


Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan: Checklist and criteria For Local Green Space Designation

| 1 | General Information | Tick if relevant evidence provided |
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| 1.1 | Name and address of site <i>Some sites have several names and all known names should be given</i> | |
| | <i>Verney Fields (part of)</i> | |
| 1.2 | Site location plan <i>The plan can be at any scale, but must show the location and boundaries of the site. Please indicate the scale.</i> | |
| | <i>Map attached showing area for Local Green space designation outlined in red.</i> | ✓ |
| 1.3 | Organisation or individual proposing site for designation <i>This will normally be a Town or Parish Council or a recognised community group</i> | |
| | <i>Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan Group</i> | |
| 1.4 | Ownership of site if known <i>Information on land ownership can be obtained from the Land Registry. Some land parcels are not registered however local people may know the owner.</i> | |
| | <i>Not registered – owner Mr Keck has managing agents Bruton Knowles</i> | |
| 1.5 | Is the owner of the site aware of the potential designation? Do they support the designation? (Sites may be designated as Local Green Spaces, even if there are objections from the site owners) | |
| | <i>The Council are nominating the site as a Community Asset and the landowner has been made aware of the Council's interest in the site.</i> | |
| 1.6 | Photographs of site | ✓ |
| 1.7 | Community served by the potential Local Green Space <i>i.e. does the site serve the whole village/town or a particular geographic area or group of people?</i> | |
| | <i>Yes – accessed by public footpaths from Stonehouse town centre and neighbouring villages (see map attached)</i> | ✓ |
| 2 | Planning History | |
| 2.1 | Is there currently a planning application for this site? If permitted/allocated, could part of the overall site still be used as a Green Open Space? | |
| | <i>No. Site is listed in Stroud District Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Update report as of 1 April 2011.</i> | |
| 2.2 | Is the site allocated for development in the Local or Neighbourhood Plan? If allocated, could part of the overall site still be used as a Green Open Space? | |
| | <i>Not allocated - if development was to proceed it would be important to retain a large proportion of the land for public amenity as parkland and retain access to Doverow Wood.</i> | |
| 3 | Size, scale and “local nature” of proposed Local Green Space | |
| 3.1 | Area of proposed site <i>It is unlikely that a site of over 20ha (50 acres) would be considered suitable for designation.</i> | |

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| | <i>Approximately 11 acres.</i> | |
| 3.2 | Is the site an “extensive tract of land”? <i>(Extensive tracts of land cannot be designated as Local Green Space) e.g. how large is it in comparison to other fields; groups of fields; areas of land in the vicinity etc.? Does the site “feel” extensive or more local in scale?</i> | |
| | <i>Local in scale, the landholding is larger than the portion for designation. A slice of the land is required.</i> | |
| 3.3 | Is the proposed site “local in character”? <i>e.g. does the site feel as though it is part of the local area? And why? How does it connect physically, visually and socially to the local area? What is your evidence?</i> | |
| | <i>The site adjoins Doverow Wood which is a publicly owned wood. The land is used for leisure, picnics, walking and nomination as a Community Asset is supported by residents.</i> | |
| 4 | Need for Local Green Space | |
| 4.1 | Is there a need for a local green space in this location? <i>e.g. is there a shortage of accessible greenspace in the area? Is there a village needs survey or parish plan that provides evidence of that need. Further information – Natural England (Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard) Cotswold District Council - Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation Study</i> | |
| | <i>The town has lost amenity space i.e. Ship Inn site, Elm Road site. There is a lack of natural parkland accessible from the town centre. The town has an industrial history and future which needs to be boosted by a close link to the rural space around it. Fits the criteria that no person should live more than 300m from their nearest area of natural greenspace of at least 2ha in size and provision of at least 1ha of Local Nature Reserve per 1,000 population. The everyday contact with nature is important for well-being and quality of life; everyone should be able to enjoy this contact, in safety, without having to make any special effort or journey to do so; natural greenspace in towns and cities can play an important part in helping safeguard our national treasure of wildlife and geological features; accessible natural greenspaces give everyone an excellent chance to learn about nature and to help protect it in practical ways; adequate provision of vegetated areas helps to ensure that urban areas are biodiverse</i> | |
| 5 | Evidence to show that “the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves” <i>Please indicate what evidence you have provided against each point.</i> | |
| 5.1 | How far is the site from the community it serves? Is the site within 2km of the local community? <i>Possible evidence – a map to show that distance</i> | |
| | <i>Under 1km. See map, Footpaths to Verney Fields attached.</i> | ✓ |
| 5.2 | Are there any barriers to the local community accessing the site from their homes? <i>e.g. railway line; main road Possible evidence – a map to show any potential barriers and how those can be overcome.</i> | |
| | <i>No barriers. See map, Footpaths to Verney Fields attached</i> | ✓ |
| 6 | Evidence to show that the green area is “demonstrably special to a local community” | |

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| | Please indicate what evidence you have provided against each point. | |
| 6.1 | Evidence of support from Parish or Town Council <i>e.g. letter of support; Council minutes</i> | |
| | Letter of support | ✓ |
| 6.2 | Evidence of support from other local community groups or individuals. <i>e.g. letters of support; petitions; surveys etc.</i> | |
| | Stonehouse Town Council Survey on Recreation and Access to Doverow Wood, January 2016 results (attached). Letters of support from individuals. | ✓ |
| 6.3 | Evidence of support from community leaders <i>e.g. letters of support from Ward Members; County Councillors; MP etc. Further information on contact details - Cotswold District Council, Gloucestershire County Council, House of Commons</i> | |
| | Support from Stonehouse Town Council's Regeneration and Environment Committee; extract from minutes of 22nd February 2016. | ✓ |
| 6.4 | Evidence of support from other groups <i>e.g. letters of support from organisations such as Campaign to Protect Rural England; Cotswolds Conservation Board; Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust; Gloucestershire Rural Community Council; Cotswold Water Park Trust; local amenity societies; local schools etc.</i> | |
| | A search through google reveals that the site is visited and supported by a number of ramblers groups, and local social groups holding torchlit walks to take in the views | |
| 7 | Evidence to show that the green area “holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty,” (if applicable) Please indicate what evidence you have provided against each point. | |
| | Survey and letters of support. Evidence that area is enjoyed by walkers: Stroud District Council Circular Walk 9. (http://www.strollinginstrouddistrict.org/downloads/CCC9.pdf), (http://www.hill-bagging.co.uk/mountaindetails.php?rf=17394) http://www.ramblers.org.uk/go-walking/find-a-walk-or-route/walk-detail.aspx?walkID=3780542 | |
| 7.1 | Is this criteria relevant to this site ? | |
| | YES | |
| 7.2 | Describe why the community feels that the site has a particular local significance for its beauty. | |
| | Described as a lung to the town providing a place to enjoy views and take a stroll in the countryside | |
| 7.3 | Site visibility <i>e.g. is it easy to see the site from a public place? Are there long-distance views of the site? Are there views of the site from any key locations?</i> | |
| | The site can be viewed from Bramble Lane. | |
| 7.4 | Is the site covered by any landscape or similar designations? <i>e.g. Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; Conservation Area; Special Landscape Area</i> <i>Further information – Stroud District Council; Natural England; Cotswolds Conservation Board</i> | |
| | The site is within the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. | |

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| 7.5 | <p>Is the site (or the type of site) specifically mentioned in any relevant landscape character assessments or similar documents? <i>e.g. Cotswolds AONB landscape character assessment. Further information – Stroud District Council; Natural England; Cotswolds Conservation Board</i></p> | |
| | <p>Extract from Village Design Statement 2005 http://www.stonehousetowncouncil.com/docs/Neighbourhood_Plan/Stonehouse_Design_Statement_10Nov05.pdf - 45. As an area for public enjoyment, Doverow Hill is ideally situated overlooking Stonehouse, Kings Stanley, Leonard Stanley and the Severn Vale. The circular walk around its perimeter provides superb views. The Hill, its woods and Verney Fields provide habitat for a wide range of wildlife and there is much to interest the naturalist. The Town Council and Doverow Hill Trust do their best to conserve the area. 46. Access to the Hill can be gained by several routes from the Town, the most direct being up Queens Road, Verney Road then through Verney Fields. The views over the Town from Verney Fields are spectacular. The importance of Doverow Hill as part of an open space between Stonehouse and Ebley/Stroud cannot be underestimated and should be preserved. This site is well protected against development by its status as a trust and by its location within the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) [see Policy N6 of SDLP]. Sites of Nature Conservation Interest – Stroud Local Plan 2007 app 6 238 Verney Meadows SO810054 Stonehouse Neutral Grassland KWS (SO80/077) 239 Stonehouse Brickpits SO810054 Stonehouse Geological RIGS (RIGS 20) 240 Doverow Hill SO815054 Stonehouse Geological RIGS The site will be mentioned in the Stonehouse Town Character Assessment currently being prepared by Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan Group.</p> | |
| 7.6 | <p>Does the site contribute to the setting of a historic building or other special feature?</p> | |
| | <p>Doverow Hill is a former quarry and there are many surrounding hills and a small cliff that looks out onto the whole of Stonehouse and is a monument to the history of the brickworks. The land formed part of the land-holding of the brickworks. Brickmaking began there in 1856 with evidence of possible prior brickmaking as early as 1839 or 1840 and of as many as thirteen brickmaking sites altogether. The largest and last to close of the brickmakers, Stonehouse Brick and Tile Company Ltd., was located where the Rosedale housing estate now stands. It was founded in 1891, and by 1895 employed a large number of people in making pottery, terra-cotta, and bricks. The company closed in 1968 and the 202 foot high chimney was demolished.</p> | |
| 7.7 | <p>Is the site highlighted in literature or art? <i>e.g. is the site mentioned in a well-known poem or shown in a famous painting?</i></p> | |
| | <p>View across the Severn from Doverow Hill, Gloucestershire <u>by Rosemary Allan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oil on canvas, 44.6 x 60 cm • Collection: Stonehouse Town Council <p>Stonehouse from Doverow Hill, Gloucestershire <u>by unknown artist</u></p> | |

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| |  <p>Museum in the Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oil on canvas, 34.2 x 60 cm • Collection: The Stroud District (Cowle) Museum Trust Collection <p>Literature: Slow Poison Casimir Greenfield</p> <p>Godson's Legacy Paul Gait</p> | |
| 8 | <p>Evidence to show that the green area “holds a particular local significance for example because of its historic significance” (if applicable) <i>Please indicate what evidence you have provided against each point.</i></p> | |
| 8.1 | <p>Is this criteria relevant to this site ?</p> | |
| | <p>YES see 7.6</p> | |
| 8.2 | <p>Are there any historic buildings or remains on the site? <i>e.g. listed buildings; scheduled ancient monuments ; registered parks and gardens; war memorials; other historic remains or structures.</i> <i>Further information – Stroud District Council; Historic England; Gloucestershire Historic Environment Record; Gloucestershire Archives; local history society;</i></p> | |
| | <p>No</p> | |
| 8.3 | <p>Are there any important historic landscape features on the site? <i>e.g. old hedgerows; ancient trees; historic ponds or historic garden features</i> <i>Further information – Cotswold District Council; English Heritage; Gloucestershire Historic Environment Record; local history society</i></p> | |
| | <p>Quarry remains, ancient hedgerow</p> | |
| 8.4 | <p>Did the site play an important role in the historic development of the village or town? <i>e.g. the old site of the town railway station; the old garden for the manor house etc.</i></p> | |
| | <p>When the Stonehouse Brick & Tile Co. Ltd. commenced operation in 1890 it inevitably started to despoil the local landscape. Over the following 60 years a great slice of the hillside was removed and people standing on the hills near Cinderford could look across the vale and see a golden gash in the Cotswold chain. It was unsightly, and in those days there were no industrial planning regulations to ensure that proper restoration of the landscape took place. When production ceased and the Parish Council discussed the area from a planning point of view it was surprised and pleased to find that the Nature Conservancy considered the clay face to be of high geological interest, and learned that students from schools and universities, as well as experts from the British Museum often came to Stonehouse to study it.</p> <p>It asked why, and this was the answer: The quarry face exposes lower Jurassic rocks deposited on the sea bed approximately 180 million years ago. The Lower Lias, the clays used for brick making, shows an important sequence of clays with minor sandstones and limestones. Comparison of the details of this sequence with other exposures, notably at Robinswood Hill,</p> | |

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| | <p>enables geologists to identify an unconformity, a gap in the sequence of the rocks, which provides important evidence of earth movements at this time</p> <p>The fossils in the rocks are important in dating the age of this earth movement. The Marlstone at the top of the face is of Middle Lias Age and is richly fossiliferous. It is especially important for very minute fossils which can only be seen under a microscope. These are of considerable educational value.</p> <p>Extract from Cotswolds AONB report on Evolution of the Landscape “Glacial deposits, river terrace materials, and alluvium occur on areas of lower ground creating soft, gently undulating landscapes, whilst on the slopes there are extensive deposits of head material of periglacial origin arising from the accumulation of solifluction debris. Landslips also mask the lower slopes of many sections of the escarpment and some outliers, such as on the slopes of Doverow Hill near Stonehouse</p> | |
| 8.5 | <p>Did any important historic events take place on the site?</p> <p>The site is used for beacons to mark important events.</p> | |
| 8.6 | <p>Do any historic rituals take place on the site? e.g. well-dressing; maypole dancing etc.</p> <p>No</p> | |
| 9 | <p>Evidence to show that the green area “holds a particular local significance, for example because of its recreational value (including as a playing field)”, (if applicable) Please indicate what evidence you have provided against each point.</p> | |
| 9.1 | <p>Is this criteria relevant to this site ?</p> <p>YES</p> | |
| 9.2 | <p>Is the site used for playing sport? If so what sport? How long has it been used for sports provision? Is this sports provision free or is a club membership required? Further information – Sport England</p> <p>No</p> | |
| 9.3 | <p>Are the public able to physically access the site? e.g. are there any public rights of way across the site? Or adjacent to the site? Has access been allowed on a discretionary basis? Is there public access to the whole site or only part? Is there good disabled access to the site? (A site can still be designated even if there is no public access.) Further information – Gloucestershire County Council</p> <p>Public footpath from Bramble Lane in 2 directions.</p> | |
| 9.4 | <p>Is the site used by the local community for informal recreation? And since when? e.g. dog walking; sledging; ball games etc</p> <p>Yes – dog walking, sledging, picnics, photography, nature watch</p> | |
| 10 | <p>Evidence to show that the green area “holds a particular local significance, for example because of its tranquillity” (if applicable) Please indicate what evidence you have provided against each point.</p> | |
| 10.1 | <p>Is this criteria relevant to this site ?</p> <p>YES</p> | |
| 10.2 | <p>Do you consider the site to be tranquil? e.g. are there any roads or busy areas close by?</p> <p>Yes – no busy roads – bird song very evident</p> | |
| 10.3 | <p>Is the site within a recognised tranquil area? e.g. within the Campaign to Protect Rural England’s tranquillity maps</p> <p>With access to the Cotswold Way.</p> | |

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| | The area is shown as relatively tranquil compared to Stonehouse town centre on the Campaign to Protect Rural England's Tranquillity map (http://maps.cpre.org.uk/tranquillity_map.html?lon=-2.28000&lat=51.74814&zoom=14) | |
| 11 | Evidence to show that the green area “holds a particular local significance, for example because of the richness of its wildlife”; (if applicable) <i>Please indicate what evidence you have provided against each point.</i> | |
| 11.1 | Is this criteria relevant to this site ? | |
| | YES | |
| 11.2 | Is the site formally designated for its wildlife value? <i>e.g. as a site of special scientific interest; a key wildlife site etc</i> <i>Further information - Natural England; Gloucestershire Centre for Environmental Records</i> | |
| | The site forms part of the Doverow Hill Key Wildlife Site. Key Wildlife Sites are identified by the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust and are “areas with a rich diversity of habitats that provide refuges and corridors for wildlife across Gloucestershire.” http://www.gloucestershirowildlifetrust.co.uk/what-we-do/local-nature-conservation/conservation-areas/key-wildlife-sites). See attached Stroud District Council map “Stonehouse NP Environment 2 Oct 2015”. | ✓ |
| 11.3 | Are any important habitats or species found on the site? <i>e.g. habitats and species listed in the UK priority habitats and species lists or in the Cotswold Water Park or Gloucestershire Biodiversity Action Plans or protected species or on the red/amber lists of birds of conservation concern.</i> <i>Further information - Natural England; Gloucestershire Centre for Environmental Records; National Biodiversity Network; Cotswold Water Park Trust; RSPB</i> | |
| | The area includes a priority habitat, deciduous woodland. See location 59 on attached Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust map, “Natural habitat areas and open space - numbered – Stonehouse” and accompanying spreadsheet. | ✓ |
| 11.4 | What other wildlife of interest has been found on the site? <i>Further information - Natural England; Gloucestershire Centre for Environmental Records; National Biodiversity Network; Cotswold Water Park Trust</i> | |
| | The woodland consists mainly of Beech, Ash, Sycamore and Whitebeam with an under storey including Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Field Maple and Hazel. The bird life here is typical of such a woodland. Small perching birds include Blue Tit, Coal Tit, Blackcap and Chiffchaff. Great Spotted Woodpecker and Nuthatch are also present. Birds of prey like Kestrels and Sparrowhawk hunt around the wood hover above the fields that surround the wood. Meadow Brown, Speckled Wood and Large White butterflies. | |
| 11.5 | Is the site part of a long term study of wildlife by members of the local community? <i>e.g. long-term monitoring of breeding birds.</i> | |
| 12 | Evidence to show that the green area “holds a particular local significance, for any other reason”; (if applicable) <i>Please indicate what evidence you have provided against each point.</i> | |
| 12.1 | Is this criteria relevant to this site ? | |
| | YES | |

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| 12.2 | Are there any other reasons why the site has a particular local significance for the local community | |
| | The site is the only rural land accessible from the town centre and directly from Stonehouse railway station adjacent to the Cotswold Way | |