

Walton Lane Weybridge Open Space

Not yet assessed for inclusion as a Local Green Space in the draft Local Plan

This is a much-used EBC open space adjacent to the River Thames next to Elmbridge Canoe Club. It comprises mown grassland and mature trees, multiple wildlife habitats, and (in EBC words) a ‘magnificent riparian panorama’ of the Thames around D’Oyly Carte Island and Desborough Island. It has EBC-provided metal picnic tables and seats, and includes a small EBC car park with a porous gravel and plastic surface. It is sheltered from Walton Lane traffic by double hedges.

The substantial Elmbridge Canoe Club building is immediately to its east, and a private dwelling is to its west behind mature trees and shrubs.



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Value to townscape, sense of place, recreation and nature habitats

This cherished green open space is adjacent to the Thames Path and National Cycle Route, and provides a welcome Weybridge stopping off and resting point, or simply a delightful place to visit, to picnic, or perhaps have a coffee from a stall next to the canoe club. It is also highly popular with families and those of limited mobility because of the convenient parking.

- This green space is visually highly attractive, a destination to contemplate the Weybridge Thames riverside panorama.
- It contributes to the local landscape, character and setting, local identity, and sense of place.
- Its main informal recreational uses are admiring the riverside view, sitting, playing, picnicking, exercising, meeting friends.
- This space is also the centre of more formal community recreational activity associated with the hugely popular Elmbridge Canoe Club.

- It is delightfully tranquil, sheltered from Walton Lane traffic by a large twin hedge (which local residents persuaded EBC to retain in 2005 when the space was opened up to the riverside, to provide an acoustic and visual screen from the road).
- The space is very rich in wildlife habitats, with ample riverside flora and fauna and magnificent mature trees.

While this EBC Weybridge open space receives some protection from development by being in Flood Zone 3, there is concern that its green nature and wildlife habitats deserve to be better protected, for example from the risk of greater encroachment by built structures and synthetically surfaced facilities, by it being given formal Local Green Space status.