

# Herstmonceux Parish Neighbourhood Plan

## Local Green Spaces



Produced by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group  
March 2017

## Introduction

This report has been prepared for the purposes of, and to accompany, the final submission of the Herstmonceux Parish Neighbourhood Plan. It sets out the conclusions of the Steering Group members (part of the Parish Council), as to which sites should be designated as Local Green Spaces and the reasons for the proposed designations.

Herstmonceux Parish is a rural parish split in half with the majority of the Parish to the North of the A271 road being part of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The majority of the area to the South of the ridge on which the A271 is situated being bounded by the Internationally recognised and protected Pevensey Levels.

The location of the Parish means that there are extensive views to the North and South over delightful unspoilt heavily wooded countryside from the ridgeline. The views extend over the High Weald Area of Outstanding from the numerous footpaths and Green Roads and to the south as far as the Sussex Downs and South Downs National Park.

Inside the Parish, there are a number of important Green Spaces which serve the community and its' residents. These Green Spaces provide significant beauty and recreational value with opportunities for sport and recreational walking. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect these Green Spaces

### **NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK**

In order for a site to qualify for designation as a Local Green Space, it must meet each of the criteria set out in paragraph 77 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). These require that the site in question:

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

### **Green Spaces**

The following Green spaces were all identified through responses to the Neighbourhood Plan Survey and the work of the Environment Focus Group. All these sites were assessed against the criteria listed above.

1. Herstmonceux Castle Gardens and Grounds: Herstmonceux Castle is owned by Bader International Study Centre, the study abroad campus of Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada, and is a private area with restricted access.

The castle is a Grade 1 listed building set in approximately 300 acres comprising woodland, formal gardens and parkland, plus accommodation blocks and service buildings associated with its primary

function as Bader International Study Centre (BISC). The public are permitted entry to the castle, gardens and grounds (excluding student accommodation areas) on payment of a fee and parish residents may purchase a discounted season ticket. The Castle estate includes a Site of Special Scientific Interest and borders on the internationally protected Pevensey Levels.

2. Herstmonceux Recreation Ground: The Recreation Ground, in the centre of the village at Gardner Street, is owned by the Herstmonceux Parish Council and is extensively used by the residents for recreational use. It comprises a children's play area for under-12s, the site of the Herstmonceux Bowling Club, a skateboard park and recreation area, a tennis court and recreational play area, a cricket pavilion, and the recreation ground is used for cricket and stoolball. The cricket pavilion is also currently used by the Herstmonceux Football Club as changing facilities.
3. Football Pitch at Lime Cross: The football pitch at Lime Cross is owned by Herstmonceux Parish Council and is utilised as a football pitch for the use of the Herstmonceux Football Club. It is also used for general recreation and walking facilities. (It is possible the Parish Council's recreation area at Lime Cross will be extended in the near future as Herstmonceux Parish Council has been advised by Gleeson that it will gift 20 metres of land to the council, to extend the football pitch. The legal work has yet to be undertaken. This land is currently private farm land)
4. Church and Scout Land adjacent to the Recreation Ground: This land is owned in part by the Herstmonceux Scouts and in part by the Church. There is limited access to the public, but it is used from time to time by the Scouts.
5. Denefield Green: Denefield Green is owned by the Herstmonceux Parish Council and is a village green surrounded by Queens Road and Fiennes Road. It is a very pleasant open area in the housing development, and is protected with Village Green status. It is extensively used by the youth in the area for sporting activities and general recreation.
6. Land adjacent to the Football Pitch at Lime Cross: This land is currently part of a proposed development site at Lime Cross. Under the provisions of the Planning Permission and the current Section 106 Agreement, the owners are required to offer the land to Herstmonceux Parish Council with a financial contribution for use as a general recreation and green space area (termed the Outdoor Open Space). It is hoped, in due course, that this will also be the site of additional play facilities for the children and part of the land will be incorporated into the Lime Cross Football Pitch area. It could extend the existing Green Spaces (recreation ground and football pitch) and provide an extended "green lung" for the village with much needed recreational facilities. (This site has been submitted to Wealden District Council (WDC) for development and the application

has received Outline Approval from WDC but no Reserved Matters Application has yet been submitted. At this stage, it is not possible to determine where any Green Space will be located. A Green Space would only be created if the site were developed under the current planning approval. In future, when the HPNP is reviewed, any green spaces which are created on development sites would be considered and included if they meet the appropriate criteria.)

7. Land at Lime Roughs: This parcel of land is a potential development site and the Planning Permission and current Section 106 Agreement require the Owner to provide an Open Space area and Buffer Zone to the adjacent Ancient Woodland for community use and to maintain the same in the future. The Green Spaces most importantly include a buffer zone between the new houses and the adjoining Ancient Woodland. This area should be subject to protection for the benefit of the residents and the vistas from the site. (This site has been submitted to WDC for development and the application has received Outline Approval from WDC but no Reserved Matters Application has yet been submitted. At this stage, it is not possible to determine where any Green Space will be located. A Green Space would only be created if the site were developed under the current planning approval. In future, when the HPNP is reviewed, any green spaces which are created on development sites would be considered and included if they meet the appropriate criteria.)
8. Sensory Garden at Herstmonceux Surgery: This parcel of land is being developed as a sensory garden adjacent to the Herstmonceux Surgery for use with the Vitality Villages Project and for use with treatment from the doctors' surgery.
9. Herstmonceux Allotments: This land is rented by Herstmonceux Parish Council at Greenways Farm, Stunts Green. It is utilised by the Herstmonceux Allotments Association for allotments and is extensively used by the residents of the Parish. A group of residents approached Herstmonceux Parish Council in 2007 to provide allotments in the parish. After investigating a number of sites, Herstmonceux Parish Council entered into a lease for land at Greenway Fruit Farm on 1.01.2009
10. Green outside the Horseshoe Inn, Windmill Hill: This land is owned by the Horseshoe Inn and is utilised as an area for seating for external use for the users of the pub and it provides a green space to protect and enhance the environment of the adjacent Listed Buildings in Posey Green.
11. Green Space at the Junction of Joes Lane and Nursery Lane, Herstmonceux: This triangle of green land at the junction of these two roads is owned by the East Sussex County Council as the Highway Authority, but provides a useful open space for road safety purposes.

12. Green Space at the Junction of Nursery Lane and High View, Windmill Hill: Again, this is an area of open land probably owned by East Sussex County Council as part of the highway, but utilised for general use of the residents and for road safety visibility purposes.
13. Land at the rear of the Merrie Harriers Public House at Cowbeech: This land is owned by the public house and neighbouring owners. It is extensively used for village events and shows, such as Dig for Victory and Bonfire Society events.
14. Land behind St Michaels, Cowbeech: Utilised by the Cowbeech Bonfire Society for its annual show, but the land is privately owned.
15. Herstmonceux Parish has a number of ancient woodlands and other woods, for example as Starvecrow Wood, Lime Wood behind the Village Hall, the woodland by the Fishing Lakes and other woodlands surrounding Herstmonceux Castle, and at Flowers Green. There are two green roads at Studdens Lane and Squirrel Track. A large northern part of the Parish is within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and on the south is bounded by the internationally protected Pevensey Levels. Other areas of the village, which border on the village, such as the land behind the Recreation Ground at the old Knights Nursery site, and the land between Church Road and Windmill Hill, have extensive views to the south and to the Sussex Downs. These are crossed by well-used public footpaths (see 16 below). The HPNP would like to see these areas preserved from development to protect them. It is noted that in the past Wealden District Council required the lowering of the Village Hall as a site by ensuring that it was dropped by some 10-15 feet to ensure that views are well protected, and this is a policy that we would wish to remain. Photographs are provided of the views from these sites and also of the green roads. The Parish is criss-crossed by an extensive series of Public Footpaths, used by residents and visitors alike. A survey of the paths has recently been undertaken. The Public Footpath Network is used for the East Sussex County Council "Health Walks" scheme based at Herstmonceux Integrative Health Centre. This is an extensive scheme, which covers footpaths across the whole of East Sussex.
16. They are at present the subject of a survey of the paths and they have been incorporated in the East Sussex County Council "Health Walks" scheme. This is an extensive scheme, which covers footpaths from Brighton to Bexhill. The proposal in the Plan is to commit to the preservation, protection, improvement and upgrading of the footpaths in the Parish. They have extensive and beautiful views of the South Downs and traverse the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The benefits of promoting these footpaths not only enhances biodiversity, a contribution to the rural economy, the ability of the members of the public to enjoy the countryside and the outstanding views but also has the undoubted benefit of the promotion of an increase in recreational opportunities and a healthy lifestyle.

## **Our Local Green Space Criteria**

1. All the sites must reasonably close proximity to the community (The land must not be isolated from the community and would normally be within easy walking distance of the community served.)
2. All the sites must meet at least one of the following criteria as being demonstrably special to a local community:-
  - a. Beauty: This relates to the visual attractiveness of the site, and its contribution to landscape, character and or setting of the settlement. LGS would need to contribute to local identity, character of the area and a sense of place, and make an important contribution to the physical form and layout of the settlement.
  - b. Historic significance: The land should provide a setting for, and allow views of, heritage assets or other locally valued landmarks. The land could have an important local historical connection. It may be necessary to research historic records from the County Archaeologist or National or Local Records Office.
  - 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.
  - d. Tranquillity: It must have the capability to offer an oasis of calm and a space for quiet reflection or to pause on a journey to rest quietly.
  - e. Richness of wildlife: This might include the value of its habitat, and priority areas may have been identified by the council. It may require some objective evidence, such as a designation, like a wildlife site or Local Nature Reserve.
3. The space is not an extensive tract of land and contributes to the rural settings.

These sites have been assessed against the criteria above as below using the following colour coding:

- Brown is poorly rated
- Light Green is standard rated
- Dark Green is highly rate

Ref	Site Name	Area size (acres)	Criteria measure					
			1	2			3	
			a	b	c	d	e	
1	Herstmonceux Castle Gardens and Grounds	Approx. 300						
2	Herstmonceux Recreation Ground	6.42						
3	Football Pitch at Lime Cross	3.52						
4	Church and Scout Land adjacent to the Recreation Ground	0.27						
5	Denefield Green	0.76						
6	Land adjacent to the Lime Cross Football Pitch (as allocated in the S106 Agreement)	3.5 approx.						
7	Land at Lime Roughs (as allocated by the s106 Agreement)	0.69 approx.						
8	Sensory Garden at Herstmonceux Surgery							
9	Herstmonceux Allotments	1.97						
10	Green outside the Horseshoe Inn, Windmill Hill	0.19						
11	Green Space at the Junction of Joes Lane and Nursery Lane, Herstmonceux	0.14						
12	Green Space at the Junction of Nursery Lane and High View, Windmill Hill	0.11						
13	Land at the rear of the Merrie Harriers Public House at Cowbeech	2.01						
14	Land behind St Michaels, Cowbeech	4.65						
15	Land and area specified in 15 above	N/A						
16	Land and area specified in 16 above	N/A						

**The following sites will not be taken forward as local green spaces for the reasons stated in the table below.**

Ref	Site Name	Reasons
6	Land adjacent to the Lime Cross Football Pitch (as allocated in the S106 Agreement)	<p>This site is currently farmland and has been submitted to Wealden District Council (WDC) for development. The application has received Outline Approval from WDC but no Reserved Matters Application has yet been submitted. At this stage, it is not possible to determine where any Green Space will be located. A Green Space would only be created if the site were developed under the current planning approval. In future, when the HPNP is reviewed, any green spaces which are created on development sites would be considered and included if they meet the appropriate criteria.</p> <p>It does not meet the criteria set out in Clause 2c.</p>
7	Land at Lime Roughs (as allocated by the s106 Agreement)	<p>This site is currently farmland and has been submitted to Wealden District Council (WDC) for development. The application has received Outline Approval from WDC but no Reserved Matters Application has yet been submitted. At this stage, it is not possible to determine where any Green Space will be located. A Green Space would only be created if the site were developed under the current planning approval. In future, when the HPNP is reviewed, any green spaces which are created on development sites would be considered and included if they meet the appropriate criteria.</p> <p>It does not meet the criteria set out in Clause 2c.</p>
8	Sensory Garden at Herstmonceux Integrative Health Centre	<p>This is a small garden located between the Health Centre and the Pharmacy.</p> <p>It does not meet the criteria set out in Clauses 2a to c inclusively.</p>

10	Green outside the Horseshoe Inn, Windmill Hill	The land is used by the owners of The Horseshoe Inn for external seating for customers. It does not meet the criteria laid down in Clauses 2a to e inclusive sufficiently to warrant inclusion.
11	Green Space at the Junction of Joes Lane and Nursery Lane, Herstmonceux	This is an area of land adjacent to a highway junction. It does not meet the criteria laid down in Clauses 2a to e inclusive sufficiently to warrant inclusion.
12	Green Space at the Junction of Nursery Lane and High View, Windmill Hill	It does not meet the criteria laid down in Clauses 2a to e inclusive sufficiently to warrant inclusion.
13	Land at the rear of the Merrie Harriers Public House at Cowbeech	The land is dissociated from the settlement and is privately owned. It is only used for community use when allowed by the owners. It does not meet the criteria laid down in Clauses 2a to e inclusive sufficiently to warrant inclusion.
14	Land behind St Michaels, Cowbeech	The land is dissociated from the settlement and is privately owned. It is only used for community use when allowed by the owners. It does not meet the criteria laid down in Clauses 2a to e inclusive sufficiently to warrant inclusion.

### Site Designation

It is proposed that the following sites be designated as Green Spaces as they meet the criteria set out in paragraph 77 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Ref	Site Name	Area size (acres)
1	Herstmonceux Castle Gardens and Grounds	300 approx.
	Herstmonceux Recreation Ground	6.42
3	Football Pitch at Lime Cross	3.52
4	Church and Scout Land adjacent to the Recreation Ground	0.27
5	Denefield Green	0.76
9	Herstmonceux Allotments	1.97

## **Special Consideration Sites Ref 15 and 16**

The areas of land specified in 15 and 16 are extensive and therefore not immediately suitable for protection as Green Space however they are **vital** important to the infrastructure and maintenance of the Parish Environment and deserve special mention and wherever possible protection.

The Rights of Way network and the areas of Ancient Woodland form an integral and essential part of the identity of the parish. They are highly regarded and regularly used for recreational activities by the local community.

Green infrastructure encompasses a wide variety of natural and restored native ecosystems and landscape features that make up a system of “hubs” and “links.”

HUBS anchor green infrastructure networks and provide an origin or destination for wildlife and ecological processes moving to or through it. Hubs come in all shapes and sizes, including:

- WORKING LANDS — Private farms, woods, that are managed for commodity production yet remain in a predominantly open and undeveloped state.
- COMMUNITY PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS — Smaller parks and other sites at the community level where natural features and ecological processes are protected and/or restored.

LINKS are the connections that tie the system together and enable green infrastructure networks to work. They range in size, function and ownership, including:

- LANDSCAPE LINKAGES — Large protected natural areas that connect existing parks, or natural areas and provide sufficient space for plants and animals to flourish while serving as corridors connecting ecosystems and landscapes. Landscape linkages may also provide space for the protection of historic sites and opportunities for recreational use;
- CONSERVATION CORRIDORS — Less extensive linear protected areas, such as stream watercourses corridors that serve as biological conduits for wildlife and may provide recreational opportunities;
- GREENWAYS & FOOTPATHS — Protected corridors of land managed for resource conservation and/or recreational use;
- ECOBELTS — Linear woody buffers that can ease the zone of tension between urban and rural land uses while providing ecological and social benefits for urban and rural residents.
- It is considered that the land in 15 and 16 meet these criteria.

## Description of photograph below

Top right: Squirrel track Green Road

Top Left: looking west from footpath 28b to South Downs

Centre: Studdens Lane Green Road at Greenway Fruit Farm

Bottom Left: view east on Footpath 26B towards village

Bottom Right: view west from Footpath 26b towards South Downs



## Justification

15	Land and area specified in 15 above	Whilst it is clear that the woodlands in this section are extensive in area they are vitally important to the Parish and its' sustainability. The Parish enjoys a large number of areas of Ancient Woodland, which add to the character, and beauty of the area. There are other areas of woodland, which require protection as they too contribute to the overall amenity of the Parish. Malcolm Emery has recently carried out a survey as to the Ancient Woodland areas and their benefit to the Parish.
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16	Land and area specified in 16 above	The importance of these areas and their preservation cannot be over emphasised for the health and welfare of the users. There is great encouragement from the East Sussex County Council for "Health Walks" and the local Vitality Villages project is progressing this initiative in the Parish. The areas involved are as in 15 above extensive but again their importance to the Parish cannot be overemphasised. The Policies of this Neighbourhood Plan seeks to preserve and increase the Rights of Way for the health and benefit of the residents and visitors.
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Below are detailed characteristics of each site, on a site-by-site basis, with photographs and supporting information.

**Ref GS01: Herstmonceux Castle Gardens and Grounds: BN27 1RN**



**Justification**

Dating from 1441, Herstmonceux Castle was home to the Royal Greenwich Observatory between 1948 and 1988. A planned conversion of the site to a golf/hotel/timeshare resort was successfully opposed by a locally formed group, The Friends of Herstmonceux Castle. Subsequently, Dr Alfred Bader purchased the site in 1993 and donated it to his alma mater Queens University as the Bader International Study Centre.

The castle and estate grounds are managed by Bader International Study Centre, a UK company and charity with links to Queens University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada, with the combined operation hosting up to 175 students and employing around 100 people. The Friends of Herstmonceux Castle continue as a positive community link with the castle and students.

The Royal Greenwich Observatory telescope complex remains within the castle estate and is operated by Science Projects Ltd to offer educational and leisure visits to the public and schools.

The estate complex is therefore important as a historic and tourist destination.

The gardens and grounds are open to the public and regularly used for private and public events. The Castle estate includes a site of Special Scientific Interest and borders on the internationally protected Pevensey Levels, which can be viewed from the grounds.

The grounds also comprise large wooded areas part of which are Ancient Woodland and these are criss-crossed by a network of Public Rights of Way which are extensively used for recreational purposes. One of the footpaths, which enjoys views of the Castle itself, also forms part of the 1066 walk from Pevensey to Battle.

Ref GS02: Herstmonceux Recreation Ground Gardner Street Herstmonceux (O.S.  
Map ref: TQ63515 12430)



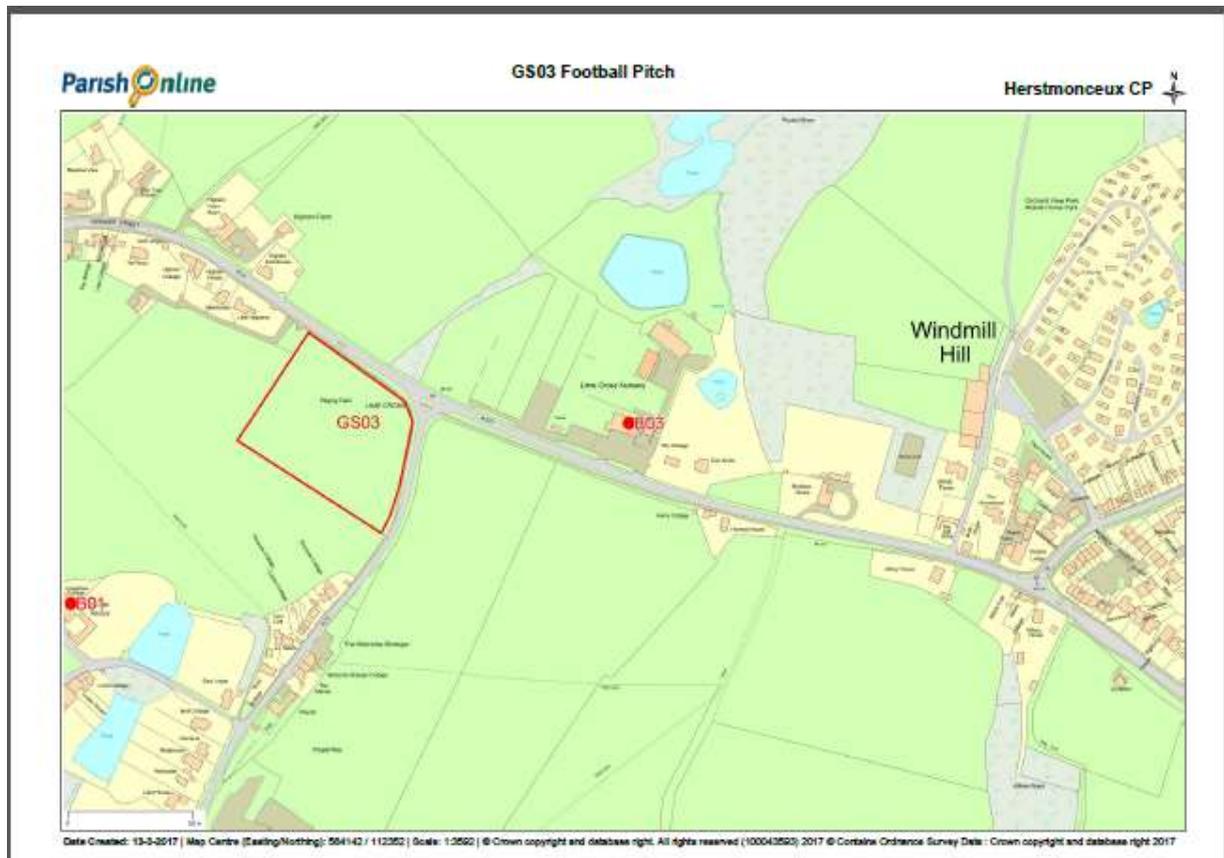
## Justification

The photographs show the wide views of the recreation ground and the individual constituent parts of user facilities namely the cricket pavilion, the bowls club, the young children's play area, the skateboard park, the cricket nets and the tennis and playground area.

The recreation ground is heavily used by walkers, dog walkers, footballers, cricketers, stoolballers, the school for sports facilities and the users of the facilities such as the skateboard park and children's play areas. It is also used for fetes and fund-raising events. It is at the heart of village.

**Ref GS03: Football Pitch at Lime Cross Gardner Street Herstmonceux (O.S. Map ref: TQ63903 12395)**





## Justification

The site is owned by the Parish Council.

The Herstmonceux Football Club and occasional dog walkers use it at present. It is used by local children who play football on the site.

There are proposals for development of the site as a multi-functional sports facility for bowls and football, with the possibility of a Scout and Guides hall. These proposals depend on additional land being given to the Parish Council when the adjoining fields are developed (see Green Space 6) It will be necessary to raise funds for these projects but the Bowls Club and Scouts have already some funding in place. The projects have the support of many local residents.

Ref GS04: Church and Scout Land adjacent to the Recreation Ground (O.S. Map Ref: TQ63592 12520)



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## **Justification**

This is the site of a church building, now demolished, and the old Scout Hut destroyed by a fire. It will not be possible to rebuild either on the site due to planning, fire and health and safety regulations. Scouts and Guides use the site at present as open and recreational space together with storage facilities. It is not generally open to the public for insurance reasons but should be kept as green space for the current uses.

Ref GS05: Denefield Green Hailsham Road Herstmonceux (O.S.Map ref: TQ63231 12496)



## **Justification**

Denefield Green now has Village Green status. It is retained as a valuable open parcel of land towards the centre of the village providing good green vistas for the surrounding houses. The local children use it as a play area for games. It has historically been used for public events.



## Justification

Local residents requested allotments several years ago and following this public request the Herstmonceux Parish Council investigated various potential sites. Eventually this site was made available by a local farmer for the Herstmonceux Parish Council to rent and although some distance from the Gardner Street “centre” of the Parish is extensively used by parishioners and there is always a waiting list for plots on the allotments.

An Allotment Association was formed and the Allotments are largely self-managed with Open Days, social events including BBQ's and the site also enjoys a public rest and viewing area.

## Green Spaces GS02, GS03, GS04 and GS05

