



Ottershaw Neighbourhood Plan

Evidence Base Document

Green Spaces and Local Green Space (LGS) Assessment

October 1, 2025

Ottershaw Neighbourhood Area

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Ottershaw Neighbourhood Forum

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Approving Authority	ONF Steering Committee
Version	Final

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Study

This Green Spaces and Local Green Space (LGS) Assessment has been prepared to support the Ottershaw Neighbourhood Plan and any associated relevant policies which may affect the designation of Open Space within its designated area. Its purpose is to:

- Identify and assess green spaces within the Ottershaw Neighbourhood Area;
- Evaluate candidate sites against the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) criteria for Local Green Space designation;
- Provide a clear and proportionate evidence base to support neighbourhood plan policies for the protection of valued green spaces.

This study focuses **only on green spaces and Local Green Space designation** and does not seek to replicate borough-wide open space or biodiversity strategies.

1.2 Policy Context

NPPF para 101 states that:

“The designation of Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them.”

This study and the resultant Neighbourhood Plan therefore has the authority to identify and recommend open spaces within the designated neighbourhood area as Local Green Spaces providing the appropriate criteria are met.

Local Green Space designation criteria are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Para 102 which states:

“The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:

- *In reasonably close proximity to the community they serve;*
- *Demonstrably special to the local community and hold particular local significance;*
and
- *Are local in character and not an extensive tract of land.”*

Neighbourhood plans may designate Local Green Spaces where these criteria are met and where robust evidence is provided. This study uses these stringent criteria throughout as a test for compliance.

1.3 Study Area

The study area covers the whole of the Ottershaw Neighbourhood Area, as formally designated by the local planning authority (see Fig 1 below).



Fig 1: The Ottershaw Neighbourhood Area

2. Methodology

The following methodology has been applied throughout.

2.1 Identification of Green Spaces

Potential green spaces were identified and assessed through employment of the following techniques and sources:

- Desk-based review of maps and aerial photography;
- Local knowledge of the neighbourhood forum;
- Feedback from community engagement and consultation;
- Site visits.

All identified Green Spaces were then considered as potential Local Green Space candidates.

2.2 Assessment approach

Each green space was assessed against the NPPF Local Green Space criteria, specifically:

1. **Proximity to the community** – whether the space is reasonably close to the community it serves;
2. **Local significance** – whether the space is demonstrably special due to:
 - beauty;
 - historic significance;
 - recreational value;
 - tranquillity; and/or
 - wildlife or biodiversity value;
3. **Scale and character** – whether the space is local in scale and not an extensive tract of land.

Assessments are based on proportionate evidence, including site descriptions, photographs, maps, and consultation feedback. Some elements of the assessment can be considered largely subjective.

3. Overview of Green Spaces in Ottershaw

This section provides a summary of the range of green spaces within the Ottershaw Neighbourhood Area, which in the widest context may include:

- Public parks and recreation grounds;
- Informal open spaces and village greens;
- Playing fields and sports areas;
- Natural and semi-natural green spaces;
- Small amenity greens within the settlement.

Not all green spaces are suitable for Local Green Space designation; however, all do contribute to the character and quality of an area.

Candidate ONA Areas for LGS Consideration (subject to local justification)

1. **Ottershaw Memorial Fields**
 - A formal park and recreation ground used for cricket, football, bowls, and informal recreation. It's a valued community green space with multiple uses.
2. **Homewood Park (SANG)**
 - A large park managed as Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace, with open landscape and embedded manor house, reminiscent of historic estate land nearby.
3. **Ottershaw Chase (SANG)**
 - Broadleaf woodland with established trails and wildlife, accessible on foot from Ottershaw.
 - *Why consider:* Local recreation and woodland amenity; check if it is “extensive tract of land” (NPPF criterion).
4. **Timber Hill & Chaworth Copse (SANG)**
 - Secondary woodland with paths and local access, part of accessible green network.
 - *Why consider:* Natural woodland used for informal recreation; similar LGS assessment needed to confirm suitability.
5. **Ether Hill & Queenwood (SANGs adjacent to Memorial Fields)**
 - Woodland and trails connecting to Ottershaw Memorial Fields, valued for walking and views.
 - *Why consider:* Adds landscape and recreational value around Ottershaw centre; suitable as a connected community green space.
6. **Hare Hill Open Space (SANG)**
 - Open grassland/woodland acting as a green corridor and tranquil space between Ottershaw and Rowtown.
 - *Why consider:* Demonstrable local value for wildlife and community access; check scale and linkage.
7. **Broxborough Meadows(SANG)**
 - A very recent community green space with meadow, wetland, orchard, and trails across a substantial area.
 - *Why consider:* Provides walking routes and community amenity; may be large, so assessment must consider the “not extensive tract” test.
8. **Murray House Open Space.**
 - A small open space and play area resultant from housing developments in the local area.
- 9.-**Queenwood Golf Club.**
 - Private members golf club which is a designated Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) and a Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA).

4. Local Green Space Assessment Criteria

4.1 Proximity

The assessment considers whether each space is located within or immediately adjacent to the main settlement Area (eg built-up area) of Ottershaw and is reasonably accessible to the community.

4.2 Demonstrable Local Significance

A space may be considered locally significant if it demonstrates one or more of the following:

- Visual or landscape quality valued by the community;
- Historic or cultural importance;
- Regular use for formal or informal recreation;
- Contribution to tranquillity within the settlement;
- Notable biodiversity or wildlife interest (proportionate to scale).

4.3 Local Character and Scale

This assessment considers whether the space:

- Is clearly defined and contained;
- Serves a local rather than strategic function; and
- Does not form part of a large, open countryside tract.

5. Site-by-Site Local Green Space Assessment

(Each candidate site should be assessed using the same structure for consistency. The table below can be repeated for each site.)

Site LGS-1: Memorial Fields

- **Location:** Foxhills Road, Ottershaw
- **Approximate size:** 6.13ha
- **Current use:** Informal recreation, organised outdoor sports, informal outdoor sports. Childrens play, public visual amenity[e.g. informal recreation, sports, visual amenity]
- **Ownership (if known):** Runnymede Borough Council

Assessment against NPPF criteria:

- **Proximity:** Located on the western edge of the main Ottershaw settlement area (MSA), directly adjacent to residential housing. Within walking distance of all properties in the MSA.
- **Local significance:** Provides a unique facility to the Ottershaw area for year round formal and informal sports (football, cricket, tennis, bowls, basketball, baseball/rounders. Fringed with mature trees and a SANG backdrop providing a high degree of visual amenity for residents to enjoy. Some additional biodiversity benefits in areas which are not cultivated for formal sports.
- **Local character and scale:** The area represents a high value local space of small to medium proportions and of unique landscape character to the area.

Conclusion:

- Assessed as **Suitable** for Local Green Space designation.
- **Summary justification.** A high value, unique, attractive, locally accessible asset regular used by the whole spectrum of age groups and abilities within the Ottershaw area.

Site LGS-2: Homewood Park

- **Location:** Between Stonehill and Guildford roads to the west and east, Hillswood Business Park to the south and the St Peter's Hospital new housing development to the north.
- **Approximate size:** 23ha
- **Current use:** Dog exercising, informal recreation, visual amenity, biodiversity.
- **Ownership (if known):** Runnymede Borough Council

Assessment against NPPF criteria:

- **Proximity:** Although adjacent to the new St Peter's Hospital residential developments it is in excess of 0.8km from the Ottershaw Main Settlement Area on the edge of the Ottershaw Neighbourhood Area (ONA). Possesses a large car park servicing most visitors to the area.
- **Local significance:** The largest Open Space and SANG in the ONA an area of maturing parkland with lakes and an embedded Grade II listed mansion and historically on the site of the old asylum. A number of significant Veteran and mature trees. Provides an attractive space and separation between built environments. Used for informal recreation only. Carries a high value for visual amenity. Biodiversity is increasing as the area matures.
- **Local character and scale:** Unique established undulating open parkland character with small area of woodland and lakes. A large and diverse area.

Conclusion:

- **Not suitable** for Local Green Space designation
- **Summary justification.** The area is disconnected from settlement and of large proportions. It does not provide any unique facilities for the local populous. Already protected "for perpetuity" by its SANG designation.

Site LGS-3: Ottershaw Chase.

- **Location:** Cross Lane, off Guildford Rd adjacent to Christchurch.
- **Approximate size:** 12.66ha.
- **Current use:** Suitable for on path walking and exercising of dogs only.
- **Ownership (if known):** Runnymede Borough Council

Assessment against NPPF criteria:

- **Proximity:** On the outer fringe of the Ottershaw main settlement area and therefore reachable by most residents. Access is aided by the provision of a nearby car park which is shared with Timber Hill and Chaworth Copse SANGS.
- **Local significance:** Wooded undulating SANG with limited other biodiversity. Provides a peaceful zone between Ottershaw and Ottershaw Park/Wey Farm.

- **Local character and scale:** Well established and unspoilt woodland area

Conclusion:

- **Not suitable** for Local Green Space designation
- Summary justification. A medium sized area of limited utility already protected “for perpetuity” by its SANG designation.

Site LGS-4: Timber Hill & Chaworth Copse.

- **Location:** Between Brox and Guildford Roads.
- **Approximate size:** 9.2ha
- **Current use:** Informal recreation only.
- **Ownership (if known):** [Runnymede Borough Council

Assessment against NPPF criteria:

- **Proximity:** On the edges of the Ottershaw main settlement area. Serviced by an adjacent car park.
- **Local significance:** A peaceful area which provides an important buffer from the busy Guildford Road. Used for walking and exercising of dogs. The footpaths provide important connections with the village.
- **Local character and scale:** An attractive undulating wooded area of medium proportions.

Conclusion:

- **Not suitable** for Local Green Space designation
- Summary justification. A medium sized area of limited utility already protected “for perpetuity” by its SANG designation.

Site LGS-5: Ether Hill & Queenwood.

- **Location:** Between Chobham Road and Memorial Fields.
- **Approximate size:** 10.8ha
- **Current use:** Informal recreation only. Parts of the area have a high value of visual amenity.
- **Ownership (if known):** Runnymede Borough Council

Assessment against NPPF criteria:

- **Proximity:** Adjacent to the Ottershaw main settlement area, providing important links between Memorial Fields and Chobham Road.
- **Local significance:** An attractive undulating wooded area providing only limited utility for walkers and runners with a relatively low biodiversity value due to the invasive, non-indigenous species in the understorey.
- **Local character and scale:** An attractive undulating wooded area of medium proportions.

Conclusion:

- **Not suitable** for Local Green Space designation
- **Summary justification.** A medium sized area of limited utility already protected “for perpetuity” by its SANG designation.

Site LGS-6: Hare Hill Open Space

- **Location:** Irregular shaped SANG in the important buffer zone between Ottershaw and Rowtown with entrances from Spratts Lane, Hare Hill, Howards Lane, Bousley Lane and via footpaths connecting to Rowtown.
- **Approximate size:** 13.9ha.
- **Current use:** A well curated, undulating area of woodland, meadow, ditches and a pond providing a high level of visual amenity, an important space for informal recreation including dog walking and important connections between Ottershaw and Rowtown.
- **Ownership (if known):** Runnymede Borough Council

Assessment against NPPF criteria:

- **Proximity:** Directly adjacent to the Ottershaw main settlement area and also that of Rowtown on its other sides.
- **Local significance:** A highly significant area providing critical separation between communities, visual amenity, informal recreation space and a high level of biodiversity. A quiet and peaceful space. The area includes a number of notable Oaks of significant age. The SANG is being proposed for dual designation as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR)
- **Local character and scale:** A sprawling area of significant importance and varied character and larger proportions.

Conclusion:

- **Not suitable** for Local Green Space designation
- **Summary justification.** A larger sized area with a significant amenity value to the surrounding communities already protected “for perpetuity” by its SANG designation and further protected should LNR status be granted.

Site LGS-7: Broxborough Meadows

- **Location:** To the rear of the New Broxborough Meadows housing development in Ottershaw, linking to the eastern end of Brox Lane in Rowtown.
- **Approximate size:** 10.42ha.
- **Current use:** A recently developed area for public access with a good level of visual amenity and providing a large, newly landscaped space for informal recreation, dog walking, play for children and picnicking.
- **Ownership (if known):** Private (Land Trust) and managed by Surrey Wildlife Trust.

Assessment against NPPF criteria:

- **Proximity:** Directly adjacent to associated new housing development and the Ottershaw main settlement area. Also close to Rowtown.

- **Local significance:** Of increasing significance as people become aware of it. Used for informal recreation activities and dog walking. A quiet and peaceful space. Contains an attractive area of ancient forest. Biodiversity is growing but issues with medium and large mammals remaining or gaining access. Its importance will increase with time.
- **Local character and scale:** A medium to large area of varied character already protected “for perpetuity” by its SANG designation.

Conclusion:

- **Not suitable** for Local Green Space designation
- **Summary justification.** A medium sized area of limited utility already protected “for perpetuity” by its SANG designation.

Site LGS-8: Murray House Open Space

- **Location:** A small open space with embedded children’s recreation area located between Palmer Crescent, Slade Court/Holt Close and Crawshaw Road.
- **Approximate size:** 0.35ha.
- **Current use:** Dedicated to informal recreation of several types including dog walking and children’s play. Used for stopping and watching activities and enjoying the visual amenity of the space regularly by the various care facility residents which surround the space.
- **Ownership (if known):** Runnymede Borough Council

Assessment against NPPF criteria:

- **Proximity:** Embedded within Ottershaw main settlement area housing developments between Murray, Slade and Brox Roads. The only available open space in the local area.
- **Local significance:** A small, tranquil area of high significance to the local community for informal recreation and providing a link between Murray and Slade Roads. Biodiversity is limited in this small space
- **Local character and scale:** A small but highly valued area of parkland character.

Conclusion:

- **Suitable** for Local Green Space designation
- **Summary justification.** A highly valued area for informal recreation, unique to the local area whilst providing important connections to local communities.

Site LGS-9: Queenwood Golf Club

- **Location:** Stonehill Road, Ottershaw.
- **Approximate size:** 90ha.
- **Current use:** Private members golf club with no public access or intersecting footpath network.
- **Ownership (if known):** Private.

Assessment against NPPF criteria:

- **Proximity:** (see below)
- **Local significance:** (see below)
- **Local character and scale:** (see below)

Queenwood Golf Club was considered as part of the initial review of green spaces. However, it is a very large, privately-owned golf course with highly restricted public access and functions as an extensive tract of land. It does not therefore meet the National Planning Policy Framework criteria for Local Green Space designation and is therefore not assessed further. It already carries the designations for Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) and Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA).

Conclusion:

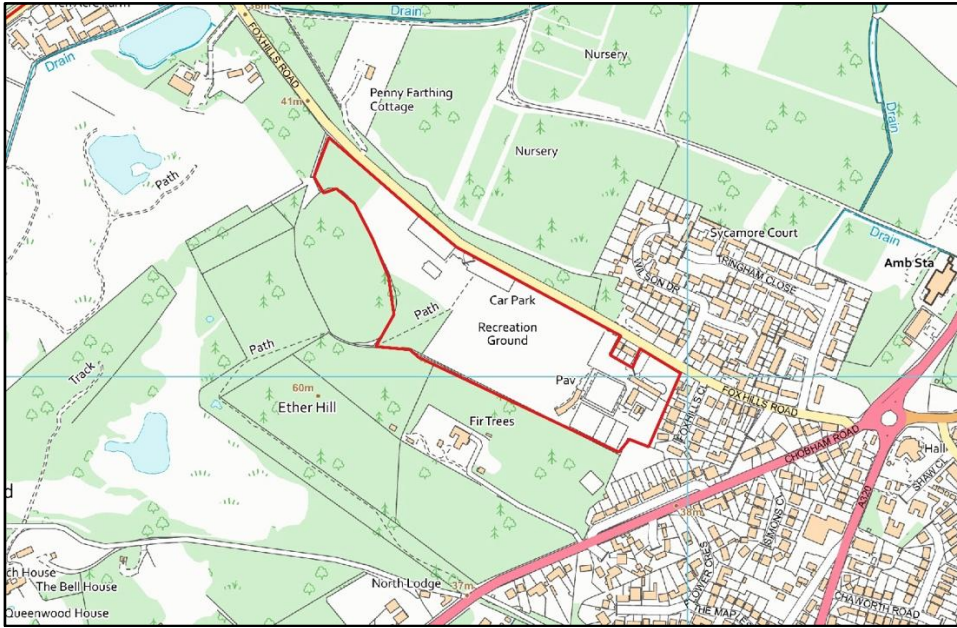
- **Not suitable** for Local Green Space designation

6. Summary of Local Green Space Recommendations

This section summarises the outcome of the site assessments:

- **Sites recommended for Local Green Space designation:**
 - LGS-1 Memorial Fields. (Close Proximity, medium size, high visual amenity, formal and informal recreation).
 - LGS-8 Murray House Open Space. (Embedded, unique to area, informal recreation and links).
- **Sites not recommended:**
 - LGS-2 Homewood Park. (Large, Remote, Informal Rec, SANG)
 - LGS-3 Ottershaw Chase. (Medium, Informal Rec, SANG)
 - LGS-4 Timber Hill & Chaworth Copse (Medium, Informal Rec, SANG)
 - LGS-5 Ether Hill & Queenwood (Medium, Informal Rec, SANG)
 - LGS-6 Hare Hill Open Space (Medium/Large, Informal Rec, SANG)
 - LGS-7 Broxborough Meadows (Medium, Informal Rec, SANG)
 - LGS-9 Queenwood Golf Club (Large, private, SNCI/BOA)

A map identifying each of the recommended Local Green Space boundaries is included below.



LGS-1: Memorial Fields Open Space



LGS-8: Murray House Open Space

7. Relationship to Neighbourhood Plan Policies

This assessment provides the evidence base for neighbourhood plan policies that:

- Designate Local Green Spaces;
- Protect valued local green spaces from inappropriate development;
- Support the retention of green character within Ottershaw.

Local Green Space designation is intended to be consistent with sustainable development and does not prevent appropriate development where justified.

8. Conclusion

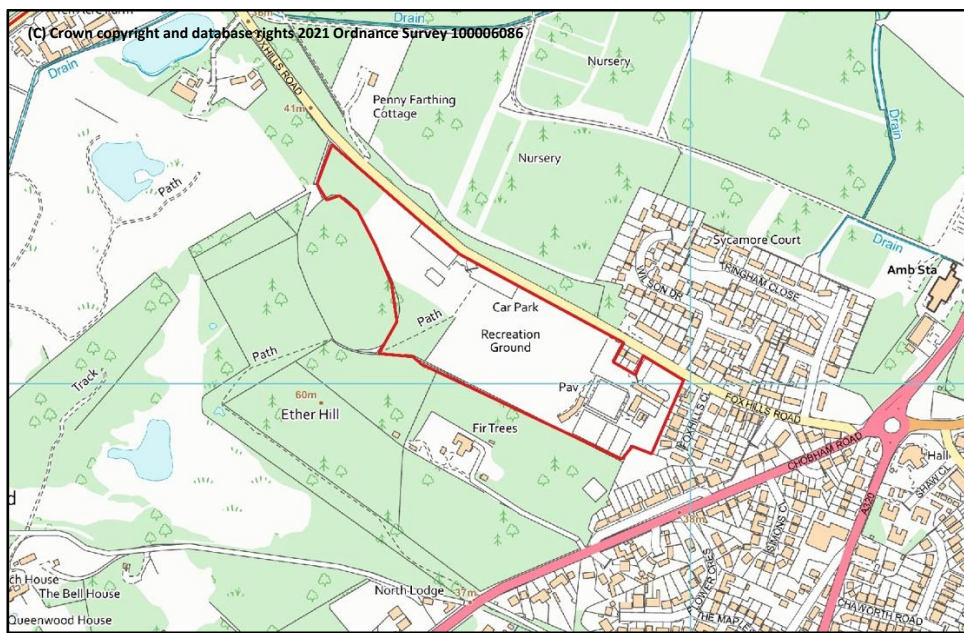
This Green Spaces and Local Green Space Assessment demonstrates that two green spaces within the Ottershaw Neighbourhood Area are special to the local community and meet the criteria set out in national policy for Local Green Space designation.

The assessment provides a proportionate, transparent, and robust evidence base to support the Ottershaw Neighbourhood Plan.

Appendix A – LGS Site Photos



LGS1 – Memorial Fields.



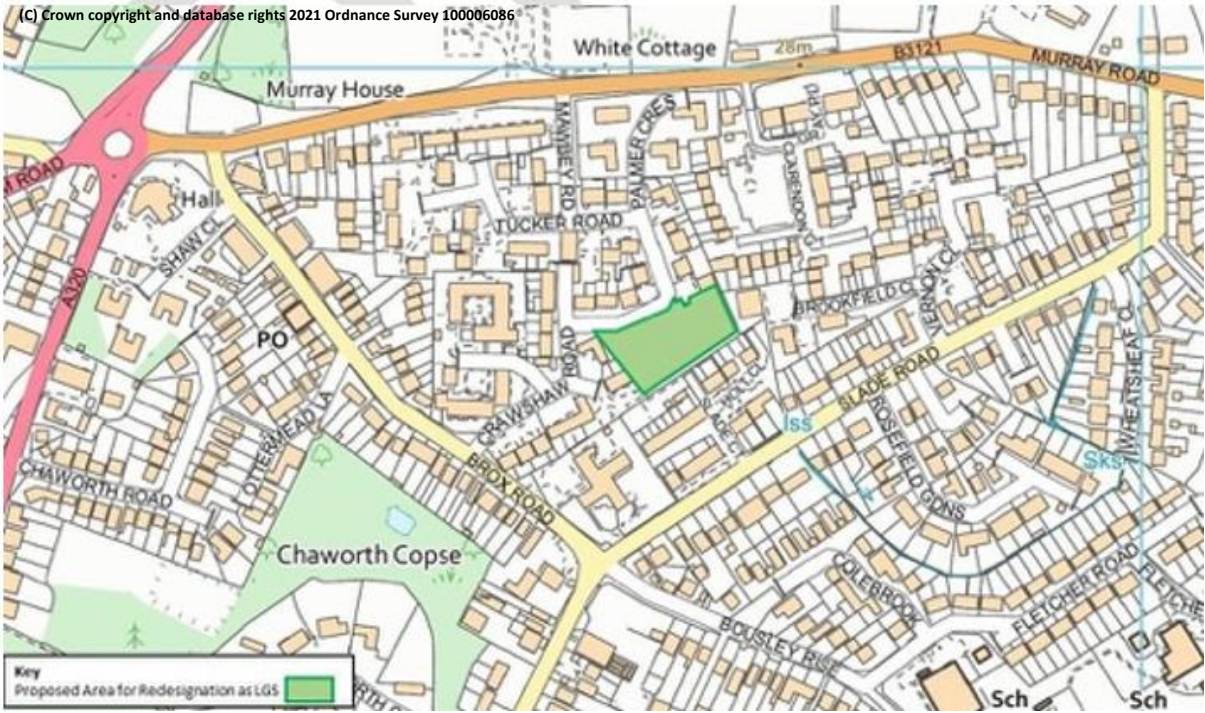
LGS1 – Memorial Fields.



LGS8 – Murray House



LGS8 – Murray House

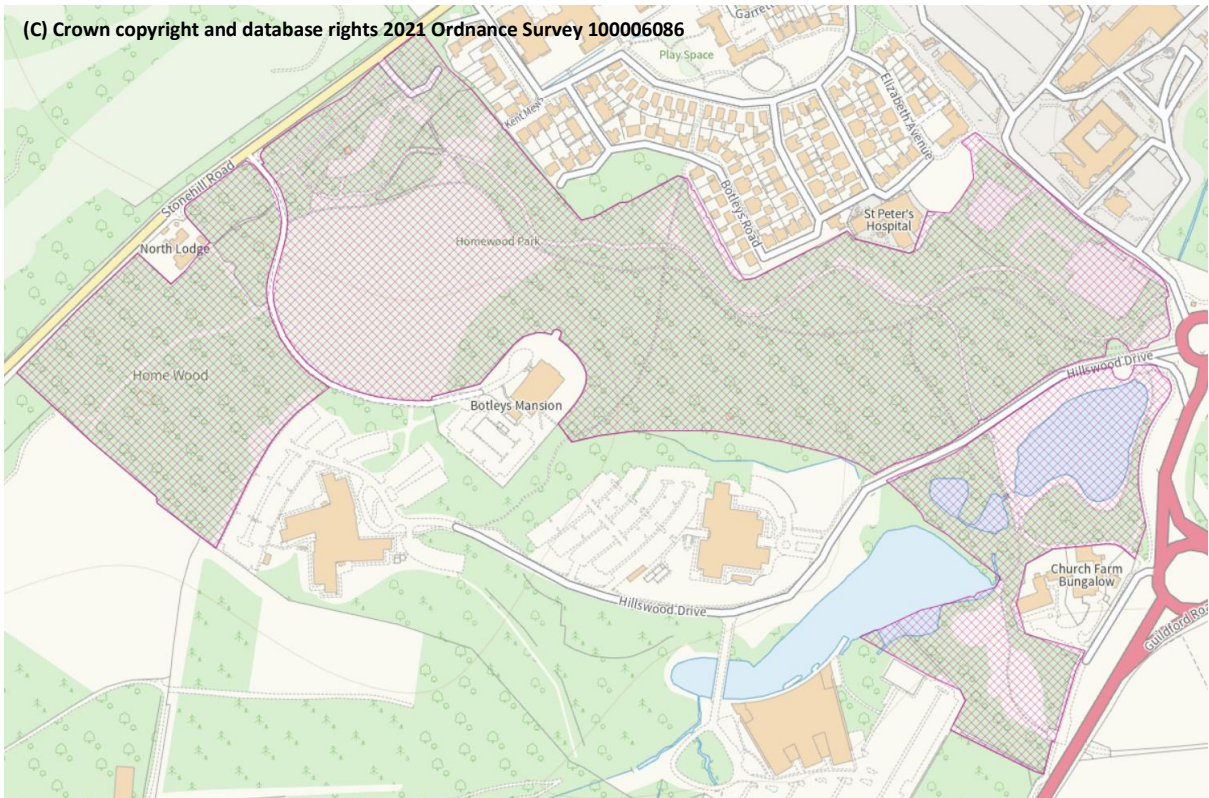


LGS8 – Murray House

Appendix B – Other Assessed Sites



LGS2- Homewood Park



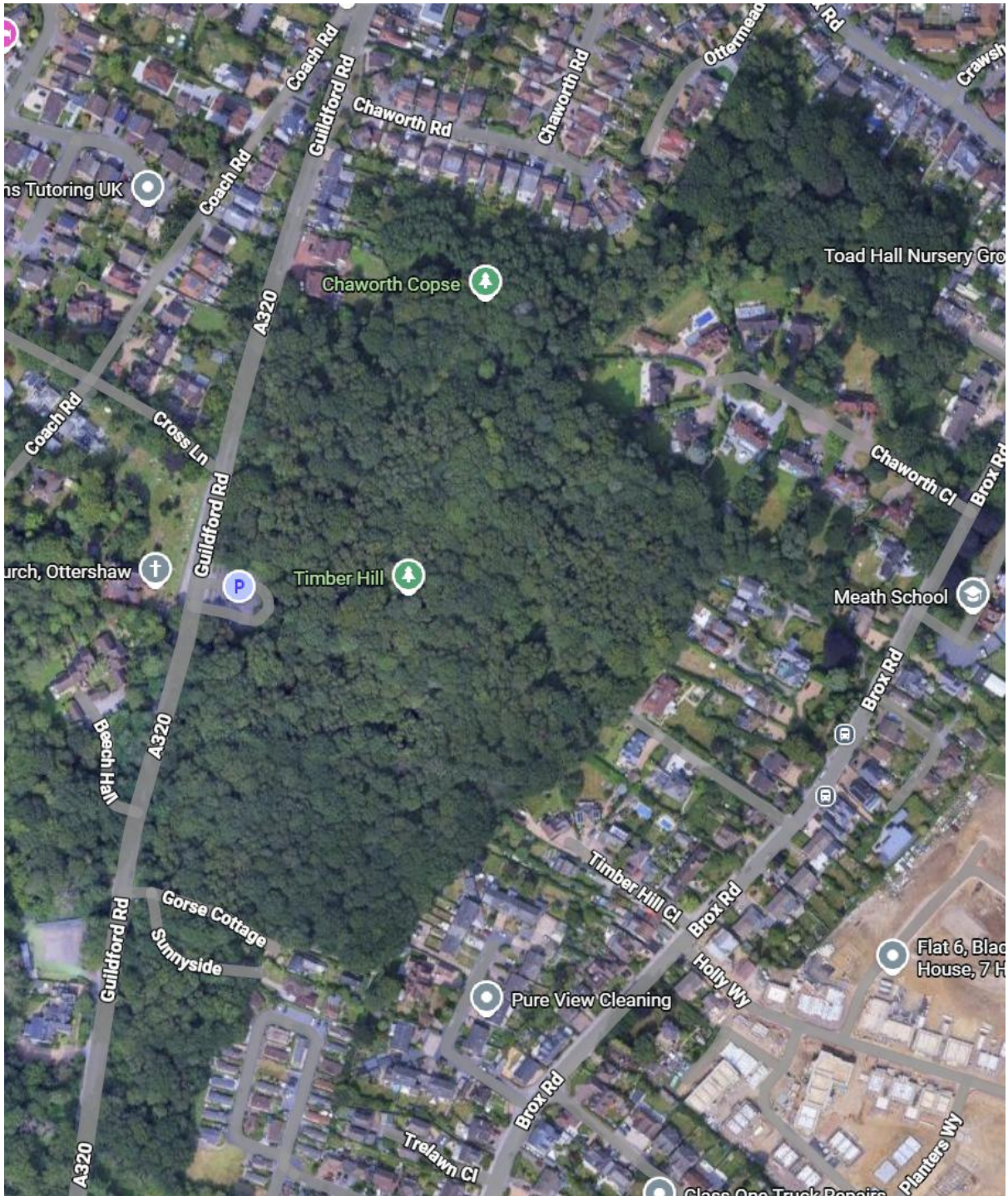
LGS2 – Homewood Park



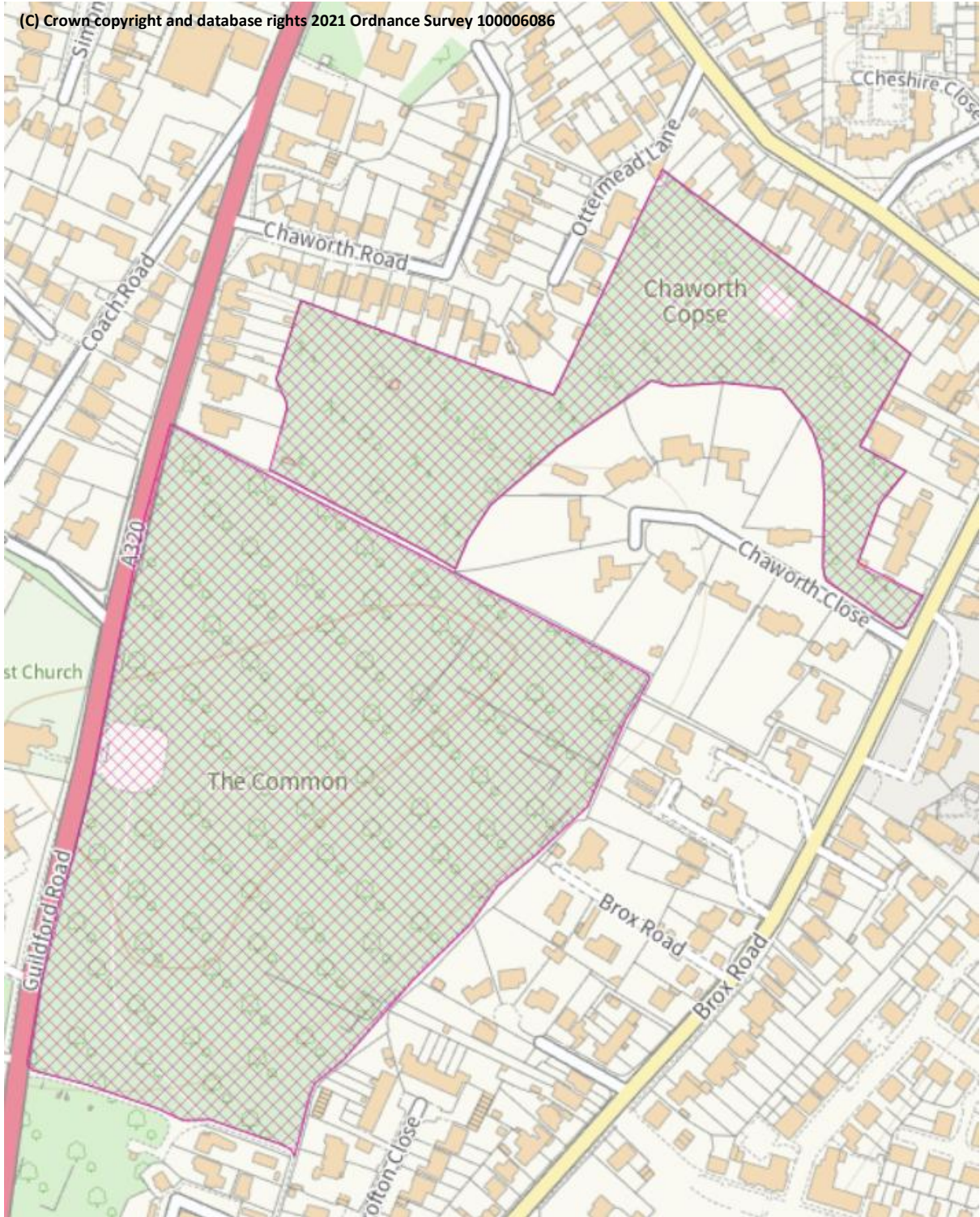
LGS3 – Ottershaw Chase



LGS3 – Ottershaw Chase



LGS4 – Timber Hill & Chaworth Copse

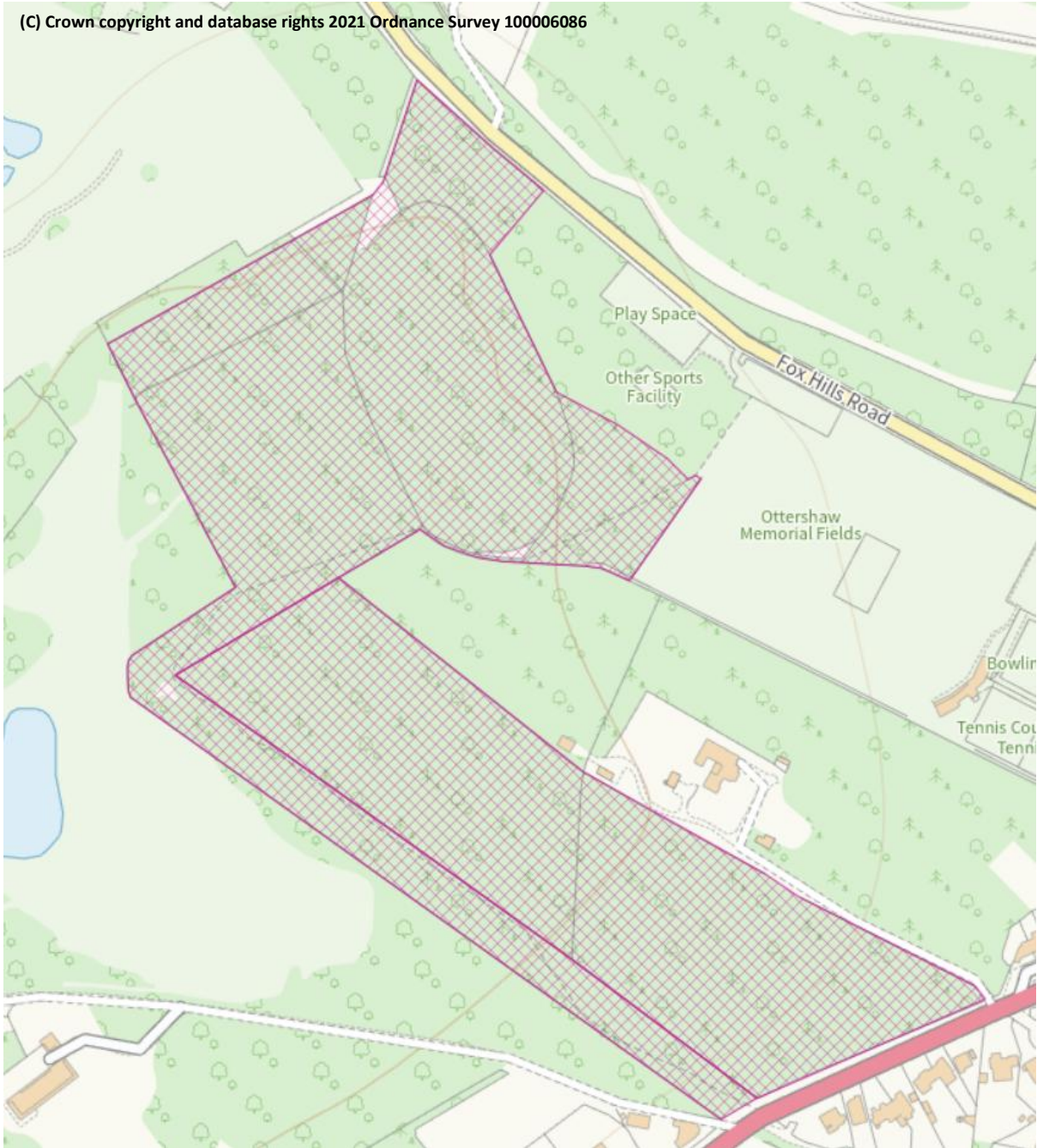


LGS4 – Timber Hill & Chaworth Copse



LGS5 – Ether Hill & Queenwood

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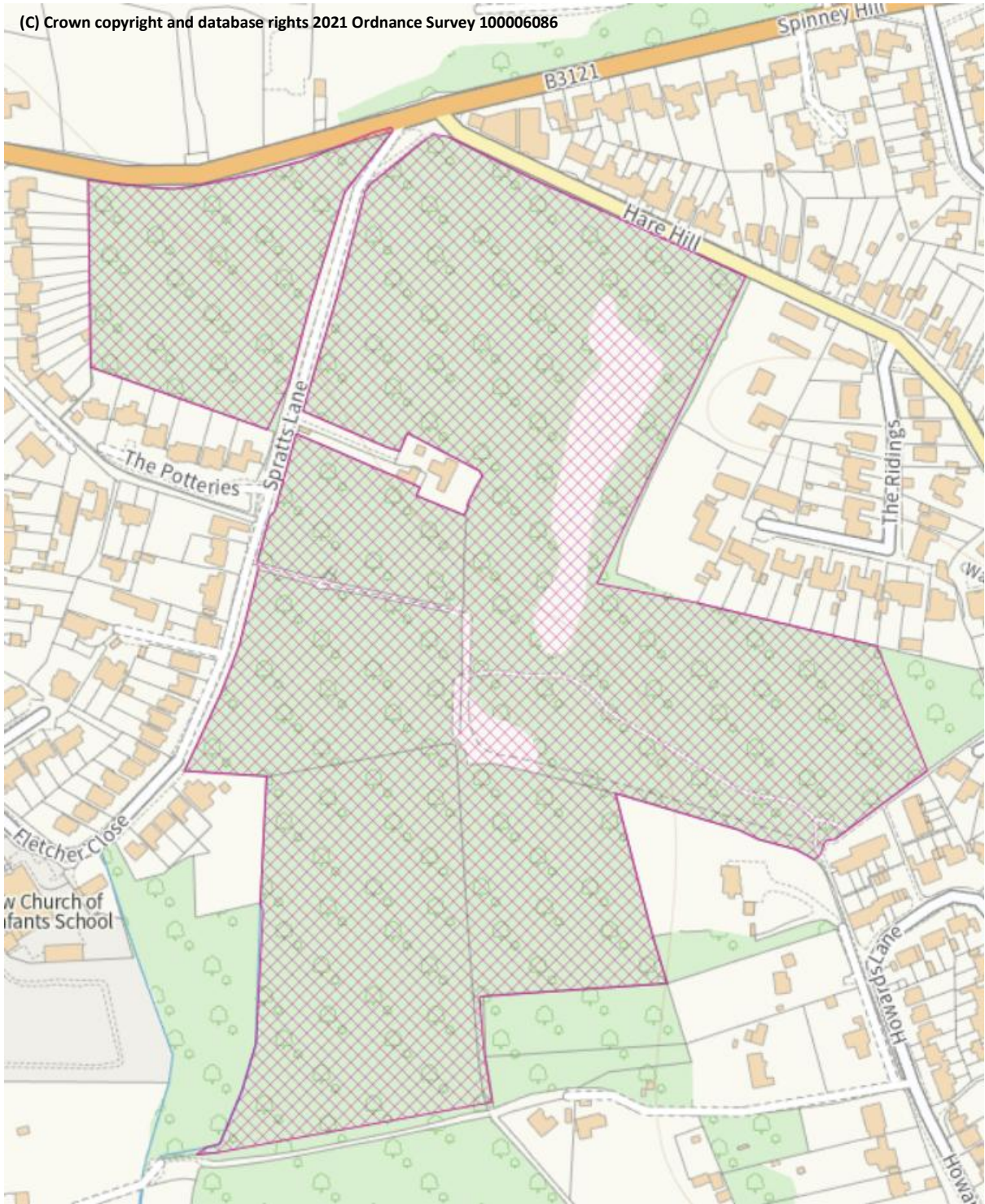


LGS5 – Ether Hill & Queenwood

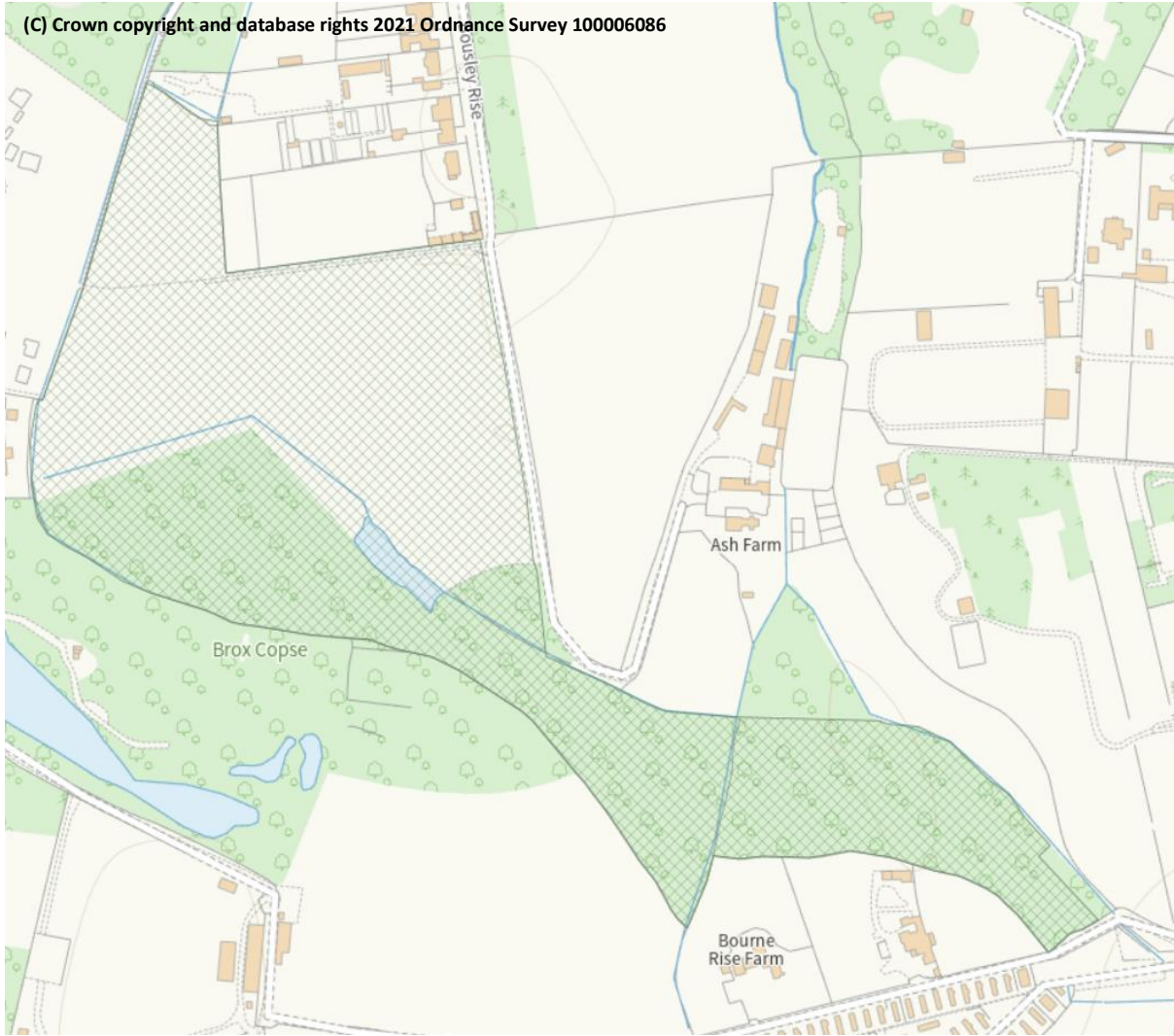


LGS6 – Hare Hill

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LGS6 – Hare Hill



LGS7- Broxborough Meadows



LGS7 – Broxborough Meadows



LGS9 – Queenwood Golf Club

