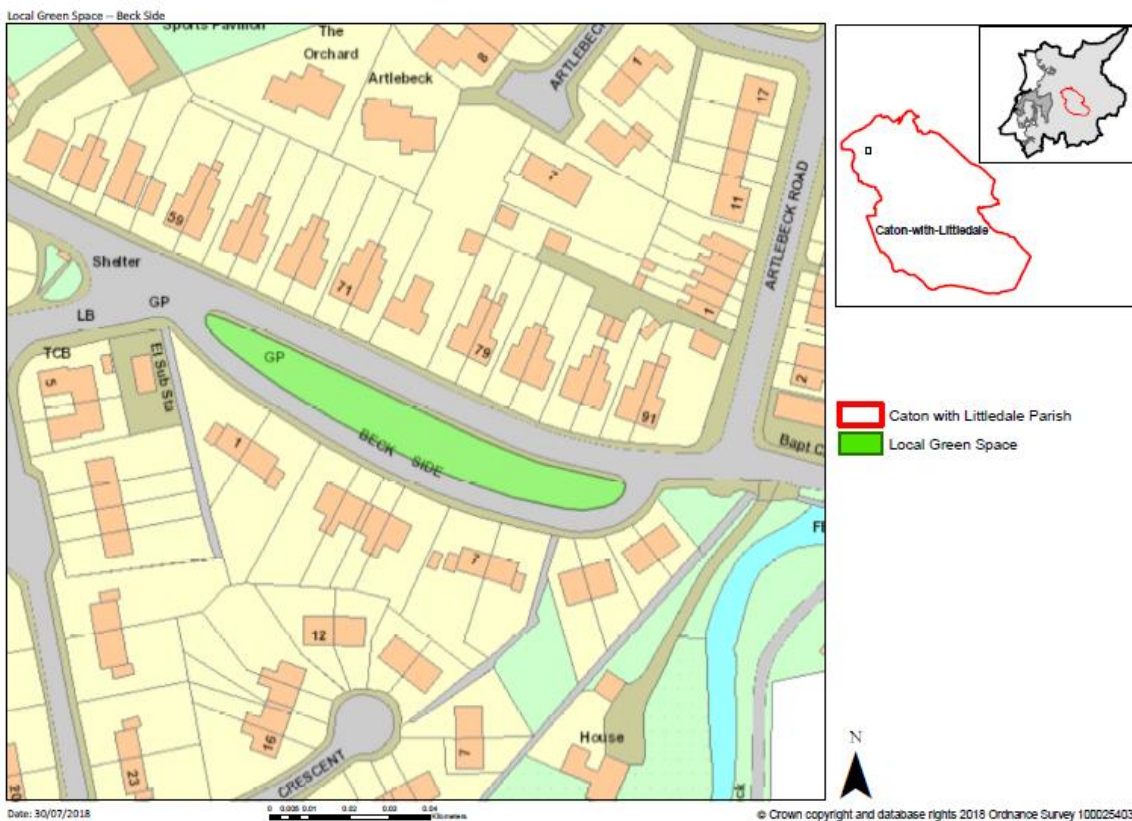


LOCAL GREEN SPACE DESIGNATION: BECKSIDE

Beckside description

Beckside is a long green crescent which is bounded to the east by the traditional stone houses of late twentieth century development of Caton, which are shown on the 1910 map of Caton (and not on tithe map of 1843 when Beckside is part of field area 186). To the west the crescent is now bounded by early council house development, built at a time when it was considered vital to integrate green spaces within council estates. Most houses are now privately owned. Beckside uniquely bonds the older and newer parts of Caton. It is the closest to Brookhouse of any part of Caton, adjacent to the area of separation.

Location



Grid ref 533 6445 area 1116.68 sq. m 0.112 hectares, 0.276 acres, perimeter 236.89 metres, (0.15 miles)

Aerial map

The aerial image shows how Beckside's grass with mature trees, is integral to the everyday lives of almost everyone in our local community as it lies on the main road through the parish. Everyone passes Beckside, driving, cycling, walking, mobility scootering, travelling by public

transport, between Caton and Brookhouse. The bus stop can be seen on Brookhouse road.



Ownership

Lancaster District Council

Maintenance

Grass mowed fortnightly by Caton with Littledale Parish Council during growing season; daffodils allowed time to strengthen after flowering

Trees maintained by Caton with Littledale Parish Council.

Bench maintained by Caton with Littledale Parish Council.

Why Becksid is demonstrably special to our local community.

Historically Becksid was part of a field by the main route between Lancaster and Kirkby Lonsdale until the A683 was built. The creation of Becksid dates back to the post war building of the council house estates centred on Fell View.



OS 1945-52 No sign of Becksid



1952 The Fell View area council houses have been built and Becksid is marked



The narrow hump backed Artlebeck bridge



The newer structure built over an earlier bridge from Artlebeck

Artlebeck bridge has along historic legacy and is a grade 11 listed heritage. It is described by Historic England as: 'Bridge over Artle Beck, c.1800. Punched sandstone blocks. Single segmental arch with band around voussoirs. String course below solid parapet with rounded coping.' The village website <https://www.catonvillage.org.uk/history> draws attention to the bridges importance: 'This road through Caton became the main road north, travelled by kings and armies. James I had to cross Artle Beck Bridge in 1618 and it was so dilapidated that he was afraid to cross, and he ordered that it be rebuilt, costing the locals £100!' Artlebeck bridge is a delightful stone bridge which features in all views towards Brookhouse from Beckside.

The curved shape of Beckside crescent, and of Artlebeck bridge, provide a visual diversity which softens the harsh straight lines of the surrounding built environment.

Beckside, because of its location, is the most well-known and prominent of the local green spaces which the neighbourhood plan seeks to designate. Location underpins the special value to our community. All road traffic between the villages of Caton and Brookhouse travels past Beckside on Brookhouse road, so the type of traffic depends on the time of day. Commuter traffic goes out past Beckside from all the villages in the parish, whether turning off on Copy Lane to Quernmore and the 'back road' to Lancaster; or continuing towards Caton village centre and the A683 between Hornby and Lancaster to join the M6 or east towards Kirkby Lonsdale. School traffic is heavy at drop off and collection times for the popular St Pauls school in Brookhouse, with a high proportion of families with prams, scooters or bicycles passing Beckside.



Looking towards Brookhouse from Beckside, over



Baptist church viewed from Beckside with Artlebeck

Artlebeck bridge and the area of separation between bridge to right and Caton Moor beyond Brookhouse and Caton on either side



Children walking, scootering or cycling have this view as they cross the artlebeck on the pedestrian bridge safely away from the narrow humpback historic bridge



View north along Beckside autumn



View north along Beckside late summer



View north along Beckside winter

The criteria description for *Beauty* appear to cover why Beckside is demonstrably special.

This relates to the visual attractiveness of the site. Beckside's contribution to landscape, character and the setting of the villages; to local identity character of the area and a sense of place; to the physical form and layout of the settlement is attributable (not in order of importance) firstly to the location which is central to all routes for residents for all motorised, pedestrian and mechanically propelled traffic. Secondly, it provides a vibrantly colourful seasonal display of grass, flowers, varieties of mature trees, berries, leaves. Thirdly it offers wildlife, especially birds, winter food and secure habitats at various levels. Fourthly the beauty is appreciated as a small peaceful haven to rest and relax with a popular bench, shelter of trees, yet central to the village. Beckside links up with other open spaces and allows views through or beyond the settlement which are valued locally.

From Brookhouse pedestrians along Brookhouse road approach Artlebeck bridge and Beckside through the green area of separation, with open views of the landscape in both directions, across the Lune Valley to the hillside beyond to the north and to the south the marshy field, dense hedgerows and traditional stone built Bridge End farmhouse and outbuildings. Beckside with the prominent lines of mature trees, is seen beyond.

Beckside is a local green space which is important for people of all ages from the parish because it is a 'hub' - a beautiful place from which many well used community walking and cycling routes start, or to pass through. (Evidence of heavy use includes the well-worn footpaths and the frequent demands to the Parish Council to cut back vegetation and remove obstructions!)

Comment: 'We have probably lived just here longer than any other residents now and the green is something that makes our part of Brookhouse Road an attractive part of the village'.

Historic footpaths starting from Beckside include:

- ❖ Path between Brookhouse Road and the A683 along Artlebeck (currently being rerouted to avoid slipped riverbank)
- ❖ Path from Beckside along Artlebeck past Parish Woodland, Caton Community School, Broadacre
- ❖ Path from Beckside to Fell View local green space with Play Park

Routes along roads include:

- ❖ Towards Brookhouse along Brookhouse road through the Area of Separation, with characteristic landscape views on either side.
- ❖ From Beckside down Artlebeck Road to the side entrance of Station local green space
- ❖ Along Brookhouse road to Bowling Green and Station Field Local Green Spaces and beyond to Millennium path local green space

Examples of footpaths:



Beckside looking north viewed as a pedestrian from Artlebeck bridge footpath between Brookhouse Road and A683



Footpath ('ginnel') from Beckside to Fell View Local green space with Play Park



Footpath from Beckside to Parish Woodland Local green space; Caton Community Primary School; Broadacre

The grass is maintained by the Parish Council, but in spring it bursts into sea of yellow as two massed areas of daffodil come into flower, followed later at the north end by a splash of dandelions. The daffodils are a much loved feature.

Comment: *"The daffodils are very attractive in the spring. We would hate to lose those"*



Daffodils in the distance beyond the bench



North end daffodils



Attractive dandelions take over.

The choice of trees, now mature, was to provide variety of trunks, leaf colour across the season; height; density of foliage and shelter; sustenance especially for birds, and to create a delightful small haven of peace next to the busy thoroughfare joining the two main villages.

Images show the trees and the profusion of late summer berries. Maples, highly coloured and splendid in autumn colours, look very special, contrasting with the delicacy of the rowan with berries hanging close to the bench. One silver birch, and three ashes join ivy covered and berry rich small (unidentified) trees.



Ash keys



Lichen, sign of fresh air and longevity



The autumn plane retains leaves well into winter



Hawthorne for bird food



Cotoneaster for bird food



Ivy, messy twigs and leaves for wildlife at ground level



Rowan



Silver birch



Plane in dense summer leaf



Comments of villagers about Beckside:

- *'This is a lovely little green spaceI remember the trees being planted and have watched them mature and change with the seasons'*
- *' The trees are the best thing'*

- *'Round about February time I have seen foxes at night and early morning on the green area'*
- *'Birds in the area are attracted to the rowan berries on the trees'*

Local identity and a very special sense of place

Many of the trees on Becksides were bought by Pat Cresswell in 1981, in memory of her husband, Frank, who died in 1980. The Parish Council arranged for Lancaster City Council to plant them. She chose English 'native' trees, and decorative, not forest trees, which would provide food for birds, butterflies and bees. (Pat, now in her '80's, is a highly respected and celebrated member of our parish, even now acting as external auditor for the accounts of the Victoria Institute, the Gardening Club and the Leisure Club. She has helped the Lune Valley Housing Association as Chair and in several other roles and has contributed in many other ways to the wellbeing and vibrancy of the community).

(c) Recreational value

It must have local significance for recreation, perhaps through the variety of activities it supports, and be of value to the community.

Children playing and dog walkers use Becksides in daylight hours on the grass on Becksides and it has large enough grassy areas for parents to bring especially young children, toddlers and babies for informal weekend relaxation.

Comment: *'It is a safe area off the road'*

(d) Tranquillity

Comments: the bench

'The bench is particularly well used. Elderly people sit for a rest when they have been to the Co-op. People sit and chat when walking with their dogs. It is used a lot by dog walkers and kids getting off the bus often sit and chat.'

The Sober Bench

'You won't want to know this, but your Saturday night drunks occasionally stagger onto the bench and stay until they've sobered up. It's better than falling into the road.'



Green haven



A place to rest and enjoy the tranquility

Contribution to sustainability

One of the basic conditions for neighbourhood plans is achieving sustainable development. The social, community, economic and environmental benefits of green spaces help to make local places sustainable.

Green spaces contribute to quality of place. Quality of place is a key factor in attracting investment, jobs and growth to an area. It is also important in making an area an attractive place to live, work and spend leisure time. So green spaces have real economic value to the surrounding area, in addition to creating community well-being.

'Locality toolkit'

The evidence supports the contribution of Beckside as a Local Green Space to achieve sustainable development, providing economic, social and environmental gains jointly and simultaneously through the neighbourhood plan as part of the planning system