

Question 6 of my letter of 14 August 2019 asked what additional local benefits would be gained by designating sites which were already in Green Belt or Conservation Areas as Local Green Space. I should have asked the same question of sites which are already designated in the Local Plan as Protected Village Amenity Areas and I apologise for not so doing.

I would be grateful if the Parish Council would answer this belated question .....

It is understood the essence of the question is: *what additional local benefits would be gained by designating as Local Green Spaces sites that are already designated in the Local Plan as Protected Village Amenity Areas?*

Six of the 11 sites designated in the Local Plan as PVAA have been designated Local Green Space (LGS) under the NP (see extract below). Two of these six are also designated Important Natural Habitat under the NP.

Paragraph 6.40 of the Local Plan notes:

*“Protected Village Amenity Areas (PVAAs) have been designated on sites within village frameworks in order to safeguard those areas of undeveloped land within villages which are important to retain. Some of the PVAAs may have important functions for the village such as allotments, recreation grounds and playing fields whilst others have an important amenity role in providing a setting for buildings or offer tranquil areas where there is minimum activity. ....”*

Accordingly, Local Plan Policy NH/11: Protected Village Amenity Areas provides that **“development will not be permitted within or adjacent to these areas if it would have an adverse impact on the character, amenity, tranquillity or function of the village.”**

Paragraph 100 of the National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019) states the Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space **“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”**.

The LGS differs significantly from the PVAA in that it:

- Affords a site protection consistent with that in respect of Green Belt ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 37-020-20140306).
- Specifically references richness of wildlife.

The NP has designated six of the PVAA sites as LGS to underline their importance to the community and to reflect the community’s wish to strengthen the appraisal process should a development be proposed that might affect them.

In particular, the PVAA designation does not permit development if it **“would have an adverse impact ...”**. There is no clarity on how any impact would be judged to be adverse or otherwise, the

level of scrutiny applied nor clarity on how such an assessment might reasonably be challenged – not least at a cost affordable to the community.

With an LGS treated consistent with Green Belt, there is an established rigorous process for appraising development (see for example [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 64-002-20190722).

It is this protection that is the “additional local benefit” sought.

At two locations, V22 (Crossing-Keeper's Copse) and V26 (Impington Coppice) a further benefit sought is that the ambit of the LGS extends to wildlife whereas this is not the clear case for a PVAA.

These two sites are part of the web of ecological connectivity around the villages (see Map 17) and are part of the green infrastructure corridor extending into the built up area (see HM Government’s A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment” referred to in NP paragraph 5.173).

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Table 4 of the Neighbourhood Plan (extract shown below) identifies the sites designated in the Local Plan as Protected Village Amenity Areas (PVAA) and the respective Neighbourhood Plan (NP) designations.

Site name, location and description		Local Plan Designation	Neighbourhood Plan Designation			
			Local Green Space	PVAA added by this Plan	Important Natural Habitat	A14 mitigation site
V8	<b>Histon &amp; Impington Junior School playing fields.</b> Playing fields adjacent to the school in the heart of Histon.	Protected Village Amenity Area				
V9	<b>Cemetery</b>	Protected Village Amenity Area	LGS			
V10	<b>Histon Village Green.</b> The existing village green in the heart of the village	Protected Village Amenity Area; Conservation Area	LGS			
V11	<b>Equipped play area next to village green</b>	Protected Village Amenity Area; Part is within Conservation Area				
V14	<b>Infant School Field.</b> Field on New School Road associated with H&I Infant School.	Protected Village Amenity Area	LGS			

Site name, location and description		Local Plan Designation	Neighbourhood Plan Designation			
			Local Green Space	PVAA added by this Plan	Important Natural Habitat	A14 mitigation site
V16	<b>Homefield Park.</b> Existing park between Water Lane and Hereward Close.	Protected Village Amenity Area; Conservation Area	LGS			
V17	<b>Woodland beside New Road / Impington Lane junction.</b> Woodland, including adjacent lawns, in IVC grounds between school buildings and roads.	Protected Village Amenity Area				
V22	<b>Crossing-Keeper's Copse.</b> Triangular copse from Crossing-Keeper's Hut to Bridge Road.	Protected Village Amenity Area; Special Policy Area	LGS		INH	
V25	<b>Impington Windmill and surrounds</b>	Protected Village Amenity Area	Site specific <a href="#">Policy HIM04</a> applies			
V26	<b>Impington Coppice.</b> Woods from southern end of Cambridge Road up to Burrough Field.	Protected Village Amenity Area	LGS		INH	
V32	<b>Southern Cambridge Road Wood and Fields.</b> Fields and woodland abutting the north-west quadrant of the A14 / B1049 roundabout, including wooded traffic island in Cambridge Road.	Protected Village Amenity Area				A14