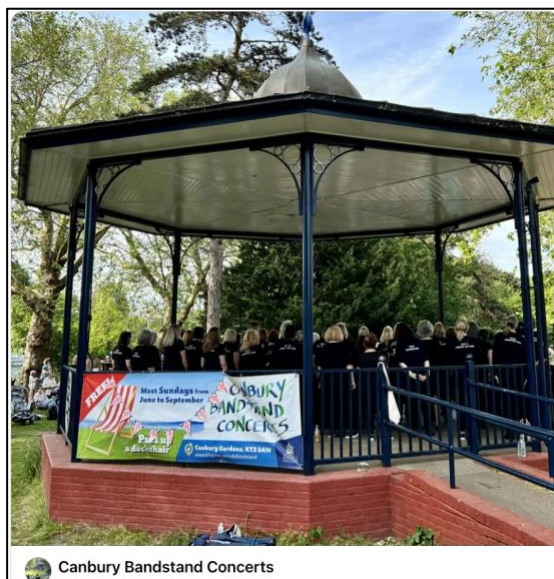


iv & vii: Canbury Gardens and Tudor Riverside



 create flying pictures

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Canbury Gardens hosts a wide range of activities each summer from Concerts, Dragon Boats and much more, with many sponsors helping to make the events accessible to all.

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Allotment sites

x: Wolsey Drive



ix: Park Road



xi: Parkfields

