

APPENDIX 5

Local Green Spaces: Evidence base

1. Locations



2. Local Green Space designations retained from the Made 2018 Neighbourhood Plan

Inventory Map Reference	Site Name	NPPF (2023) Criteria for Local Green Space Designation							Total /25
		Local: Bounded, Not Extensive Yes/No	Proximity 0 - 5	Special to Community (<10)			Local Significance (<10)		
				Beauty 0 - 3	Tranquil 0 - 2	Rec. Value 0 - 5	History 0 - 5	Wildlife 0 - 5	
116	Great Bowden Cemetery	Y	4	2	2	2	4	3	17

Bounded: Boundaries are old brick walls on two sides, hedge and ditch and hedge and Gunnsbrook on the southern boundary.

Proximity: It is a short walk from the centre of the village and parish church. Funeral processions walk from the Church to the cemetery.

Special to community

Recreational value: For some people the walk to the cemetery and the time spent there close to deceased relatives is comforting and reviving as well as recreational. Access is at all times on foot from the Dingley Road entrance. A pavement is available for the walk from the village centre. The double width gates allow for vehicle access during funerals or for maintenance. It is visited frequently by local people who have family or friends buried there. The cemetery is slightly outside the village and its setting within fields importantly adds to the atmosphere aiding quiet contemplation. The surrounding fields are pasture and grazed by cattle. There is no noisy distraction from tractors or harvesters.

Beauty: It is the setting with surrounding old paddocks that makes this area attractive. The fields are very visible from the cemetery to the east and the south and the views across the fields extensive. Buildings on the far side of the River Welland in Market Harborough do not intrude. There are also views towards the village where properties are visible in the distance. There is attractive green space in between. This is most needed in the small extension to the west alongside Dingley Road where there is only a small wooden fence between the cemetery and the paddock.

Tranquillity: The setting in a rural landscape of this 2 acres of land makes it particularly tranquil and the provision of benches allows visitors to sit and enjoy the quietness.

Local Significance

History: The cemetery was opened in January 1880 when the churchyard was closed. Since then, it has been the burial place for people in Great Bowden and those from further afield with Bowden connections. It is possible to find graves of people who have made their mark on the history and development of the village

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		LOCAL: BOUNDED, NOT EXTENSIVE YES/NO	PROXIMITY 0 - 5	SPECIAL TO COMMUNITY (<10)			LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE (<10)		
				BEAUTY 0 - 3	TRANQUIL 0 - 2	REC. VALUE 0 - 5	HISTORY 0 - 5	WILDLIFE 0 - 5	

alongside those who are known only to their families. Five members of the armed services from WWi and WWII are buried in graves supplied by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Wildlife: The cemetery it situated a short distance from the built-up area and is therefore a place where wildlife can be appreciated by local people. The hedges round 2 sides of the cemetery are attractive to garden birds and rabbits, foxes, bats, green woodpeckers; tawny owls and kestrels have been spotted regularly. There have been occasional sightings of barn owls. A voluntary management group has been involved over recent years and has removed dead trees and replanted with native species. There is also a small wildflower glade with a marked path at the rear of the area next to the Gunnsbrook.



198	Churchyard of St Peter and St Paul parish church	Y	5	3	2	2	5	3	20
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Bounded: There are listed coursed stone boundary walls on the south and west sides of the churchyard of some age with flat stone capping. Also listed are the three stone gateposts at the main entrance on The Green. The gateposts have a pyramidal stone capping. The northern boundary is open to the facade of Rectory House and part of the mud wall. The eastern boundary adjoins the Church Hall (former village school 1839) and its fenced playground area. Part of the western boundary is the back wall of a property in Sutton Road.

Proximity: Within the built-up area. The churchyard has four entrances:

- on Dingley Road as part of footpath (A70) linking the church and Dingley Road to Nether Green and running to the east of the church building
- the continuation of A70 footpath on the north side of the churchyard
- the main entrance to the Church on the Green
- a small gated entrance to the west of the churchyard linking to Sutton Road.

Access: The churchyard is situated at the heart of the village and adjacent to the Central Village Greens with open access.

Special to community

Recreational value: Functions as an informal small ‘park’ / open space. Used as a walking route past the church and to the north of the village and beyond. The village school (C of E) frequently have services in the church. Inscriptions on the 18th and 19th century headstones are the subject of genealogical research.

Beauty / Tranquillity: The combination of old buildings, tombs and wildlife make this a tranquil and attractive part of the village with views from the churchyard to the open fields off Dingley Road and across the Central Greens with listed older properties in the near distance.

Local Significance

History: The churchyard is the *setting* for the Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul which is a Grade 1 listed building. The boundary walls, gate piers and monuments in the churchyard are Grade II listed and also have an entry on Leicestershire & Rutland HER under reference MLE14937. The gravestones are mostly upright stones in either in high relief carved stone or finely engraved slate. They are of very fine quality, of considerable interest and have survived well. The stones were removed some years ago and replaced not in their original positions. Their current positions aid the maintenance of the graveyard. There are also several table tombs. A survey of the monuments in the churchyard was made in 1988 and was published by the Great Bowden Historical Society. It records 334 monuments in the churchyard, their dedication, date and relationships mentioned. There are further monuments within the church building. The vast majority of these monuments date from the 18th and 19th centuries. From 1880 onwards parishioners were buried in the Cemetery in Dingley Road.

Wildlife: The churchyard has several mature trees including two large metasequoia “Wellingtonia” introduced to this country in the mid 19th century and a row of limes alongside the wall on Dingley Road. There is a large copper beech at the western end of the churchyard. There are bats, numerous garden birds and sightings of nuthatches and treecreepers.

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		LOCAL: BOUNDED, NOT EXTENSIVE YES/NO	PROXIMITY 0 - 5	SPECIAL TO COMMUNITY (<10)			LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE (<10)		
				BEAUTY 0 - 3	TRANQUIL 0 - 2	REC. VALUE 0 - 5	HISTORY 0 - 5		WILDLIFE 0 - 5
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201	Great Bowden Community Wood	Y	5	2	2	3	2	3	17
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Bounded: The boundaries are the grounds of Great Bowden Academy and the Gunnsbrook Close bungalows to the north on the far side of the path and the course of the Gunnsbrook to the south, with back gardens beyond.

Proximity: It is only a minute’s walk to the village centre to the east or to the recreation ground to the west. Easily reached by everyone in Great Bowden.

Access: A level tarmac path runs along the northern edge of the wood linking the Recreation Ground to the west and the centre of the village, Stocks Green and the Shoulder of Mutton pub to the east. There is a circular walk way through the wood and the adjacent area below the tennis courts. The paths here are trodden earth - the setting being natural woodland.

Special to Community

Recreational value: The wood was planted in 1999 by village volunteers as part of the Millennium celebrations. Some people therefore call it the Millennium Wood. There are periodic work parties of residents who maintain it. It is an attractive area of woodland right in the heart of the village. It provides the opportunity to have a quiet woodland walk right on your doorstep without having to drive to a location further away. Great Bowden Parish Council Open Space.

Beauty: The collection of native trees are not as majestic as those on the Rec. but are younger specimens and in a totally natural setting with much undergrowth and many wild flowers beneath the canopy. Flowers start with the early spring wild flowers and finish with extensive swathes of hedge parsley in May/June.

Tranquility: The wood is a peaceful place at most times. The noise of the children at play in the school may drift over at playtimes

Local significance

History: The Community Wood was previously a paddock owned by Harborough District Council.

Wildlife: This is an extensive area of undeveloped land and a number of different animals and birds have been seen. Greater spotted woodpeckers, treecreepers, siskins, chiff-chaffs, nuthatches in addition to the usual small birds have been seen frequently in the larger trees which also provide nest sites for birds. There is a small starling roost, and a short term roost for rooks and the open grass area is a pre-migration point for swallows and seasonal visits of redwing and fieldfare. There are many grey squirrels and more occasional visitors such as muntjac deer have been spotted. The Gunnsbrook which winds its way through the site not only provides water for wildlife but also a safe corridor which links to the open fields.



203	Great Bowden Recreation Ground	Y	5	2	1	5	3	3	19
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Bounded: The grassed area is bounded by the railway line in the west, the Gunnsbrook and paddocks to the north, the back gardens of houses in Station Road to the south and privately owned Market Harborough Lawn Tennis Club to the east.

Proximity and access: This is the largest of the open spaces within Great Bowden and lies at the heart of the village with easy pedestrian access from four different directions, namely, the village centre close to the Shoulder of Mutton to the east, Gunnsbrook Close to the north and Station Road to the south where there is also

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a small car park. There is a footbridge over the railway to the west meeting footpaths leading to the west of the village and also to Market Harborough. It is easily reached from all parts of the village within a few minutes.

Special to Community

Recreational value: The Great Bowden Recreation Ground is approximately 8 acres. Parish Council owned and managed Open Space. ‘The Rec.’ continues to be used extensively by local people for sport, walking, dog walking, exercising and playing throughout the year. It provides an attractive, tree lined walking area with tarmac paths for those who are affected by age or disability and also for parents with buggies. There is a cricket pitch used by the Bowden Cricket Club, an area of play equipment for children, a toilet block, The childrens’ play area is particularly busy in the afternoon after school closes. The Rec. also provides a safe open space for village events such as the Village Festival.

Beauty: The open green space surrounded with mature trees in leaf is very beautiful. The trees hide any surrounding houses and other buildings. the manicured grass of the open recreation field.

Tranquility: The grassed area is often busy and therefore not particularly tranquil - the passing trains add to the background noise. However, walking here on a summer’s evening can be very tranquil indeed.

Local significance

History: The area around the car park and eastern entrance originally was the orchard behind a property known as Barnscroft. This house was built in 1829 and still remains next to the site entrance. The Rec. was opened in 1906 and was owned by Market Harborough Urban Council. They acquired further land and enlarged the original pedestrian entrance around 1960. The modern, brick, purpose built Community Pavilion was built following local fund raising in 2005 and is available for local events. It replaced an earlier wooden pavilion used by the cricket club since 1967. The (Great) Bowden Cricket Club has been playing on this field since before 1923. There are visible remnants of ridge and furrow earthworks on the grass field.

Wildlife : This open space has abundant trees but also a large open grass space for games and sports. The mature trees here are mostly horse chestnuts and small leaved limes but the oldest tree is an English oak, approximately 200 years old.



146	Green Lane	Y	5	2	2	3	3	2	17
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Bounded: The lane opens out onto Upper Green at the eastern end and to Main Street at the western end. The sides of the lane are bounded by hedges on both sides and in addition a ditch running almost the entire length on the southern side of the lane.

Proximity: The lane is about 680 metres from the centre of Great Bowden but much nearer village communities in Upper Green and Leicester Lane area.

Access: The lane is classified as a byway (A51) and open at all times. However the lane is narrow at the eastern end and the unmetalled surface makes it unsuitable for anything other than foot traffic. The two main access points are at the edge of Upper Green and from Main Street opposite the junction with Burnmill Road. Access to the footpath no. A63 is via a stile at the right angled bend in the lane.

Special to community

It is a unique traffic-free area within the village valued highly by the community.The entire lane is now part of Great Bowden’s Conservation Area.

Beauty: The overgrown hedges on either side of this lane meet overhead and form an atmospheric green tunnel particularly during the summer months. Through gaps in the vegetation there are attractive and extensive views to the north of the village and views into the adjoining paddock, often with grazing sheep, to the south of the lane.

Tranquility: This is a tranquil spot away from the noise of traffic on Main Street and there is a feeling of being well away from the built up area although in reality it is quite close.

Recreational value: Green Lane is used frequently through the year by local people for short walks around the village and as a starting point for longer walks across the fields following footpath A63 and beyond. It is a favourite walk for dog walkers where they can safely walk their pets off the lead. In recent years runners are frequently seen using this track as well.


Local significance

History: It is possible that Green Lane was an ancient west/ east way into the village skirting north of an early medieval manor site in the paddock area to the south and east of the lane. In documents from the 15th and 17th century the lane is variously referred to as the Common Lane or Street, the High Street and the King’s Highway (*Market Harborough Parish Records, JE Stocks & WB Bragg, p191*). The area of common land in Upper Green adjoins the start of the lane. The immediate area has been subject to a number of archaeological surveys: (North of Green Lane) MLE 1950 Medieval village earthworks in field to north of stile. MLE 16665 (2007) medieval gullies, pits and postholes, early-late medieval pottery. MLE 17526 Iron Age/Roman pottery www.archaeologydataservice.ac.uk Archaeological Evaluation at 7 Upper Green Place, Great Bowden ULAS Report no 2007-074 (Paddock south of Green Lane) MLE 21590 Test pitting 2013 - 47 sherds early medieval/medieval pottery.[http://www.access.arch.cam.ac.uk/reports/leicestershire/great-bowden/ _2013-14/GreatBowdenReport.pdf](http://www.access.arch.cam.ac.uk/reports/leicestershire/great-bowden/_2013-14/GreatBowdenReport.pdf) Pages 57-59


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Test pits 13 and 14.

Wildlife: The lane, because of its quiet position in the countryside will be much used by small birds of the garden and hedgerow. There are several mature trees but much of the vegetation is overgrown hedge plants grown into small trees. There are wild flowers along the hedge line particularly in the spring before the canopy is too thick.



Green Lane, east end



Green Lane, west/south entrance

4. New Local Green Space designation, Great Bowden Neighbourhood Plan Review, 2024

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				Beauty 0 - 3	Tranquil 0 - 2	Rec. Value 0 - 5	History 0 - 5	Wildlife 0 - 5	
096 209 210	Hursley Park Country Park	Y	5	3	2	5	2	3	20

A group of open spaces created as part of the approved masterplan for the Northfield Avenue/Hursley Park development (Mulberry Homes, HDC Planning reference 17/00732/FUL and others 2017 – 2024 as ‘Land off Welham Lane’).

The Local Green Space comprises ‘Welham Green’, ‘Country Park’ (developer’s names), other amenity green spaces, linear buffer zones, landscaped internal walking routes, children’s play area, flood mitigation infrastructure with landscaping and planting by the developer.

There have been further enhancements (for biodiversity and amenity) by the community (residents’ organisation, see below). Although still maturing (open space functions, use, natural environment features and natural rewilding) the whole area already (2024) qualifies for LGS designation, having regard for the NPPF criteria.

Area: about 5 hectares

Bounded, not an extensive tract of land: yes. External boundaries are hedged and clearly defined.

Proximity: within and adjacent to the built-up area

Access: all open access

Special to community

Beauty: inherent (planned for) attractive place/open space, already highly valued by the community. Also provides the viewpoints for important view #6 (policy ENV 7) across the northern parts of the Neighbourhood Area.

Tranquillity: High, designed to be so, and the management strategy of the Residents’ Management Company, see below, includes enhancement of opportunities for peace and quiet (as well as more active enjoyment)

Site status and recreational value: Management of the open spaces across the whole site has been released by the developer and adopted by a Residents Association (Great Bowden Residents Management Company) whose funding comes in part from stipulated house-owner contributions.

A user survey in 2024 shows that the park is being used regularly by residents of Great Bowden generally (52%), as well as from the adjacent new estate itself (40%) and wider Market Harborough area (8%). 60% use the park at least once a week; uses mentioned include walking, running, dog-walking, children’s play area and wildlife watching.

New seating (benches) has been funded by local building society and installed by volunteers with some support of local contractors. £32k of other funding for management and enhancements has been received in total as grants and donations from 7 different contributing agencies including local and national organisations (to May 2024).

A community orchard was planted in 2024. 18 trees were planted to start a community orchard with a combination of cherries, plums, apples and pears. A workshop was subsequently held with Leicestershire Heritage Apples. The longer term plan is to grow local grafted heritage apples and introduce several varieties of these into the orchard.

Local significance

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Wildlife: [NatureSpot description] *Hursley Park is a modern development of 50 houses set within a newly created country park. A large part of the park is designated as wildflower meadows with a sizeable sustainable urban drainage (SUD) basin in the centre of the site fed by three major channels which provide excellent wetland habitat. The boundaries comprise mature hedges with several large trees. Additional hedge and tree planting has been added around the Park. The development included the erection of bat and bird boxes, fence holes to provide hedgehog access and a large amphibian and reptile hibernaculum.*

The Residents Management Company, in collaboration with NatureSpot and the Leicestershire Environmental Records Centre, is recommending designation of the whole LGS as a *Local Wildlife Site* for its (at least) local biodiversity significance: species of note recorded since its inception include non-flowering plants, trees, wild flowers (including waterside and aquatic), invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians, birds (30+ species), mammals (including larger types but significantly small mammals having value for support of animals higher in the food chain), and bats.

Habitat creation initiatives have included the following:

Wildlife pond and marshland (and improved surface water drainage management for habitats and access): commissioned *Hursley Park Wetland Concept Proposal* June 2023 (Supporting Document xxx) – scheme now implemented and maturing (June 2024).

The Farming and Wildlife Group have led a project to develop a wetland pond with supporting drainage, to provide a habitat for Great Crested Newts. The project was co-funded with support from Leicestershire County Council and the Market Harborough & Bowdens Charity. The scheme provides a wildlife pond, protected by a perimeter barrier, drainage channels, timber bridges in place of mown paths to maximise access, safety signage and provisions and a couple of benches to maximise public access and enjoyment.

The local resident’s association have followed and implemented ecological advice from FWAG throughout. This includes ensure the area regenerates naturally with species that will thrive in the local environment, and the use of a perimeter fence to prevent dogs or people entering the water and polluting it or disturbing the sensitive environment.

The enhancements with the drainage channels ensure the pond receives natural clean water, drains the park in areas that would otherwise by boggy and impede public access. The channels also create in a new habitat in their own right and provide further interest for the public.



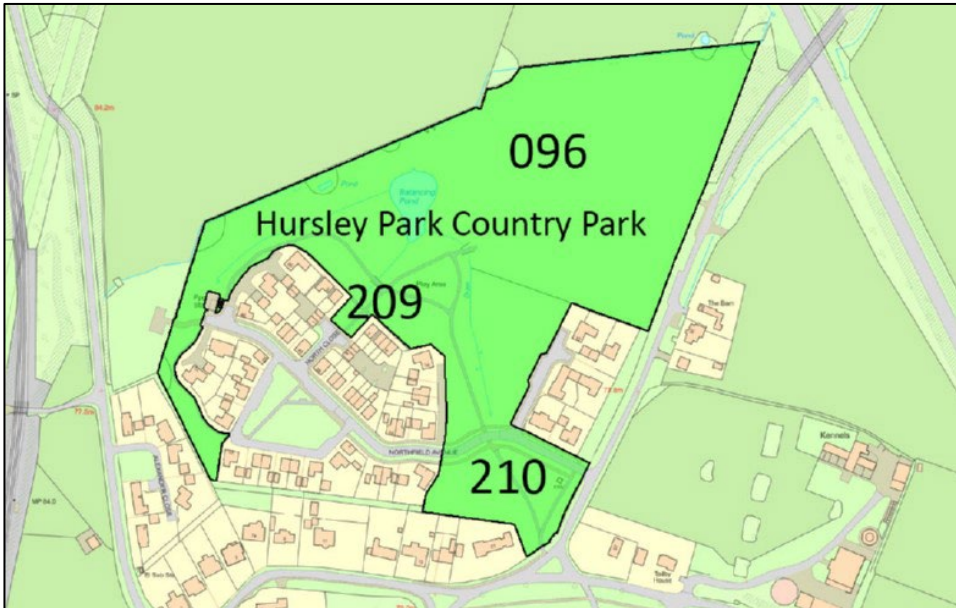


The wildflower meadows have been enhanced with additional seeding funded by Leicestershire County Council, carried out by a local specialist contractor, and overseen by a qualified ecologist. This has included the addition of a large amount of yellow rattle to the site, complemented with carefully selected clay soils meadow mix, which has had certain species removed / amended at the request of the ecologist. The meadows now undergo an annual program of removal of the arising to help continually lower nutrient levels to allow the wildflowers to thrive and selected seeding where needed and where affordable with the management budget.



Aerial view of children’s play park (left), seating, surfaced and mown paths and extensive habitat creation areas, 2023



Tree-planting by staff and pupils of Bowden Academy, January 2023
© Harborough Mail

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		Commemorative and celebratory tree planting by the community		Groundwater management (improving drainage for amenity and meadow flora) by the community group					Mature boundary hedgerow trees, wildflower meadow and mown paths, Country Park area
									
		Location and boundaries							Welham Green area from the main walking entrance to the site, showing play area, managed wildflower meadows, amenity mowing, 'Country Park' area in right distance; relationship of houses to the open spaces is clearly shown
									
		Children's play area, tree planting, surfaced path and wildflower meadows							Children's play area; also note the 'plank bridge' for play and groundwater management

