

Alcester Neighbourhood Development Plan Local Green Space Site Assessment - August 2018

Site Address	Site Area	Site Ref
Crooks Lane Children's Play Area, Crooks Lane, Alcester	Approx. 0.22ha	LGS 8

Plan




Site Description and Current Land Use

This well-used and maintained open green recreation space is situated on Crooks Lane, close to residential dwellings of the Conway Estate and Hopkins Precinct shopping areas. Within the site is a small selection of recreational equipment including large climbing frames, basketball and football court, swings, slide and an open sided metal shelter with bench. The site is populated with some semi-mature trees. Remnant ridge and furrow is also noticeable on the site.

Along the west boundary is a line of garages with the shopping precinct beyond. Residential dwellings line Crooks Lane to the east and Kinwarton Road to the south. An open green space sparsely populated with mature trees and a line of hawthorn hedges sits at the site's northwest corner. It is accessible from the site and leads to residential dwellings beyond. Across the road to the south is the Oversley Retirement Home in the Grade II listed, Oversley House.

Pavements line the east and south road frontage and a pedestrian crossing sits at the near the southwest corner of the site. A combination of metal, picket, featherboard and post and rail fencing line the north, east and south perimeters. St Benedict's Catholic High School and Sixth Form are in close proximity to the southwest of the site. The Alcester Inn and Alcester (Town FC) Members Club is situated to the north of the site. Bus stops are located nearby along Crooks Lane and Kinwarton Road.

Relevant Planning History
<p>Application no: 07/01828/FUL (Land at corner of Crooks Lane and Kinwarton Road)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed: Erection of Youth shelter with basketball & football court, removal of tree • Decision: Permission with conditions • Decision Date: 14/11/2007
Site Ownership
Owned and managed by Stratford District Council. Title Ref: WK393564
Site Constraints
<p>The site sits within the Built-up Area Boundary. It is designated as a 'Park, Garden and Amenity Space' in B2 Alcester Landscape Sensitivity Study (2011) for Stratford District Council, White Consultants.</p> <p>It helps for the setting of the Grade II listed, Oversley House across the road to the south.</p>
Public Access
The site is open and accessible to the public along the road frontage.
Site Photo


Ecological Significance

With the exception of the trees and shrubs that frame and sporadically populate the site, the majority of the site has low ecological value.

The mixed species trees and shrubs that are there are important for a number of birds and mammals as they provide food, shelter and nesting sites. They increase the diversity of insect species (including butterflies and bees which are currently in decline), which are a food source for bird and mammal species and can also play an important role in the pollination of plants and crops in the surrounding area. The diversity and population numbers of insects directly impacts the food chain for other fauna in the area and has a wider impact on the cultivation of crops.

Trees provide nesting sites for birds as well as habitats for small mammal species e.g. squirrels. These are all vital for the wider food web and species diversity within the town's ecosystem.

In the town, there have been sightings of larger fauna species such as bats, birds of prey (e.g. buzzards and owls), rabbits and hedgehogs. The site plays an important contributory role in the wider ecological significance of the town.

Special Qualities and Local Significance

The site is a recreational facility and open green space that is easily accessible to local residents and the nearby school being in the heart of Alcester.

The special qualities of the site include its recreational and social value for children and adults as a meeting place by many teenagers from the Conway Estate area and amenity space for walkers and dog walkers.

The site is demonstrably special and locally significant as it is actively used and valued by the local community as a formal area of open space.

Summary and Suitability for Designation as Local Green Space

This site is well related to and appreciated and valued by the local community and makes a positive contribution to the local distinctiveness of the village.

The LGS as outlined on the above plan is considered to be suitable for Local Green Space designation in accordance with paragraphs 99-101 of the National Planning Policy Framework in that it is:

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