

LOCAL GREEN SPACES PROPOSED IN THE HUNGERFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

1. Introduction

1.1 This report sets out the Local Green Spaces proposed in the Hungerford Neighbourhood Plan and briefly explains the justification for their inclusion.

1.2 Green spaces are important to Hungerford and the town benefits from several of these within easy reach of residents. Notably there is the Common Port Down (photo below) to the east and Freeman’s Marsh to the west, both owned and managed by the Town and Manor. These areas are already protected along with the Memorial Avenue and the Croft.



1.3 Under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Neighbourhood Plans have the opportunity to designate Local Green Spaces which are of particular importance to them. This will afford protection from development other than in very special circumstances. Paragraph 106 of the NPPF says that the Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:

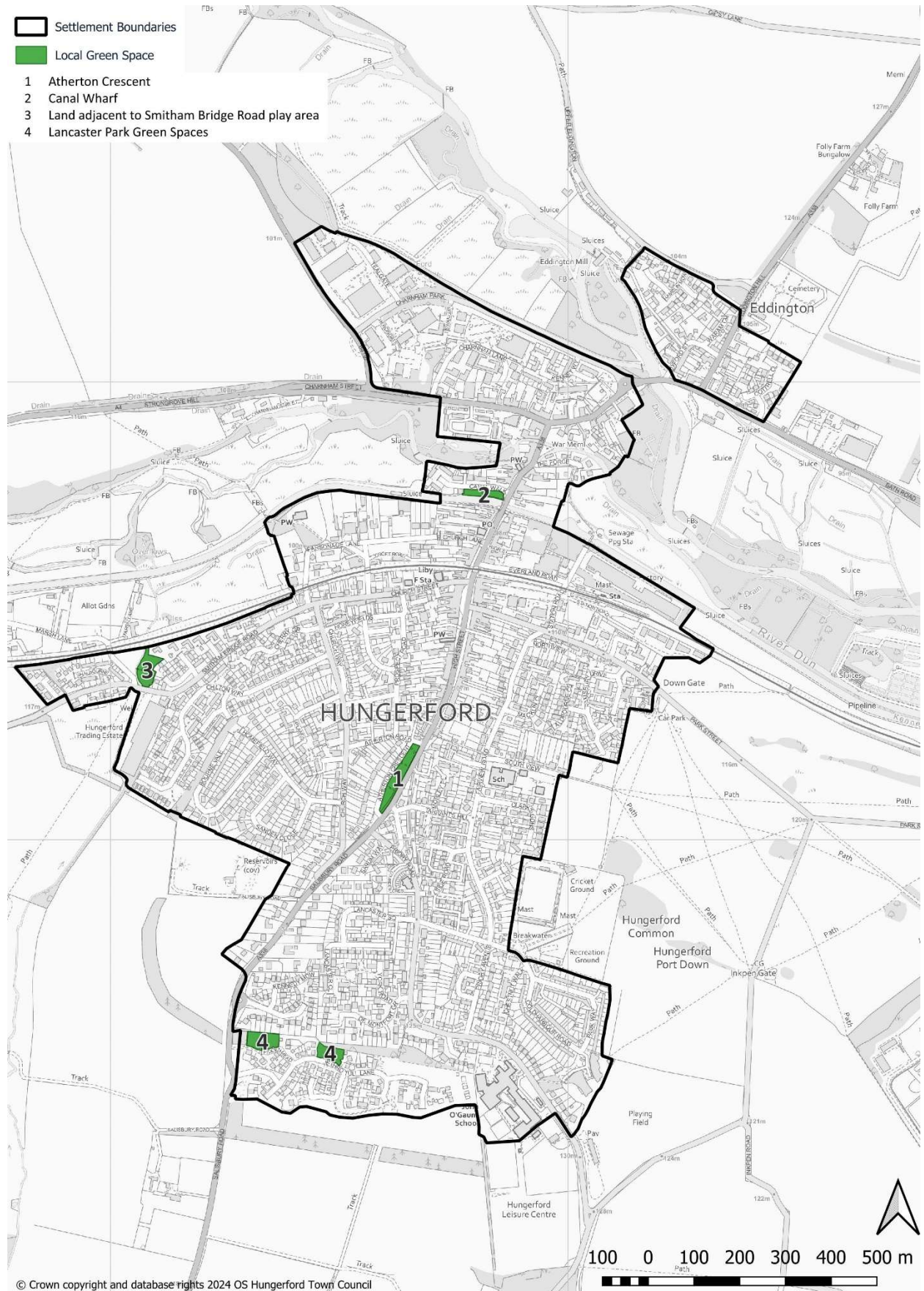
- in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and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

1.4 The following four areas are considered to fulfil all of the criteria of the NPPF:

- Atherton Crescent green space.
- The canal wharf.
- Land adjacent to Smitham Bridge play area.
- Lancaster Park green spaces.

1.5 The location of the sites is shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Location of proposed Local Green Spaces



2. Atherton Crescent

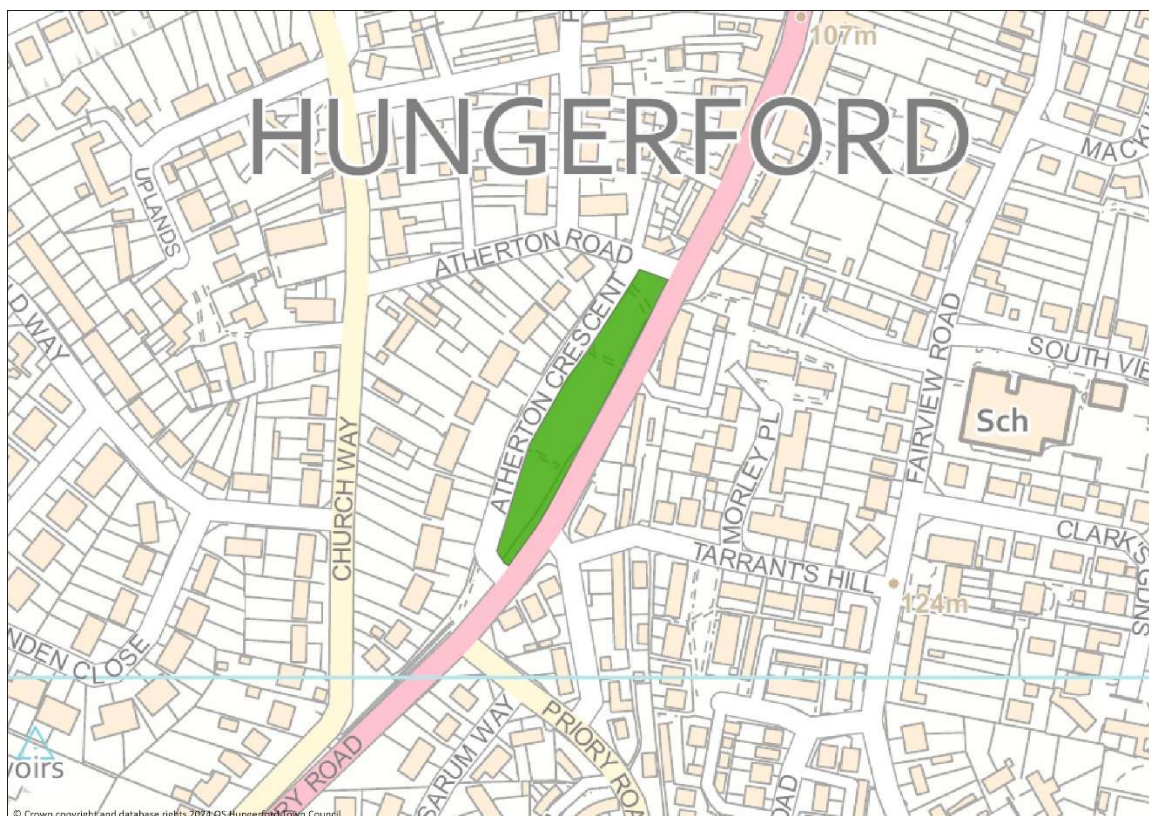
Size: 0.32 hectares.

2.1 Atherton Crescent local green space is an important frontage to Atherton Crescent and the A338 Salisbury Road which forms the southern approach to the town centre and the Hungerford Conservation Area. The Crescent, constructed in the early 20th century, is set out in a curve that fronts the green space which is essential for the setting of the dwellings. Its shape also preserves the openness of the approach into the town centre. There are a number of significant established trees on the green space which provide a habitat for biodiversity and shade in summer. In spring the green area is renowned for its carpet of daffodils that are a delight for all those passing through or living in the area. The area is used by local residents and others for a range of activities such as picnics and dog walking. The space has a bench which is used by residents and also by people waiting for buses from the adjacent bus stop.



2.2 The local green space is considered to meet the necessary criteria as it is close to the community and is of special significance, both for its visual function of retaining openness and as a green space enjoyed by the residents of Atherton Crescent. It is also local in character which is partly reflected by its size. The land owners are West Berkshire District Council and have not objected to the designation. Figure 1 below shows the proposed area to be designated, and the photo above shows the area.

Figure 1: Proposed Atherton Crescent Local Green Space



3. Canal Wharf

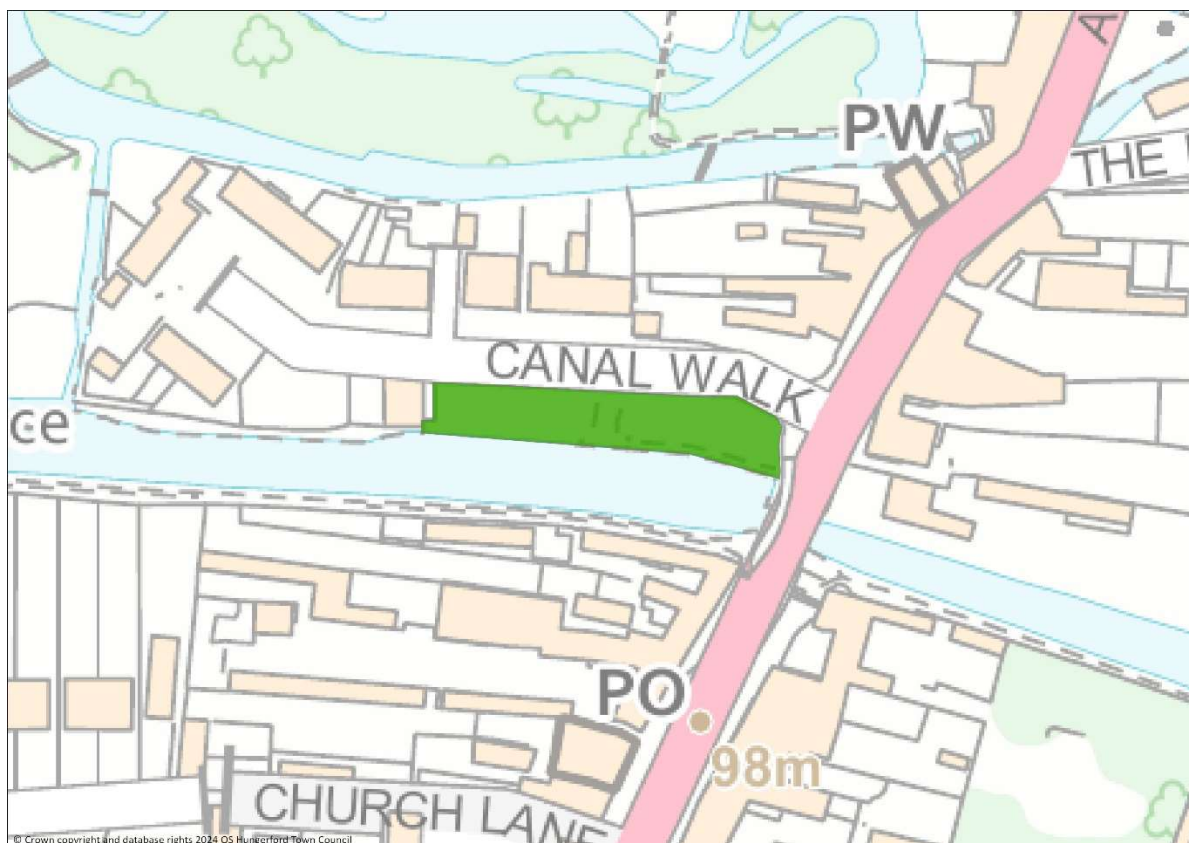
Size: 0.13 hectares.

3.1 The canal wharf is an area to the north of the canal and just west of the town bridge. It is one of the few green spaces that is close enough to the town centre to make people include it as part of a visit to the town centre. It is also the only open green space adjacent to the canal in Hungerford. It has several benches, including the first 'friendship bench' (a joint initiative with the Town Council and Chamber of Commerce to help with mental health) The area benefits from a gentle south facing slope which makes it a suntrap. It functions as a small park and is well used especially at lunch times by residents, employees of nearby businesses and visitors for sitting, picnics and eating a lunchtime sandwich. The Rose of Hungerford, a narrow boat (part shown in the photo) offering trips during the summer season, also sets off and returns from the wharf.



3.2 The local green space is considered to meet the necessary criteria as it is close to the community and is of special significance due to its function as a town centre park. It is also local in character which is partly reflected by its size. The land owners are a combination of the Kennet & Avon Canal Trust and West Berkshire District Council and neither have objected to the designation. Figure 2 below shows the proposed area to be designated and the photo above shows part of the area.

Figure 2: Proposed Canal Walk Local Green Space



4. Land adjacent to Smitham Bridge Play Area

Size: 0.25 hectares.

4.1 The land adjacent to the Smitham Bridge play area is a plain grassed area that is separated from the play facilities by the Shalbourne Brook, a chalk stream. It plays an important role in preserving the setting of the Brook and providing a green open space for informal leisure to serve the population in the west of the town. In this regard it has an important function as an informal park area for the nearby residential areas. With the adjacent play area it is popular with parents that bring their children to use these facilities.



4.2 The local green space is considered to meet the necessary criteria as it is close to the community and is of special significance given its role as a local park and providing a setting for the Brook. It is also local in character which is partly reflected by its size. The land owners are West Berkshire District Council, and they have not objected to the designation. Figure 3 below shows the proposed area to be designated and the photo above shows the area.

Figure 3: Proposed Smitham Bridge Play Area Local Green Space



5. Lancaster Park

Size: 0.4 hectares.

5.1 Lancaster Park is Hungerford's most recent development and benefits from several green spaces. It is fairly low density for a new development and the two spaces which make up the Local Green Space are an important part of that. The green areas are well used by the local residents with one of them including a popular play park. It is also important to the setting of the site on the edge of the town within the National Landscape.



5.2 The local green space is considered to meet the necessary criteria as it is close to the community and is of special significance, partly functioning as a play area and as a space for informal leisure. It also has a role in preserving the National Landscape setting. It is local in character which is partly reflected by its size. The land owners are Bewley Homes, who constructed the houses, and they have not objected to the designation. Figure 4 below shows the proposed area to be designated, and the photo above shows one of these areas.



Figure 4: Proposed Lancaster Park Local Green Space

