

1. Introduction

1.1 This Evidence Paper explains the policy context for Local Green Space designation, describes the methodology used to identify and assess candidate sites, summarises the existing green infrastructure context within Eversley Parish.

1.2 The document forms part of the evidence base supporting the Eversley Neighbourhood Plan and should be read alongside the proposed Local Green Space policy, the Policies Map, the Consultation Statement and the other supporting evidence prepared during the neighbourhood planning process.

2. National Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework

2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (August 2026) establishes the national planning policy framework for the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans. Policy HC2 ("Local Green Space") sets out the policy basis for the designation of Local Green Spaces, enabling local communities to safeguard green areas of particular value to them.

Paragraph 1 of Policy HC2 explains that local and neighbourhood plans may designate land as Local Green Space to safeguard green areas of particular value to the local community. It identifies three tests that all proposed Local Green Spaces must satisfy:

1. In close proximity to the community it serves;
2. 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
3. Local in character and not an extensive tract of land.

Paragraph 2 makes clear that designating land as Local Green Space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and the provision of sufficient land for homes, jobs and other needs. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated and should be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.

Policy HC8 ("Development affecting Local Green Space") states that development proposals affecting designated Local Green Spaces should be determined in a manner consistent with the relevant national decision-making policies for land in the Green Belt, specifically excluding provisions relating to grey belt and previously developed land.

Planning Practice Guidance

2.2 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides additional advice on the interpretation and application of Local Green Space policy (Reference ID: 37, Paragraphs 005–022).

The guidance emphasises that Local Green Space designation should be applied only where there is robust evidence that a site satisfies the criteria set out in the NPPF. It also confirms that designation should be proportionate and evidence-led, and should not be used to prevent otherwise sustainable development or to create a new area of Green Belt by another name.

The following principles have informed this assessment:

- Local Green Space designation must be consistent with strategic planning for sustainable development and must not undermine the delivery of identified housing, employment or infrastructure requirements.
- Existing environmental or heritage designations do not automatically justify Local Green Space designation. Each site must be assessed independently against the NPPF criteria and demonstrate additional local significance.
- A wide range of green spaces may be suitable for designation, including village greens, recreation grounds, allotments, churchyards, sports facilities and other locally valued open spaces.
- Boundaries should be clearly defined, defensible and capable of enduring beyond the plan period.

Local Planning Context

The emerging replacement Hart Local Plan is considering how future housing and employment needs beyond the current plan period should be accommodated in response to updated national planning policy and revised housing requirements. In accordance with the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) on Local Green Space (Reference ID: 37-007-20140306), Local Green Space designation should be consistent with the strategic policies of the development plan and should not be used to undermine the delivery of sustainable development. We do not consider that any of the proposed Local Green Space designations would undermine the strategic approach to meeting development needs across the District.

3. Methodology

3.1 Based on the principles established in the NPPF and PPG, three tests have been devised for identifying Local Green Space across the designated area.

Test One. Is the site reasonably close to the community it serves?

The NPPF states that to be designated as a Local Green Space an area should be in close proximity to the community it serves. Sites which are entirely isolated from the community will not be considered.

- PPG requires that if public access is a key factor, then the Local Green Space should normally be within easy walking distance of the community served. As a guide, 'easy walking distance' has been defined as being within 10 minutes' walking time of the nearest settlement boundary.
- It is recognised that some discretion may be needed depending on the topography of the area, the mobility and size of the community, and the size and function of the Local Green Space itself.

Test two Is the site demonstrably special to the local community?

- The designation of Local Green Space must be based on evidence which demonstrates why the area is demonstrably special to the local community and holds a particular local significance. To pass this test, an area must be demonstrably special and locally significant in one of the following categories.
- Beauty – This relates to the visual attractiveness and aesthetic value of the site, and its contribution to the streetscape, landscape, character or setting of a settlement. To qualify, the site

should contribute significantly to local character, for example by defining a sense of place, or by helping to define the physical form of a settlement.

- **Historic significance** – This relates to the historic importance a site holds for the local community. This could be because it contributes to the setting of a heritage asset or some other locally valued landmark. It might be because the site holds cultural associations which are of particular significance to the local community. Where the site is already protected by a designation (e.g. AONB), consideration should be given as to whether any additional benefit would result from designation as Local Green Space.
- **Recreational value** – Sites would need to hold local significance for recreation and be important to the community for a particular recreation activity or range of activities. These could be formal or informal activities.
- **Tranquillity** – In order to qualify, the site would need to be viewed by local people as important for the tranquillity it provided, offering a place for reflection and peaceful enjoyment.
- **Richness of wildlife** – A site would need to be locally significant for wildlife in a way that could be demonstrated. It might, for example, home to species or habitats of principal importance, veteran trees, or locally characteristic plants and animals such as mistletoe. Where the site is already protected by a designation (e.g. SSSI), consideration should be given as to whether any additional benefit would result from designation as Local Green Space.
- **Other reasons** – Sites might be special and locally significant for reasons other than those identified above. For example, a site might make a particular contribution to defining the individual character of a settlement, or it might be an asset of community value.

Test Three. Is the site local in character and not an extensive tract of land?

- The NPPF makes clear that the area to be designated should be local in character and not an extensive tract of land.

4. Consultation

4.1 This assessment will be published as part of the Neighbourhood Plan evidence base, where it can be viewed and commented on by all those taking part in the consultation on the Pre-Submission Draft.

4.2 The views of external organisations will be sought through the consultation on the Pre-Submission Draft

4.3 The Parish Council will invite all known landowners to make representations about proposals to designate any part of their land as Local Green Space. Wherever land has been registered, landowners will be written to at the address held by the Land Registry at least six weeks before the finalised Neighbourhood Plan proposal is submitted to the local planning authority under Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012

5. Existing Green Space Context

5.1 Eversley Parish contains a rich network of valued green spaces, many of which benefit from statutory or non-statutory environmental designations recognising their ecological, landscape and

heritage importance. These include Conservation Areas, National Nature Reserves (NNRs), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs).

Figure 1 below identifies the locations of all SSSIs, SINCs and NNRs within the parish.

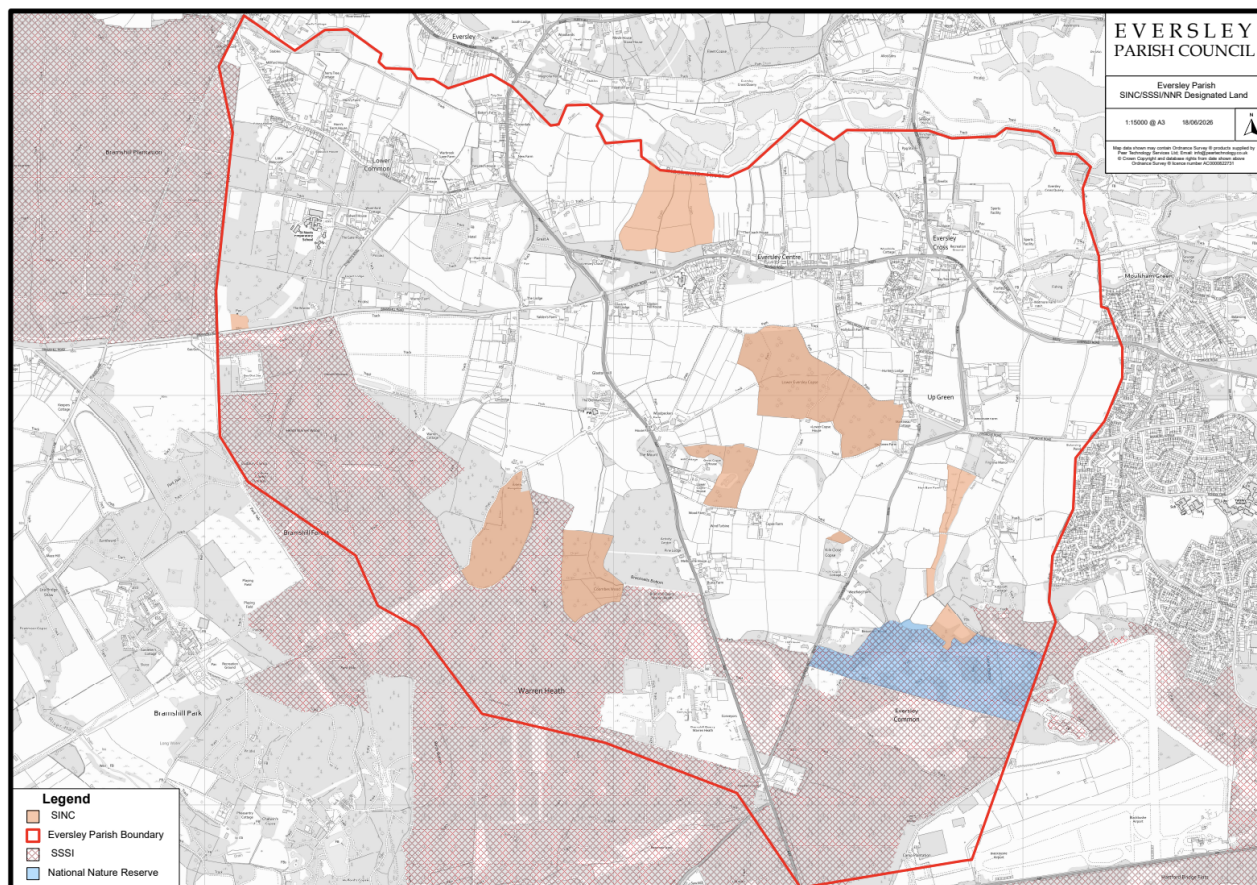


Figure 1

Several of these areas also form part of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA), an internationally important designation protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations. The SPA protects heathland habitats that support internationally significant populations of ground-nesting birds, including nightjar, woodlark and Dartford warbler.

Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA)

Parts of Eversley Parish lie within the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA), an internationally important nature conservation designation. The SPA protects a network of heathland habitats supporting internationally significant populations of ground-nesting birds, including nightjar, woodlark and Dartford warbler, together with the habitats on which these species depend.

National Nature Reserves (NNRs)

Castle Bottom National Nature Reserve lies within the Parish and is one of the finest remaining examples of lowland heathland and valley mire in southern England. The reserve contains a

diverse mosaic of habitats, including heathland, mire, woodland and wetland, supporting a wide range of plants and animals.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)

Castle Bottom and Bramshill are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) in recognition of their nationally important habitats and species. These sites make a significant contribution to the ecological network of Eversley and form part of the wider Thames Basin Heaths landscape.

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs)

In addition to nationally designated sites, Eversley contains a number of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), including Lower Eversley Copse (North and South). These sites are recognised for their valuable habitats, including areas of ancient woodland and species-rich habitats, and for their contribution to local ecological networks and biodiversity.

The Parish's combination of internationally, nationally and locally designated sites demonstrates the importance of protecting and enhancing its existing network of green and natural spaces. These areas provide not only significant biodiversity value but also contribute to the landscape character, recreational opportunities and rural identity of Eversley.

Castle Bottom National Nature Reserve



Castle Bottom to Yateley and Hawley Commons SSSI and SPA

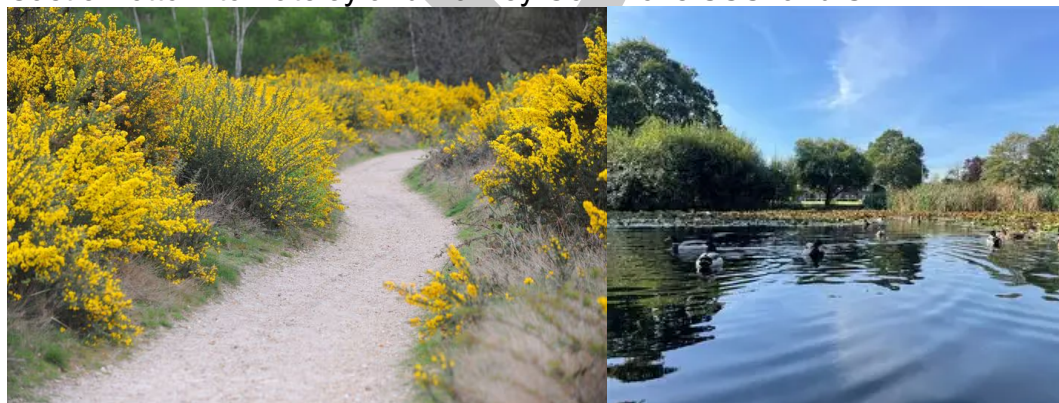




Figure 2 below identifies the location of the designated Local Green Spaces within the parish.

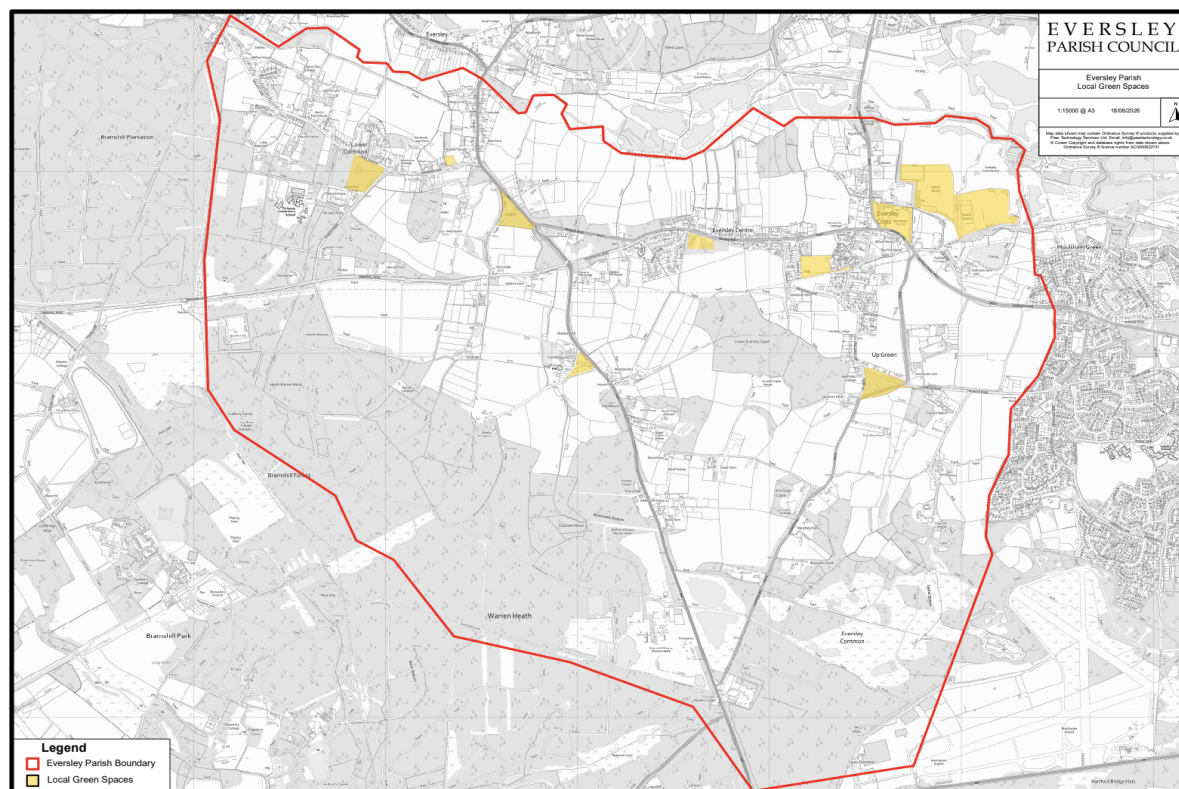


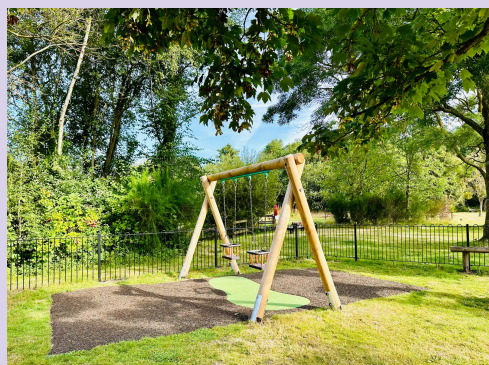
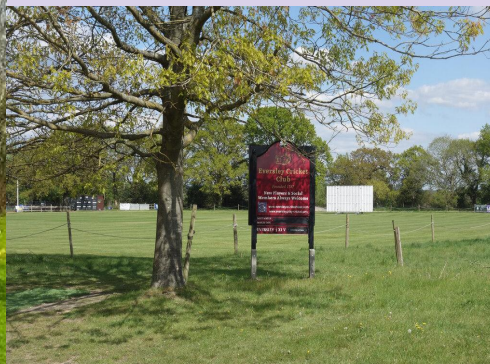
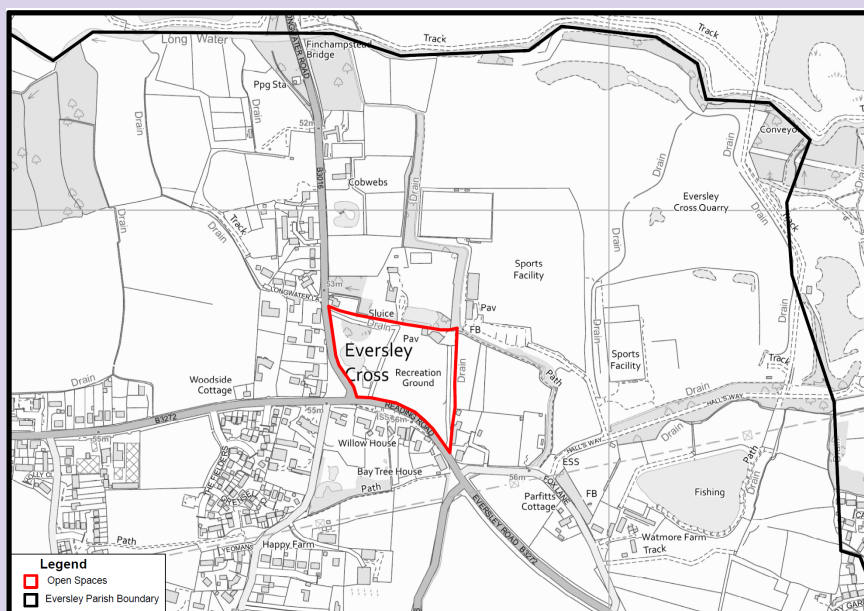
Figure 2

The following section presents the detailed assessment of each proposed Local Green Space and explains why each site is considered to satisfy the national policy tests for designation.

Reference/Name
EPLGS01.
Cross Green Park

Description

Located at Eversley Cross, the land is registered as a village green and conservation area (1983). The area incorporates the village pond, the play area and the village cricket ground.



Site Ownership

Eversley Cricket Club owns the land east of the central gravel path. The play park pond and surrounding land west of the central gravel path is owned by Eversley Parish Council

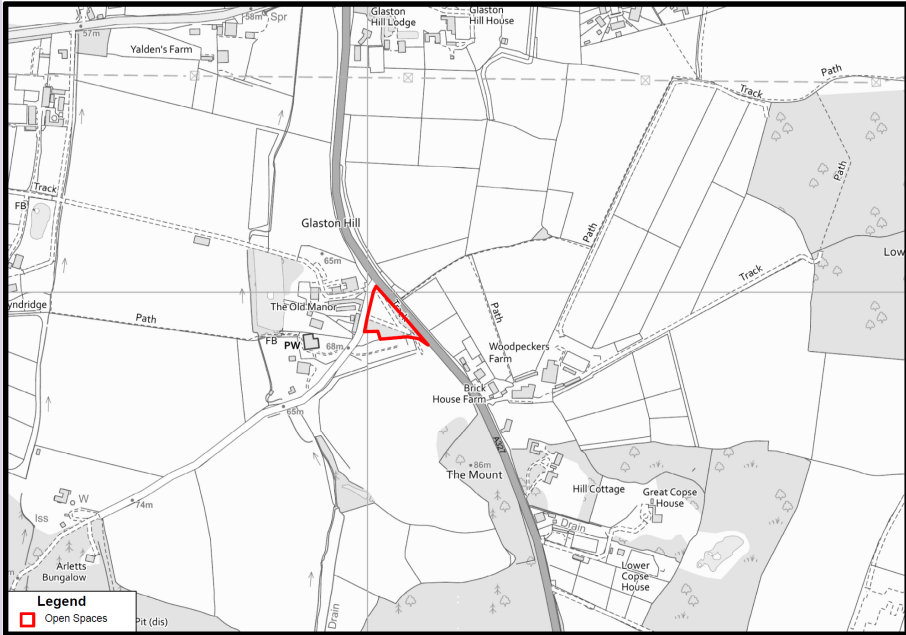
Close to the Community?

Centrally located within the village at Eversley Cross, the space is highly accessible to all the village's residents by car, foot or cycle

Demonstrably special?

This is an iconic open green space that characterises the village and is instantly recognisable. The cricket ground is recognised as one of the oldest grounds in the south of England having its first match recorded in 1787. Of high recreational value, the green has a pretty duck pond with biodiversity. The play area has a

	basket swing, climbing frame and picnic benches making it a nice spot for families to enjoy.
Not an extensive tract of open land?	The area is clearly delineated as a distinct local green space, and the boundaries are visible from the main road
Conclusion: This should be designated a LGS in Eversley's Neighbourhood Plan	

Reference/Name EPLGS02 Church Farm Green	Description The triangle of land below the cemetery is known as Church Green. This area now provides informal parking for St Mary's church and graveyard.  
Site Ownership	Part of Eversley Conservation area, this is Common Land
Close to the Community?	The green space is an essential part of the village church landscape and is used for religious worship and community events
Demonstrably special?	As well as providing essential parking for the village church, the space is a very pleasant spot to sit amongst the many mature oaks. It is bordered by the conservation area made up of the Church, Manor House and the Old Rectory. The conservation area includes the common land area east of the farm, the cemetery and the fields beyond it to the south to the edge of the wooded area of the Warren Heath This space is a nodal form development identified as a medieval settlement and an area of high archaeological potential. Trees and hedgerows are an important part of the established rural character of this

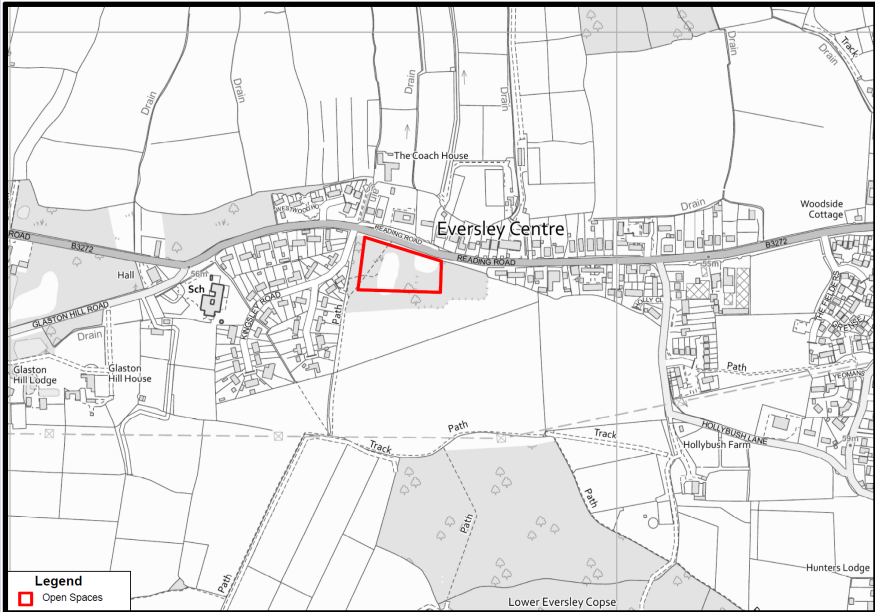
	conservation area, and many are associated with its most famous inhabitant, Charles Kingsley.
Not an extensive tract of open land?	The area is clearly delineated as a distinct local green space, and the boundaries are visible from the main road
Conclusion: This should be designated a LGS in Eversley's Neighbourhood Plan	

Reference/Name EPLGS03 Up Green	Description Up Green is based around the triangle of common land created by the tracks which became the carriageways between the local farms and the village. It is situated between Up Green and Marsh Lane and is a registered village green and conservation area.
Site Ownership	Eversley Parish Council
Close to the Community?	The space is adjacent to the residents of Up Green and Chequers Lane and is a central green space in the Up Green hamlet and conservation area.
Demonstrably special?	The space creates a special open feel to this historic area of the village. The common land area of Up Green is now an area of light woodland with a variety of species including Oak, young Elm, Silver Birch and Holly, much of which is self-sown. Up Green Farm with its red brick timber framed farmhouse stands at the south end of the area within its farmyard group of traditional timber clad timber framed barns and

	small granary. Up Green Cottage has a 17th century timber frame core and still features early iron framed leaded light windows and with its guttering in cast iron on metal brackets below its clay tiled roof. Also, on the west side facing the green stands a group of Martineau Cottages with their delightful architectural features including stepped brick sills to the ground floor, heavy timber lintels, jettied timber framed first floors with close exposed timbering and wide decorative barge boards. The gabled tiled roofs step up and down and above them tower groups of 2, 3 and 4 octagonal brick chimneys above square bases. Christian mottoes decorate the main jetty bressumer beams. The front boundary hedge is a feature in front of the properties facing the Up Green from the north and the houses enjoy a view over the adjoining field behind which is included in the conservation area and forms part of the setting and overall character of the area.
Not an extensive tract of open land?	The area is clearly delineated as a distinct local green space, and the boundaries are visible from Up Green and Chequers Lane.
Conclusion: This should be designated a LGS in Eversley's Neighbourhood Plan	

Map Reference/Name	Description
EPLGS04 Chequers Green Play area	Chequers Green play area is located between Chequers Lane, Yeomans and The Fielders- all main residential areas. The space has a safe pathway linking Chequers Lane to Hollybush Lane passing through Sherlock Lea and then onto the wider village.

Site Ownership	Eversley Parish Council
Close to the Community?	The space is located adjacent to Yeomans, and The Fielders which contain 7 and 10 properties respectively as well as linking to Sherlock Lea which contains a further 20 homes.
Demonstrably special?	The play equipment consists of a tower with climbing ropes, slide and climbing ramp, junior and toddler swings, basketball areas, a fitness trail, and picnic benches. The space is a key recreational area.
Not an extensive tract of open land?	The area is clearly delineated as a distinct local green space and is surrounded by residential areas.
Conclusion: This should be designated a LGS in Eversley's Neighbourhood Plan	

Map Reference/Name EPLGS05 Centre Green Play Area		Description Centre Green play area is located opposite The Kingsley Hotel. Behind the play area is a pathway that leads into woodland. The space is registered as a village green.
		 
Site Ownership		Eversley Parish Council

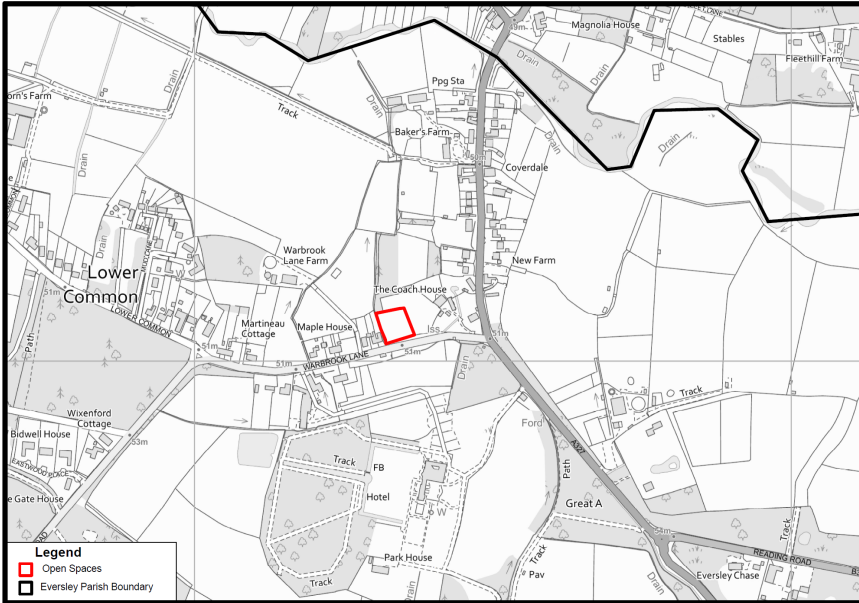
Close to the Community?		The recreation space is close to Church Farm and Eversley Village and is on the route to the village's primary school and nursery. It is situated near Westward Ho, a rural exception site providing affordable housing to local people and to Paul's Field social housing estate.
Demonstrably special?		Centre Green is of high recreational value with a basket swing trail, pick up sticks climbing frame, slide, junior swings and picnic benches. There is also an open field up the side of the bank which can be used as a 5-a-side football pitch.
Not an extensive tract of open land?		The area is clearly delineated as a distinct local green space and is surrounded by residential areas central to the village and its boundaries are clearly marked.
Conclusion: This should be designated a LGS in Eversley's Neighbourhood Plan		

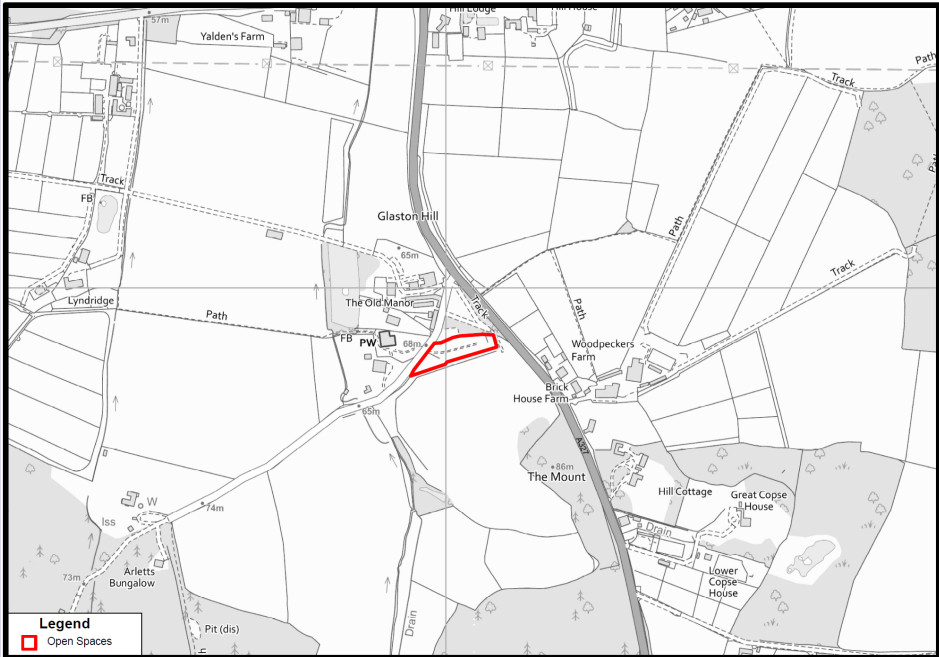
Reference/Name EPLGS06 Lower Common Play Area	Description Situating opposite Mud Lane in Lower Common, this play area has a woodland setting.
--	--

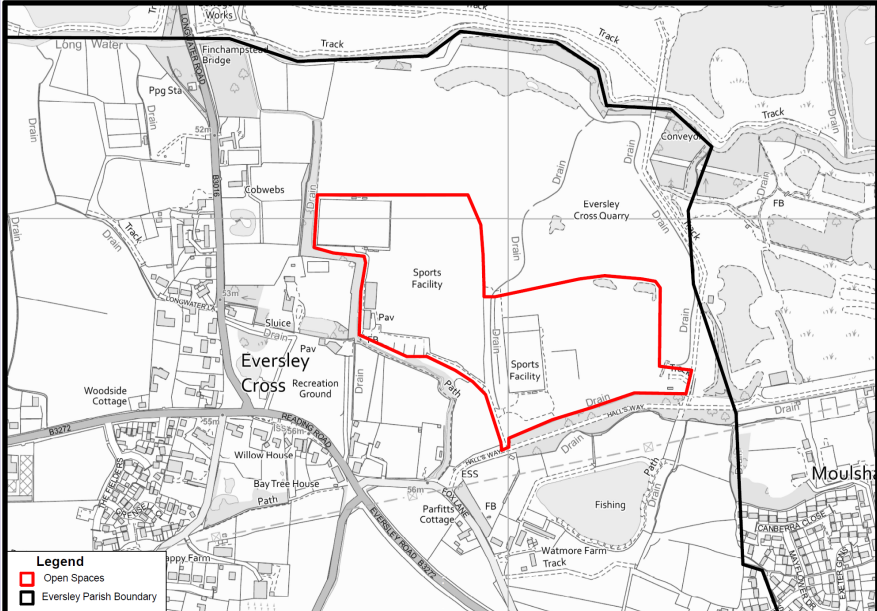
	
Site Ownership	Eversley Parish Council
Close to the Community?	Situated close to housing in Lower Common, it allows local residents an area to enjoy without the need of car transport.
Demonstrably special?	The space is of high recreational value with a zip wire, picnic benches, pyramid climber, balance beams, rockers, and swings.
Not an extensive tract of open land?	The area is clearly a delineated play and recreational area with boundaries visible from the road.
Conclusion: This should be designated a LGS in Eversley's Neighbourhood Plan	

Reference/Name	Description
EPLGS07 The Great A	The Great A is designated as a Village Green and has been an historic recreational space. It is a grassy area to the front of Warbrook House estate which is now used as a hotel and events venue.

	
Site Ownership	Warbrook House Heritage Hotel Ltd
Close to the Community?	Warbrook Estate and The Great A grass area is a landmark when passing between the four hamlets of Eversley - Eversley Centre, Eversley Cross, Lower Common and Church Farm. It is positioned at the inter-section of the major roads through the village.
Demonstrably special?	The Great A is a testament to the historical and architectural significance of the Warbrook House, which was designed by the renowned architect John James. The Great A's use as a Village Green reflects its importance in the community and its connection to the estate's history. This area is part of the Warbrook House estate and is a significant feature of the Grade II* landscape. Following the 1868 Enclosure Map, portions of Eversley Common were formally absorbed into the private estate, ending its status as a "borrowed" open landscape. To compensate the public for closing the original north-to-south drive during these alterations, a new public footpath was constructed curving through Eversley Green, preserving pedestrian access across the estate grounds from north to south.
Not an extensive tract of open land?	The area is clearly delineated within the grounds of Warbrook House and is visible from the main roads
Conclusion: This should be designated a LGS in Eversley's Neighbourhood Plan	

Reference/Name	Description
EPLGS08 Garden Plots	There are 14 garden plots on Warbrook Lane open to residents.  
Site Ownership	Hampshire County Council and managed by Eversley Parish Council
Close to the Community?	Located on Warbrook lane at the eastern end and close to both Eversley Centre and Lower Common.
Demonstrably special?	These provide recreational open spaces for growing produce. The garden plots contribute to the health and well-being of residents.
Not an extensive tract of open land?	Clearly identifiable as garden plot spaces.
Conclusion: This should be designated a LGS in Eversley's Neighbourhood Plan	

Reference/Name EPLGS09 Eversley Burial Ground	Description Across the road from the Churchyard is the cemetery dating from 1896. This has a medium height, mainly holly hedge boundary facing the common, except either side of the entrance is a low brick wall with a wide blue brick coping now covered by the hedge. The cemetery has a further extension to the west. The cemetery and graveyard are at capacity, and an extension is currently being planned.  
Site Ownership	Eversley & Bramshill Parochial Church Council and Eversley Parish Council
Close to the Community?	There are two parts of the cemetery adjacent to St Mary's Church.
Demonstrably special?	Both sections of the cemetery have their own oak lych gates, erected in 1905 and 2000, well matched to that of the churchyard. The cemetery is home to the grave of author and the village's first rector, Charles Kinglesy. The space is at capacity and whilst there have been no burials for a while <i>there</i> is work planned to extend the grounds.
Not an extensive tract of open land?	A defined area for a clear purpose.
Conclusion: This should be designated a LGS in Eversley's Neighbourhood Plan	

Reference/Name EPLGS10 Eversley Sports Grounds	Description Eversley Sports Association (ESA) is a charity based in Eversley Cross that provides and runs sports facilities for use by local clubs and the community. ESA comprises of the following clubs: • Eversley & California FC • Eversley Cricket Club • Yateley Hockey Club  
Site Ownership	Cemex UK Operations Ltd owns the land. Eversley Sports Association has a 45 year lease expiring in 2052 but which is subject to ongoing discussions about future development for the clubs.
Close to the Community?	The spaces used by the association are located around the Cross Green area of the parish and within easy reach of all residents. Many of its facilities have been funded through Crowdfunding, demonstrating the value that the community places on these facilities.

Demonstrably special?	The objectives of ESA are to widen and deepen the access to cricket, football and hockey, and to provide a high standard of organised competitive sports and skills training. As such, the space has high recreational value to the village's residents.
Not an extensive tract of open land?	The space is clearly used for recreation and is delineated as such.
Conclusion: This should be designated a LGS in Eversley's Neighbourhood Plan	

Draft