NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING WORKSHEET
LOCAL GREEN SPACE

What is a Local Green Space Designation?

A Local Green Space (LGS) designation is a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities. The National Planning Policy Framework (2025) at Policy HC2[1] sets out that LGS can be designated in local and neighbourhood plans where it will safeguard green areas of particular value to the local community.

LGS are part of the network of recreational and other spaces that make up the 'Green and Blue Infrastructure' network of the locality and can help to provide a range of benefits to the community including enhanced wellbeing, outdoor recreation and access, enhanced biodiversity and landscapes, food and energy production, and climate change resilience.

LGS areas could include land where sports pavilions, boating lakes or structures such as war memorials are located, allotments, or urban spaces that provide a tranquil oasis. While most LGS may already have largely unrestricted public access, other land could be considered for designation even if there is no public access or only restricted access such as through a Public Right of Way (e.g., green areas which are valued because of their wildlife, historic significance and/or beauty). Designation does not in itself confer any rights of public access over what exists at present.

Policy HC2 of the NPPF sets out the three criteria which must be met in order to result in designation. These are as follows:

a) *In close proximity to the community it serves;*
b) *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; and*
c) *Local in character and not an extensive tract of land.*

Once land is designated as Local Green Space, the policy and decision for management development on the land should be consistent with the national policy for Green Belts. Further information on LGS designation is available in the PPG[2] and the neighbourhood planning toolkits[3].

How to designate land as Local Green Space in a Neighbourhood Plan

Step 1: Identify Candidate Sites for Assessment

Gather a list and map of candidate sites for assessment. Candidate sites could be suggested by the community as part of a consultation exercise or put forward by the Steering Group.

Step 2: Initial Scoping

If there are lots of candidate sites identified by the community, an initial scoping exercise can be undertaken to screen out options which would clearly not meet the three LGS criteria (i.e. has no

[1] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a8334c03bd75b81e2329ac4/National_Planning_Policy_Framework.pdf
[2] https://www.gov.uk/guidance/open-space-sports-and-recreation-facilities-public-rights-of-way-and-local-green-space#Local-Green-Space-designation
[3] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/making-local-green-space-designations-in-your-neighbourhood-plan

community benefit, is too extensive, or is covered by another designation such as environmental/ ecological sites)

Step 3: Detailed Assessment

For each candidate site taken forward, a detailed assessment must be undertaken to ensure the site meets the LGS criteria. The following steps can be recorded in the proforma below.

LGS Ref:		**Area (ha):**	
Site Name:			
Description and Purpose:			
INSERT MAP EXTRACT OF SITE			
Statutory designation:			
Site allocation:			
Planning permission:			
Close to the community it serves:			
Demonstrably special to local community (beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity, wildlife, or other):			
Local in character and not extensive tract:			
LGS Management:			
Conclusion			

1. First identify the name, boundary, area and the existing use and description of the candidate site. Include a map of the site boundary.
2. It is helpful to review any existing statutory designations that may exist on the site (such as village green designation, or ecological designations). PPG confirms that if land is already protected y designation, then consideration should be given to whether any additional local benefit would be gained by LGS designation.
3. If the site has already been identified for allocation for development or is subject to planning permission for development, it is unlikely to be considered appropriate for a LGS designation.
4. Next, consider the NPPF criteria:
    - *Close to the community it serves:* while the NPPF or PPG does not give a precise definition of 'close proximity', and will depend on local circumstances. It could be interpreted as meaning adjacent or in very easy walking distance. It may depend to some extent on the nature of the facility
    - *Demonstrably special:* The space must have special value to the community by virtue of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity, biodiversity value, and/or other considerations. Engagement with the community will help assess how the community uses a space.
    - *Local in character:* There are no hard and fast rules about how big a LGS can be however the NPPF confirms it should not concern an extensive tract of land. Blanket designation of open countryside adjacent to settlements will not be appropriate. There is no minimum size limit.

5. LGS management objectives can be defined to understand how managed change of LGS may arise in accordance with national Green Belt policy, for instance recognising at an early stage that a playing field may have aspirations for new ancillary buildings that would be appropriate development or constitute very special circumstances. In many instances, there may be no change envisaged.
6. A final conclusion can then be recommended on whether the area can be taken forward for designation as LGS in the NDP or not.