Postwick with Witton Neighbourhood Plan

Local Green Space Assessment

2024

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Introduction

Postwick with Witton is preparing a neighbourhood plan which will include a policy designating areas of Local Green Space which are particularly valued by the community. A robust process has been followed to determine which green spaces within Postwick with Witton should be designated.

Initial ideas were suggested by residents and the steering group as part of consultation activities in 2024. In Q15 of the initial community survey, residents were asked about green spaces in the parish that they would like to see protected. This was a free text question that 38 people chose to answer and **everyone who answered supported the idea of protecting green space**. Some respondents gave specific suggestions for spaces to protect which are listed below. **The spaces that were mentioned multiple times were: areas around the river, village hall playing fields, Postwick Grove, and the park and ride extension site.** Suggestions included:

Suggested green spaces	NP taking forward for LGS Designation? Yes/No	Further comments
All wild spaces planted with trees	No	It is not appropriate to designate all areas of green space. The designation must meet national criteria and be demonstrably special.
Area just outside of Postwick beyond the railway bridge, part of the Park and Ride extension site.	Yes	The wooded area only has been included which incorporates the woodland path, this is the park and ride extension site.
Postwick Grove	No	This has been decided to be included as a local important view instead
Land opposite Oaks Lane	No	It is not appropriate to include greenfield/agricultural land as local green space designations. This is because trying to include blanket designations of open countryside is seen as undermining sustainable development and should not be done to try and prevent any further development.
Land between Brundall Low Rd	No	It is not appropriate to include greenfield/agricultural land as local green

Suggested green spaces	NP taking forward for LGS Designation? Yes/No	Further comments
and the Brethren church		space designations. This is because trying to include blanket designations of open countryside is seen as undermining sustainable development and should not be done to try and prevent any further development.
Village hall playing fields and cricket pitch	Yes	This has been included for its recreational value.
Fishing pegs by Ferry Lane	No	No, this site was not taken forward since it is a linear path and doesn't meet the criteria for being demonstrably special.
Path to river/along river	No	No, this site was not taken forward since it is a linear path and doesn't meet the criteria for being demonstrably special.
Woodland along the boatyard at Brundall	No	It is not appropriate to include greenfield/agricultural land as local green space designations. This is because trying to include blanket designations of open countryside is seen as undermining sustainable development and should not be done to try and prevent any further development.
Marshland near to the river	No	It is not appropriate to include greenfield/agricultural land as local green space designations. This is because trying to include blanket designations of open countryside is seen as undermining sustainable development and should not be done to try and prevent any further development.
Woodland adjacent to Witton Run	No	Not within our parish/designated area.
Protection for ancient oak trees	No	It is not appropriate to designate all areas of green space/trees. The designation must

Suggested green spaces	NP taking forward for LGS Designation? Yes/No	Further comments
		meet national criteria and be demonstrably special. Trees can be protected in other neighbourhood plan policies.
Open fields either side of the lanes leading into Postwick village	No	It is not appropriate to include greenfield/agricultural land as local green space designations. This is because trying to include blanket designations of open countryside is seen as undermining sustainable development and should not be done to try and prevent any further development.
Postwick Cemetery	Yes	This has been included in the plan due to its historic and recreational value.
Witton Cemetery	Yes	This has been included in the plan due to its historic and recreational value.
Tann Land	No	Used to be a couple of properties on the site, but these went into disrepair years ago and there's a woodland on there now. However, this site has been put forward because it has become a wooded area, with little if any management. It offers an important wildlife habitat. With green space designation this could be improved/ enhanced - but of course it isn't included.
Snowdrop acre	Yes	This has been included in the plan due to its biodiversity and historic value.
Graveyard in the middle of Broadland Business Park	Yes	This has been included in the plan due to its historic and recreational value.

These spaces were reviewed to consider whether they would meet the national criteria for designation with regard to the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance.

- A site visit was undertaken by the working group for the sites wishing to be taken forward and further evidence gathered including:
  a) Reviewing any historic evidence related to the green spaces on the Historic England website and via Heritage Gateway;
  b) Reviewing Statutory or Local Designations within mapped data sources available in the public domain via Natural England, Historic England, Norfolk County Council, Broadland District Council and Broads Authority;
- An assessment against the national criteria for Local Green Space was made for each of the potential areas;
- Landowners were contacted to make them aware that their land was being considered for local green space designation and to invite them to make representations;
- A final decision was recommended by the Steering Group, and confirmed by the parish council, as to which green spaces to designate.

This document provides the assessment and reasoning of all six areas of green space visited or suggested for us to investigate to include in the neighbourhood development plan. Chapter 3 provides the assessment and explanation of the green spaces we feel are justified and supported to be a LGS in the Postwick with Witton Neighbourhood Plan.

Policy Context

Local Green Space designation is a way to provide special protection for green areas of particular importance to local communities. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in 2012 (revised December 2023) introduced the concept of Local Green Space designation.

Paragraph 105 of the NPPF sets out that communities should be able to identify green spaces of particular importance through neighbourhood plans, with para 106 Determining:

The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green 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 (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and*
c) *Local in character and not an extensive tract of land*[1].

In addition, the National Planning Practice Guidance states:

Local Green Space designation will rarely be appropriate where the land has planning permission for development. Exceptions could be where the development would be

[1] National Planning Policy Framework (publishing.service.gov.uk)

compatible with the reasons for designation or where planning permission is no longer capable of being implemented.

Other designations, such as Special Areas of Conservation, do not necessarily preclude or support designation as a Local Green Space. However, it is necessary to consider whether the additional designation is necessary and would serve a useful purpose.

In applying the NPPF criteria, close proximity would normally mean easy walking distance, which based on Natural England standards would mean 1.25 miles or less.

Consideration of whether the green space is local in character, and not an extensive tract of land, suggests spaces within a locality, rather than for example, extensive green areas in the countryside.

The Broadland District Local Plan and Broads Authority Local Plan includes strategic policies for the neighbourhood area. Planning Practice Guidance on Neighbourhood Planning sets out that plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan if it is to meet the basic conditions. Green spaces are mentioned a few times in the relevant Local Plan Policies which are relevant for the designated area, and this includes:

- Policy EN2 of the Broadland Development Management DPD (2015) sets out that development proposals should consider any impact upon as well as seek to protect and enhance where appropriate green spaces including natural and semi-natural features as well as geological/geomorphological features which make a significant contribution towards defining the character of an area.
- Policy 3 of the Greater Norwich Local Plan (2024) states that development proposals should enhance the natural environment through respecting landscape character and retaining important views and features… and sensitive areas such as green spaces identified in Local or Neighbourhood Plans.
- In Policy SSLGS of the Broads Local Plan (2019) development proposals that protect or enhance local green spaces and that comply with other relevant policies will be permitted. Development proposals that would have unacceptable adverse impact on the use, function and appearance of these local green spaces or would result in their loss will not be permitted other than in very special circumstances.

Assessment of the green spaces being designated

The Local Green Space Assessment Tool from My Community: Neighbourhood Planning Local Green Spaces[2] has been used as the basis to assess each site identified by the community. This includes:

- LGS1- Memorial Garden, the graveyard in the middle of Broadland Business Park
- LGS2- Wooded Area, West of Oak Lane
- LGS3- All Saints Church Burial Ground, South of Ferry Lane
- LGS4- Playing Field South of Ferry Lane
- LGS5- Snowdrop Acre, Witton
- LGS6- St Margaret's Church Churchyard, Witton Wooded Area, West of Oak Lane

[2] https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/making-local-green-space-designations-neighbourhood-plan/

LGS1- Memorial Garden, the graveyard in the middle of Broadland Business Park







Site Details

Criteria	Description
Site	Graveyard in the middle of Broadland Business Park
Description and purposes	The greenspace sits in the built-up part of Broadland Business Park. This area has seating and is surrounded by trees it is used by the residents and workers in the area and provided amenity value. The site can be entered by cycle or foot via Memorial Way.

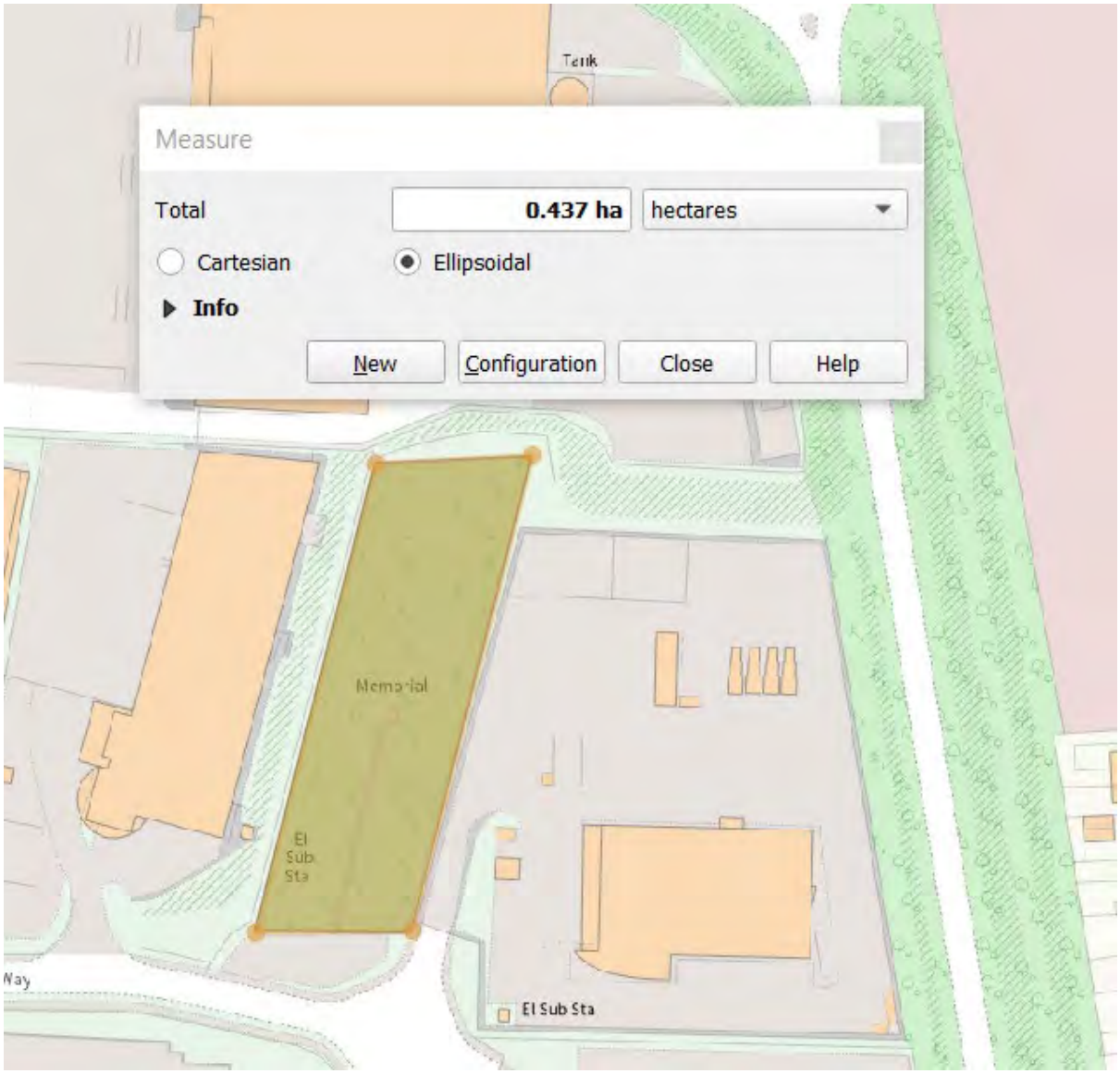
Checklist

Criteria	Description
Statutory designations - ie CWS, listed status, SSSI, SPA, NNR, SAC	None
Site allocations	None
Planning permissions	None

NPPF Criteria

Criteria	Description
Close to the community it serves. Add distance to centre of village	The greenspace is within the core of the built-up area in Broadland Business Park and within 50m walking distance to other community and business facilities. It is under 1200m distance to residential dwellings.
Demonstrably special to the local community (beauty, historic significance, recreational, tranquillity, wildlife or other) Add as much here as possible to	A grassed area which includes benches used for recreational use and resting by the community. We consider it to be demonstrable special for amenity and health and well-being value.

Criteria	Description
determine whether the green space is demonstrably special.	
Local in character and not extensive tract of land. Add site of green space	The area size is approximately 0.437ha. It is local in character to Postwick and Witton serving the purposes of the local area only. It would not necessarily be considered an extensive tract of land.



LGS2- Wooded Area, West of Oak Lane







Site Details

Criteria	Description
Site	Wooded Area, West of Oak Lane

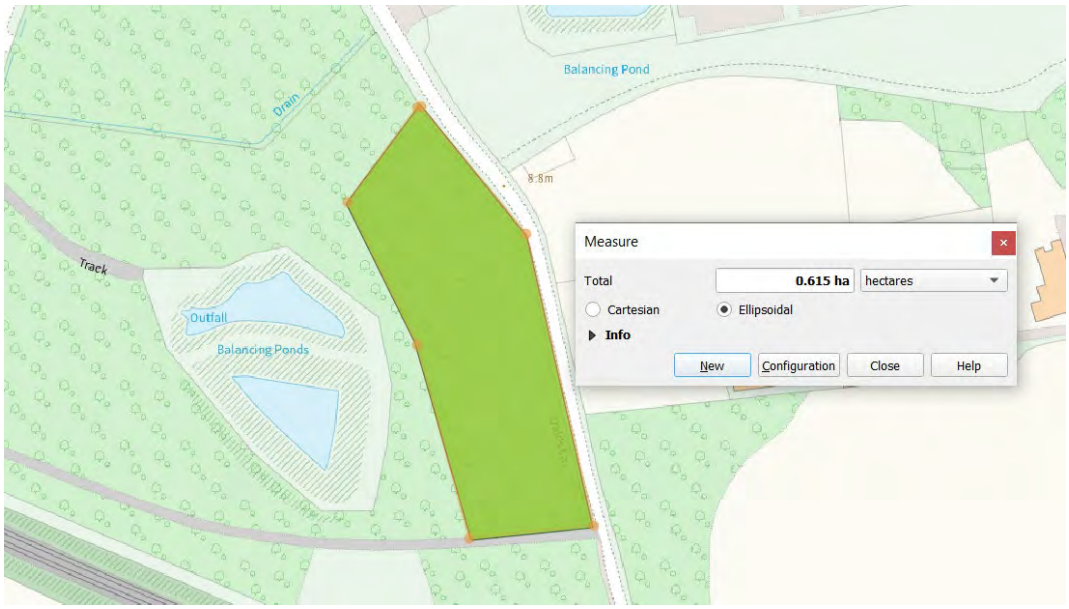
Description and purposes	The wooded area just off Oaks Lane, between the roundabout at the top of Oaks lane and the park and ride footpath. This is a relatively new green space created when the drainage works were made for the Postwick junction on the land leased by Norfolk CC for a planned but now defunct extension to the park and ride. Small trees were planted along a small edge of the land bordering Oaks Lane which now has a path that meanders through it enabling walkers to join a permissive path up to Brundall Low Road past the Plymouth Brethern meeting room. This means pedestrians do not have to walk along the single lane road which has no footpath, high banks and a sharp bend. This path goes off the tarmac path to the Park and ride off Oaks Lane (what3words explored.gourmet.excavate) and meanders through trees to return to oaks lane nearer the roundabout. (sheepish.snooping.joystick). It is approximately 80m in length (parallel with Oaks Lane by 30m width).

Checklist

Criteria	**Description**
Statutory designations - ie CWS, listed status, SSSI, SPA, NNR, SAC	None
Site allocations	None
Planning permissions	None

NPPF Criteria

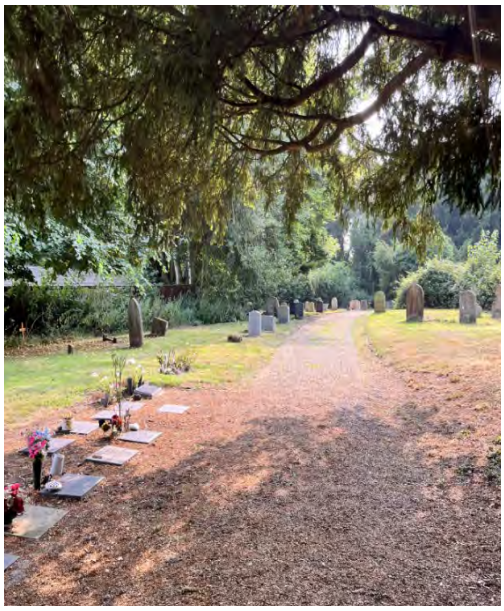
Criteria	Description
Close to the community it serves. Add distance to centre of village	The greenspace is on the outskirts of Postwick village and within 700m walking distance to other community facilities such as All Saints Church and residential dwellings.
Demonstrably special to the local community (beauty, historic significance, recreational, tranquillity, wildlife or other) Add as much here as possible to determine whether the green space is demonstrably special.	It has a high recreational value which also attracts wildlife, and the landowner keeps bees on the site. One of the villagers carries out moth and butterfly surveys here. Trees within this green space include oak, Rowan, silver birch, buddleia and more.
Local in character and not extensive tract of land. Add site of green space	The area size is approximately 0.615ha. Any built development within the green space will be excluded from designation. It is local in character to Postwick and Witton serving the purposes of the local area only. It would not necessarily be considered an extensive tract of land.



LGS3- All Saints Church Burial Ground, South of Ferry Lane











Site Details

Criteria	
Site	All Saints Church Burial Ground
Description and purposes	The green open space is the burial ground for residents of the parish. This greenspace sits South of Ferry Lane. The war memorial is also in these grounds.

Checklist

Criteria	Description
Statutory designations - ie CWS, listed status, SSSI, SPA, NNR, SAC	• Church of All Saints (Listed Grade II*)[3]

[3] CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS, Postwick with Witton - 1372681 | Historic England

Criteria	Description
	• Postwick War Memorial Cross (Grade II Listed) • Priority Habitat – Deciduous Woodland over the majority of the site and additional habitats present to the northern border of the site called Leeder Hill.
Site allocations	None
Planning permissions	None

NPPF Criteria

Criteria	Description
Close to the community it serves. Add distance to centre of village	The greenspace is within the core of the village and within 150m walking distance to other community facilities such as the Recreation Ground and residential dwellings.
Demonstrably special to the local community (beauty, historic significance, recreational, tranquillity, wildlife or other) Add as much here as possible to determine whether the green space is demonstrably special.	The burial ground can be considered demonstrably special to Postwick and Witton as it has been the burial ground for residents since the late 13th century to the current day. It is an important local facility which offers a historical and spiritual connection for current and previous villagers. The consultation analysis from the initial community survey conducted in Postwick with Witton 2024 showed that this area in the parish is special to the community.
Local in character and not extensive tract of land. Add site of green space	The area size is approximately 0.551ha including the church. Any built development such as the church within

Criteria	Description
	the green space will be excluded from designation. It is local in character to Postwick and Witton serving the purposes of the local area only. It would not necessarily be considered an extensive tract of land.



LGS4 - Playing Field South of Ferry Lane











Site Details

Criteria	Description
Site	Playing Field, South of Ferry Lane
Description and purposes	The greenspace sits in the built-up part of the village South of Ferry Lane. This area is used by the residents and visitors for recreational purposes. The site can be entered by car, cycle or foot via Ferry Lane and entered by foot only via the Wilderness.

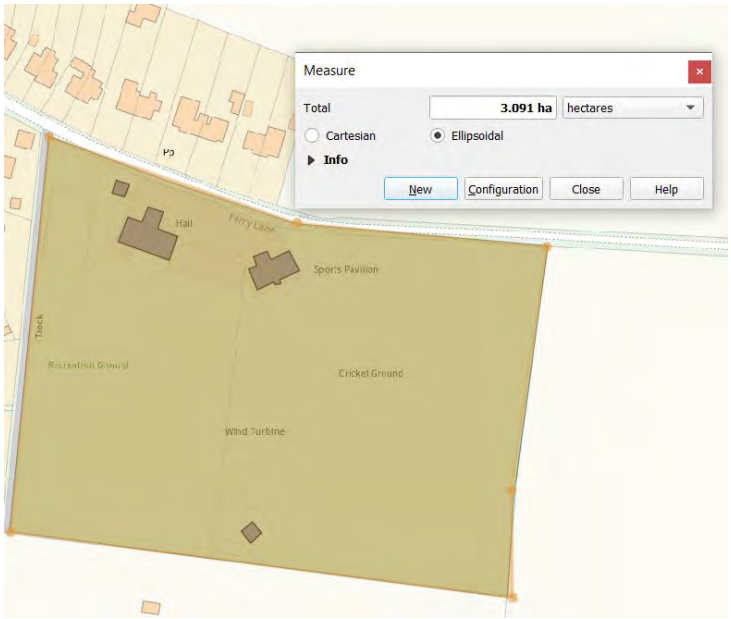
Checklist

Criteria	Description
Statutory designations - ie CWS, listed status, SSSI, SPA, NNR, SAC	None
Site allocations	None
Planning permissions	None

NPPF Criteria

Criteria	Description
Close to the community it serves. Add distance to centre of village	The greenspace is within the core of the village and within 200m walking distance to other community facilities and residential dwellings.
Demonstrably special to the local community (beauty, historic significance, recreational, tranquillity, wildlife or other) Add as much here as possible to determine whether the green space is demonstrably special.	A large, grassed area which includes children's play equipment, and cricket grounds used for exercise and recreational use by the community. We consider it to be demonstrable special for recreational and health and well-being value. The consultation analysis from the initial community survey conducted in Postwick with Witton 2024 showed that this area in the parish is special to the community.
Local in character and not extensive tract of land. Add site of green space	3.091ha in size including the sports pavillion, hall and other built development (0.050ha) which will be excluded from the green space. In total the greenspace is approximately 3.041ha. As explained in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) Para:015 ID:37-015-

Criteria	Description
	20140306[4], there are no hard and fast rules about how big a Local Green Space can be, and a degree of judgement will inevitably be needed when making a designation. Para 106 of the NPPF (December 2023) states that a Local Green Space should only be designated if it is not an extensive tract of land, such as making blanket designations of open countryside adjacent to settlements to purposely stop development. This would not be considered appropriate. The recreation ground is not an extensive tract of land and serves as a green space for the local community and is considered an appropriate size in proportion to the village itself.



[4] Open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and local green space - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

LGS5- Snowdrop Acre, Witton









Site Details

Criteria	Description
Site	Snowdrop Acre, Witton West off West Lane **what3words:** hang.nylon.buck
Description and purposes	This greenspace is off West Lane (leading to the Marina) and within short walking distance from properties in Witton (South). The area is in the back of a garden where there is a large snow drop field[5]. The District Council owns this land, and the greenspace is managed by Blofield and District Conservation Group (BADCOG). Recently been in the news because of its historical and botanical importance to the community[6]. It is considered one of the fifteen important conservation and wildlife sites in the area the BADCOG look after. Managed by BADCOG since 1985 in collaboration with BDC.

Checklist

Criteria	Description
Statutory designations - ie CWS, listed status, SSSI, SPA, NNR, SAC	Priority Habitat – Deciduous Woodland
Site allocations	None
Planning permissions	None

NPPF Criteria

[5] Snowdrop Acre – BADCOG

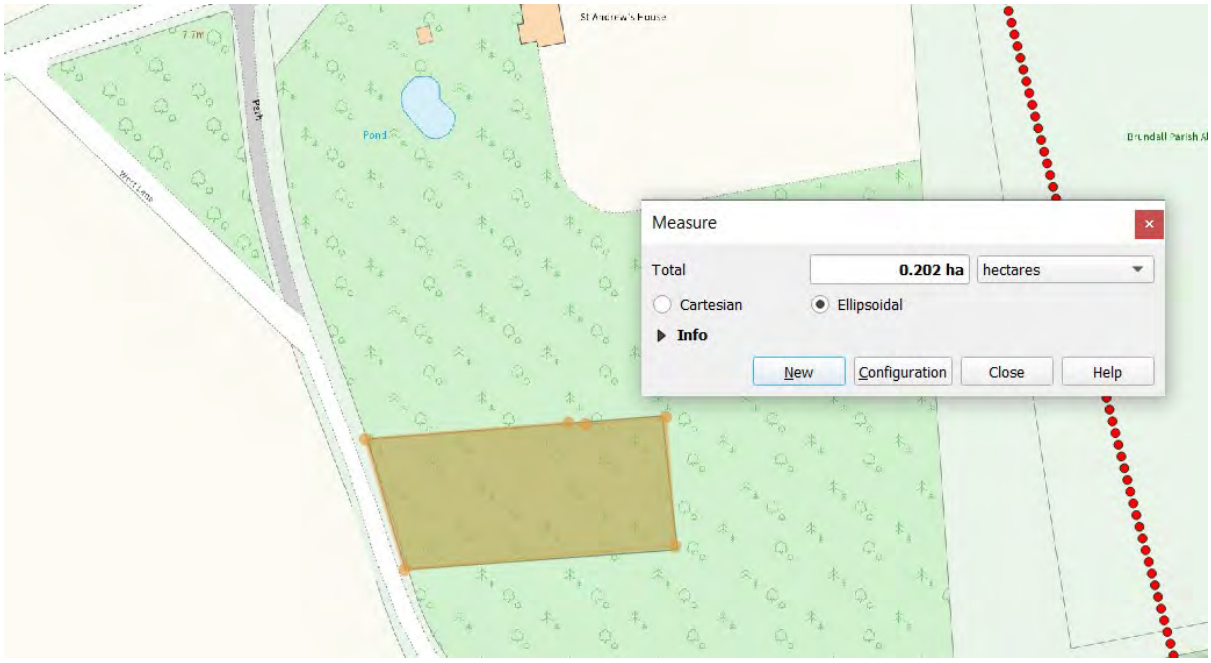
[6] Broadland: Gateway to a greener future – Broadland and South Norfolk (southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk)

	Description
Close to the community it serves. Add distance to centre of village	The greenspace is in reasonable distance to the core of the village and within 200m walking distance to other residential dwellings.
	This field is considered to have historic benefit and wildlife benefit to the local area. The site was once the garden of decorated WWI hero Hayrick Antony Greatorex. He moved to Norfolk with his family in 1915, and after the war he pioneered the breeding of snowdrops. More varieties of named snowdrops are derived from his garden than any other in Britain[7]. **Habitats:** Woodland garden, pond, hedgerow. Despite the site's small size several interesting bird species have been recorded, including tawny owl, goldcrest, marsh tit, and siskin. **Main Conservation Interest:** Winter/early spring ground flora, woodland pond, wych elms. **Description on the BADCOG website:** In 1985 BADCOG began managing this site by removing encroaching scrub and tall vigorous herbaceous vegetation. A large debris pile, made up from the cleared material, now provides a habitat for invertebrates and small mammals, perhaps including the bank voles which have been seen on the site. The garden still contains a range of interesting ornamental trees, shrubs and flowering plants, including oso berry *Osmaronia*

[7] Interesting read from Richard Hobbs. Source: H. O. Greatorex's garden – Snowdrop Acre. Pages 1-5 - Flip PDF Download | FlipHTML5

Criteria	Description
	cerasiformis from western North America, the climber *Akebia quinata* from China and Japan, and *Hydrangea aspera* from the Himalay and southeast Asia. A mature Indian horse chestnut *Aesculus indica* grows in the hedgerow next to the gate. The garden's exotic trees and shrubs are interspersed among native species which have been augmented by recent plantings. A wide range has been used, with hazel, holly, and oak predominant. Selective felling of sycamore, grey poplar and Douglas fir has been undertaken to prevent excessive shading of the winter/early spring ground flora, and to allow space for the growth and development of preferred tree species. Two mature wych elms are a notable feature of the garden. Further interest is added by a shaded, semi-permanent woodland pond which dries out periodically. Whether or not it is man-made and how long it has existed is not known, but it forms a distinctive and valued feature of the old garden. Rather than attempt to revert the site back to semi-natural woodland, the management aim is to retain the garden's ornamental character, in keeping with its recent history. The garden will be restored and enhanced, maintaining its woodland framework interspersed with exotic plants. In addition to retaining ornamental garden plants, several native woodland species have been recently introduced, including bugle and woodruff. As the recent plantings of trees

Criteria	Description
	and shrubs become established, selective coppicing or pollarding will be implemented to maintain the site's open character and prevent excessive shading of the ground flora. The boundary hedge also requires ongoing management and will be coppiced periodically. Local councillors and residents believe Snowdrop Acre is a special site for its historical and botanical importance and are grateful to the local volunteers who maintain this for community benefits.
Local in character and not extensive tract of land. Add site of green space	The area size is approximately 0.2ha. It is local in character to Postwick and Witton serving the purposes of the local area only. It would not necessarily be considered an extensive tract of land.



LGS6-St Margaret's Church Churchyard, Witton







Site Details

Criteria	
Site	St Margarets Church Churchyard
Description and purposes	The green open space is the burial ground for residents of the parish.

Checklist

Criteria	**Description**
Statutory designations - ie CWS, listed status, SSSI, SPA, NNR, SAC	• Church of St Margaret (Listed Grade II*)[8] • Witton War Memorial Cross (Grade II Listed)

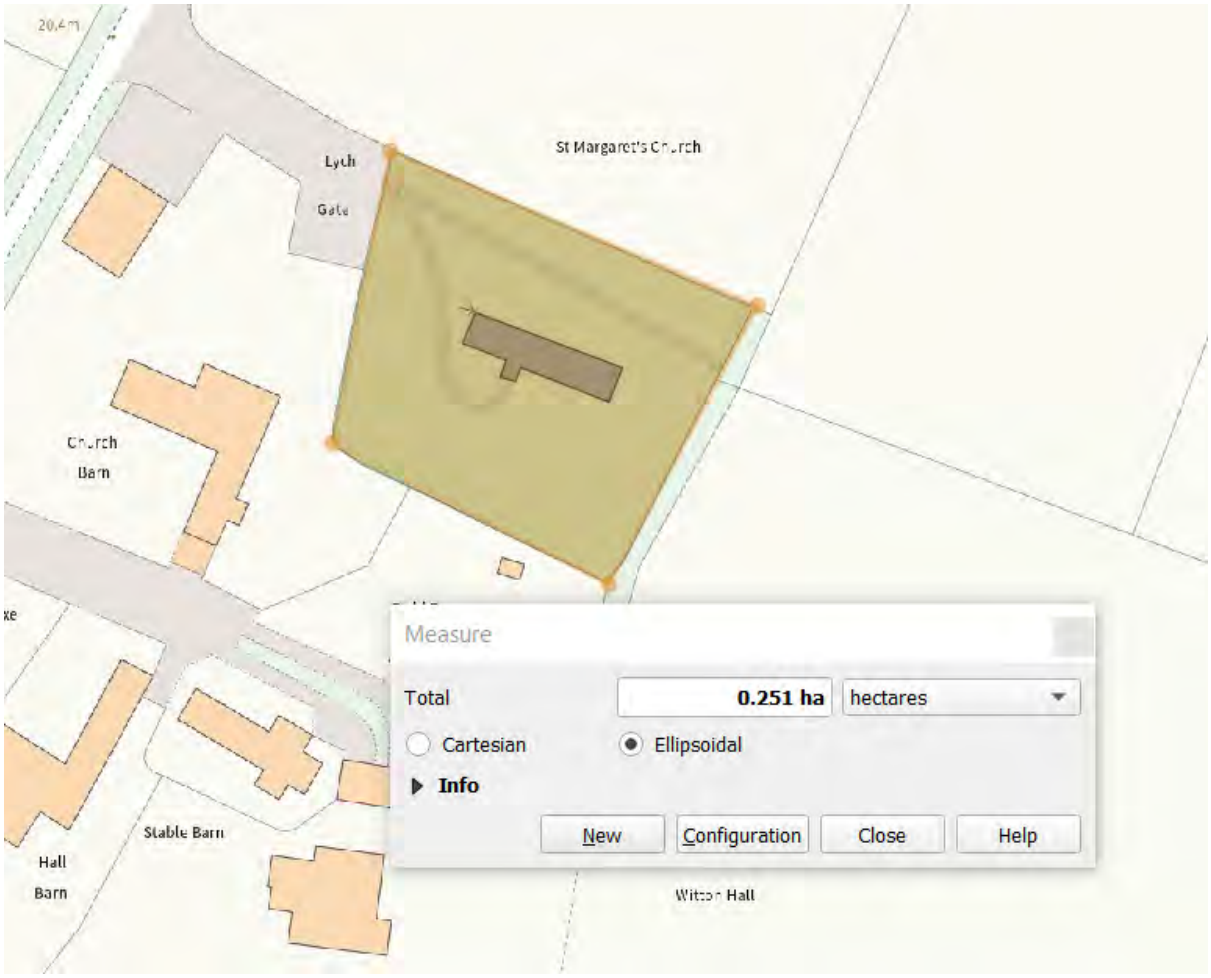
[8] CHURCH OF ST MARGARET, Postwick with Witton - 1153110 | Historic England

Criteria	Description
Site allocations	None
Planning permissions	None

NPPF Criteria

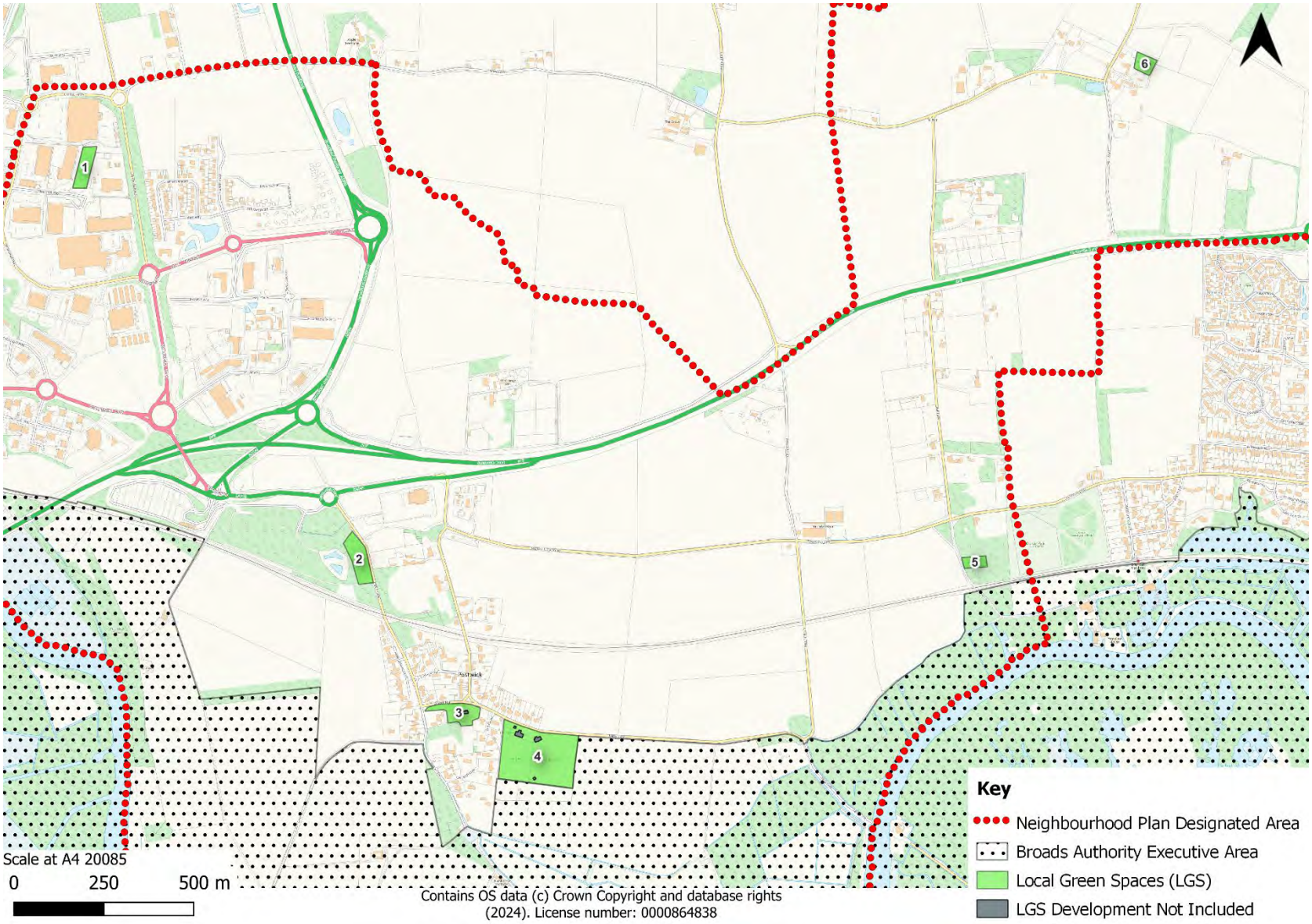
Criteria	Description
Close to the community it serves. Add distance to centre of village	The greenspace is within the small hamlet of north Witton.
Demonstrably special to the local community (beauty, historic significance, recreational, tranquillity, wildlife or other) Add as much here as possible to determine whether the green space is demonstrably special.	The burial ground can be considered demonstrably special to Postwick and Witton as it has been the burial ground for residents since approximately 15th century the building was partially rebuilt in 1857. There is a WW1 memorial within the burial grounds. It is an important local facility which offers a historical and spiritual connection for current and previous villagers[9]. The consultation analysis from the initial community survey conducted in Postwick with Witton 2024 showed that this area in the parish is special to the community.
Local in character and not extensive tract of land. Add site of green space	The area size is approximately 0.251ha including the church. Any built development within the green space will be excluded from designation. It is local in character to Postwick and Witton serving the purposes of the local area only. It would not necessarily be considered an extensive tract of land.

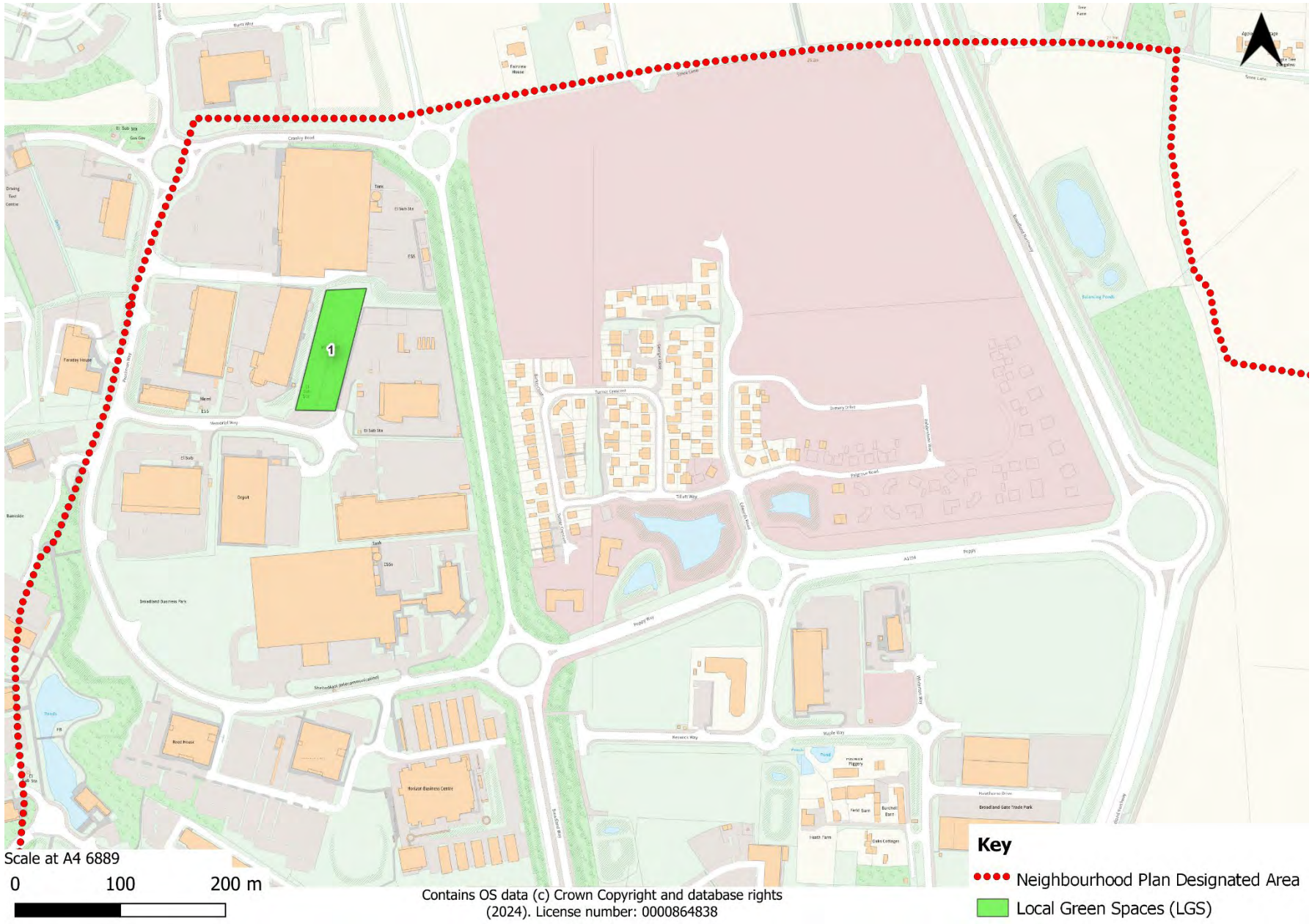
[9] Norfolk Churches

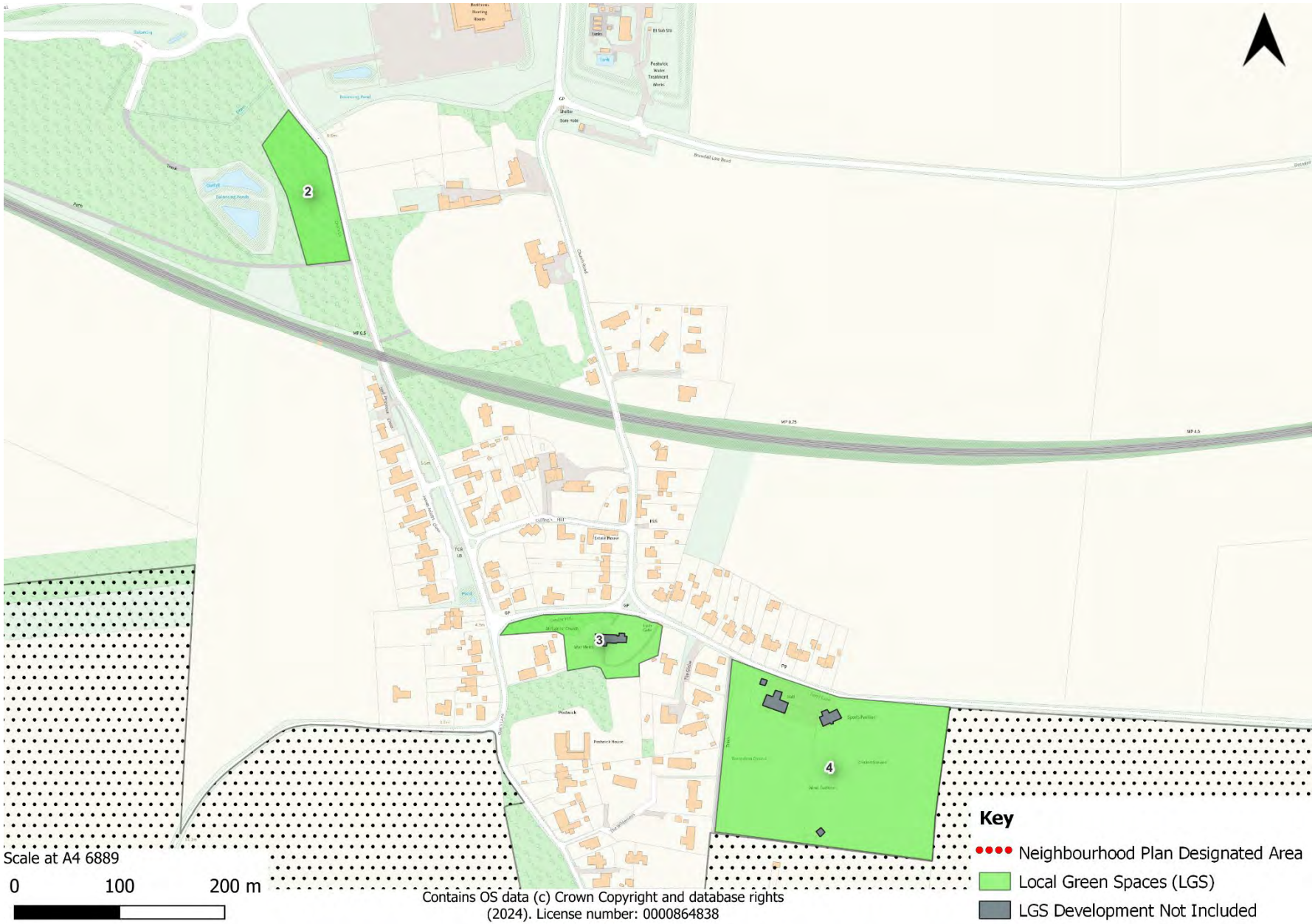


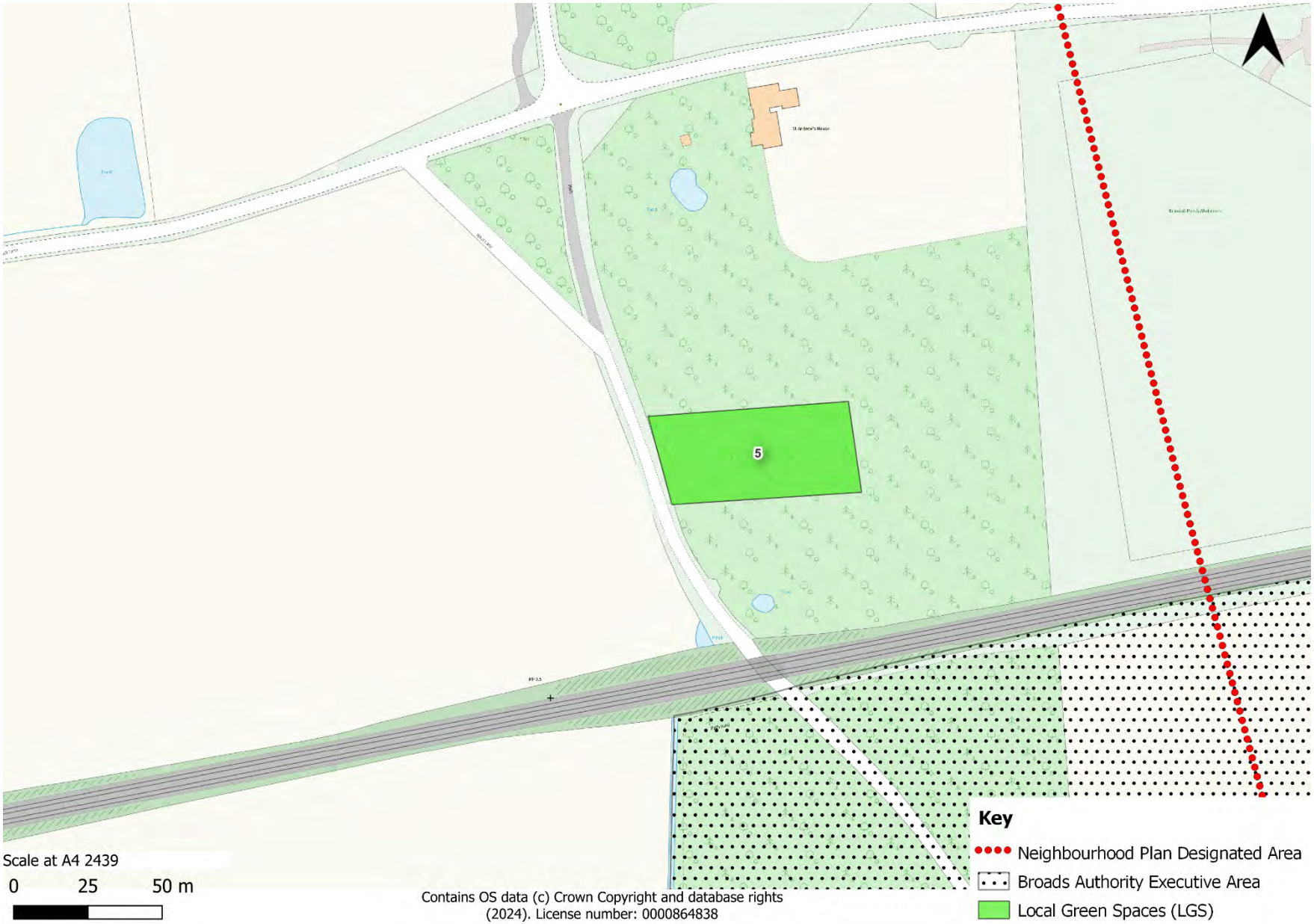
Recommended Designations

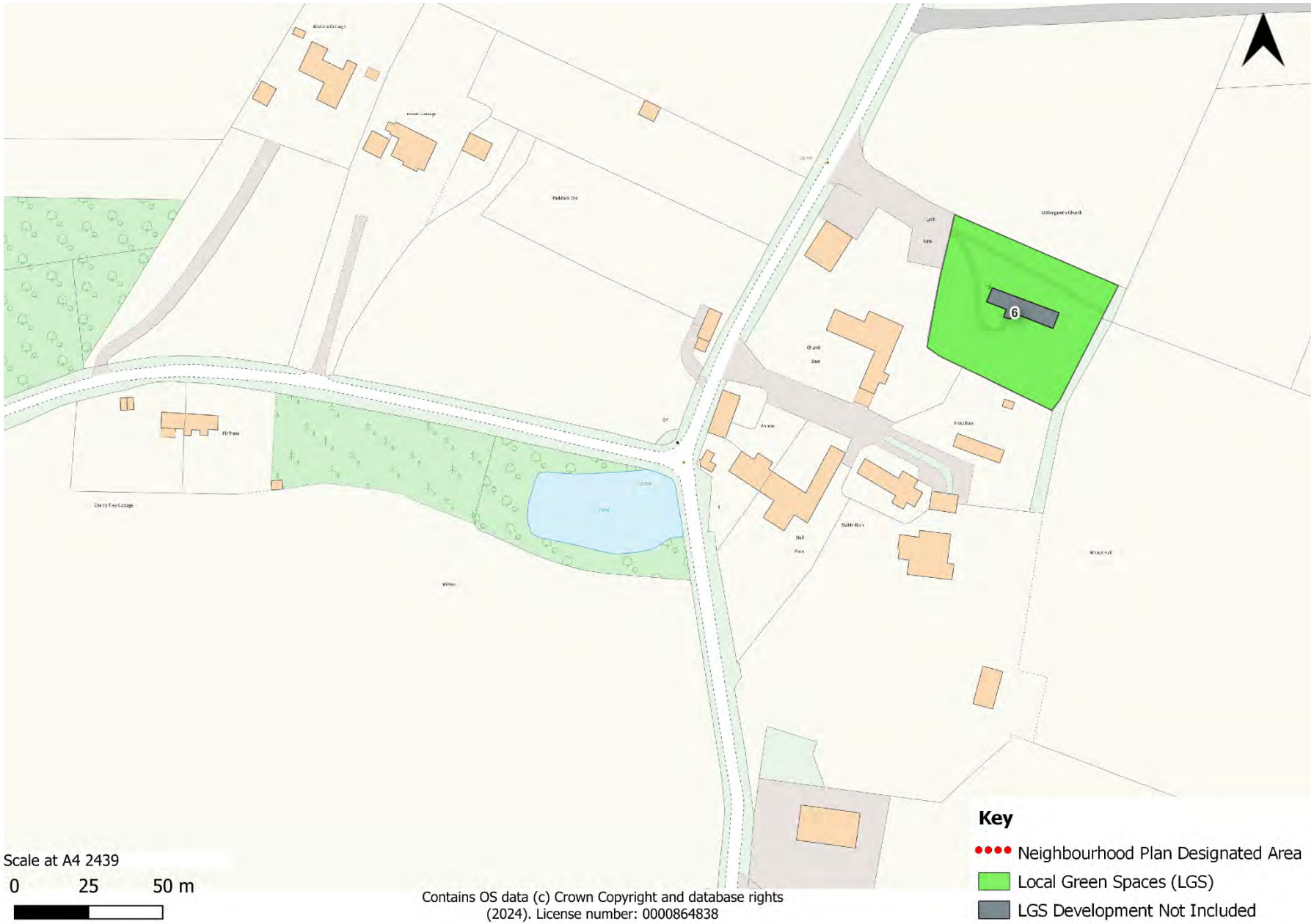
From the assessment work, 6 Local Green Spaces have been determined to meet the national criteria for designation. These are highlighted below.


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500 m
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(2024). License number: 0000864838
Key
Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area
Broads Authority Executive Area
Local Green Spaces (LGS)
LGS Development Not Included


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Key
Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area
Local Green Spaces (LGS)


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Key
Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area
Local Green Spaces (LGS)
LGS Development Not Included


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(2024). License number: 0000864838
Key
Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area
Broads Authority Executive Area
Local Green Spaces (LGS)



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