

Local Green Space Designation Consultation

Guidance

May 2019



Introduction

The Natural Environment White Paper (The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature 2011) highlighted “the importance of green spaces to the health and happiness of local communities”.

Green spaces, particularly natural green spaces, located close to people provide a range of social, environmental and economic benefits including:-

- Improved mental and physical health
- Increased physical activity
- Increased social activity
- Improvements to childrens learning
- Reduced crime
- Improved community cohesion and sense of belonging
- More attractive places to live, work, play, visit and invest
- Enhanced opportunities for wildlife habitats and wildlife corridors
- Climate change adaptation (e.g. flood alleviation)

The Council is seeking your views on potential sites for Local Green Space designation. This guidance is to support local communities/individuals in putting forward their local open spaces for formal designation as a Local Green Space in a robust, consistent and transparent matter.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (February 2019)

The NPPF (Feb 2019) states that “*The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Designating land as Local Green Space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period*” (Paragraph 99).

The designation of local green space should only be used where the space meets the following criteria:-

- it is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- it 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; and,
- it is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

National Planning Policy Guidance

➤ ***What is Local Green Space designation?***

Local Green Space designation is a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities.

Paragraph: 005 Reference ID: 37-005-20140306

➤ ***How is land designated as Local Green Space?***

Local Green Space designation is for use in Local Plans or Neighbourhood Plans. These plans can identify on a map ('designate') green areas for special protection. Anyone who wants an area to be designated as Local Green Space should contact the local planning authority about the contents of its local plan or get involved in neighbourhood planning.

Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 37-006-20140306

➤ ***How does Local Green Space designation relate to development?***

Designating any Local Green Space will need to be consistent with local planning for sustainable development in the area. In particular, plans must identify sufficient land in suitable locations to meet identified development needs and the Local Green Space designation should not be used in a way that undermines this aim of plan making.

Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 37-007-20140306

➤ ***What if land has planning permission for development?***

Local Green Space designation will rarely be appropriate where the land has planning permission for development. Exceptions could be where the development would be compatible with the reasons for designation or where planning permission is no longer capable of being implemented.

Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 37-008-20140306

➤ ***Can all communities benefit from Local Green Space?***

Local Green Spaces may be designated where those spaces are demonstrably special to the local community, whether in a village or in a neighbourhood in a town or city.

Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 37-009-20140306

➤ ***What if land is already protected by designations such as National Park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Scheduled Monument or conservation area?***

Different types of designations are intended to achieve different purposes. If land is already protected by designation, then consideration should be given to whether any additional local benefit would be gained by designation as Local Green Space.

Paragraph: 011 Reference ID: 37-011-20140306

➤ ***What types of green area can be identified as Local Green Space?***

The green area will need to meet the criteria set out in paragraph 100 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Whether to designate land is a matter for local discretion. For example, green 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.

Paragraph: 013 Reference ID: 37-013-20140306

➤ ***How close does a Local Green Space need to be to the community it serves?***

The proximity of a Local Green Space to the community it serves will depend on local circumstances, including why the green area is seen as special, but it must be reasonably close. For example, if public access is a key factor, then the site would normally be within easy walking distance of the community served.

Paragraph: 014 Reference ID: 37-014-20140306

➤ ***How big can a Local Green Space be?***

There are no hard and fast rules about how big a Local Green Space can be because places are different and a degree of judgment will inevitably be needed. However, paragraph 100 of the National Planning Policy Framework is clear that Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green area concerned is not an extensive tract of land. Consequently blanket designation of open countryside adjacent to settlements will not be appropriate. In particular, designation should not be proposed as a 'back door' way to try to achieve what would amount to a new area of Green Belt by another name.

Paragraph: 015 Reference ID: 37-015-20140306

➤ ***Is there a minimum area?***

Provided land can meet the criteria at paragraph 100 of the National Planning Policy Framework there is no lower size limit for a Local Green Space.

Paragraph: 016 Reference ID: 37-016-20140306

➤ ***What about public access?***

Some areas that may be considered for designation as Local Green Space may already have largely unrestricted public access, though even in places like parks there may be some restrictions. However, other land could be considered for designation even if there is no public access (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. Any additional access would be a matter for separate negotiation with land owners, whose legal rights must be respected.

➤ ***What about public rights of way?***

Areas that may be considered for designation as Local Green Space may be crossed by public rights of way. There is no need to designate linear corridors as Local Green Space simply to protect rights of way, which are already protected under other legislation.

Paragraph: 018 Reference ID: 37-018-20140306

➤ ***Does land need to be in public ownership?***

A Local Green Space does not need to be in public ownership. However, the local planning authority (in the case of local plan making) or the qualifying body (in the case of neighbourhood plan making) should contact landowners at an early stage about proposals to designate any part of their land as Local Green Space. Landowners will have opportunities to make representations in respect of proposals in a draft plan.

Paragraph: 019 Reference ID: 37-019-20140306

➤ ***Would designation place any restrictions or obligations on landowners?***

Designating a green area as Local Green Space would give it protection consistent with that in respect of Green Belt, but otherwise there are no new restrictions or obligations on landowners.

Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 37-020-20140306

➤ ***Who will manage Local Green Space?***

Management of land designated as Local Green Space will remain the responsibility of its owner. If the features that make a green area special and locally significant are to be conserved, how it will be managed in the future is likely to be an important consideration. Local communities can consider how, with the landowner's agreement, they might be able to get involved, perhaps in partnership with interested organisations that can provide advice or resources.

Paragraph: 021 Reference ID: 37-021-20140306

Local Planning Policy

Local Green Spaces can be designated through the emerging Richmondshire Local Plan or through neighbourhood plans. The Local Planning Authority will consider all of the local green space designations submitted and those found to meet the requirements will be published as part of the Preferred Options consultation for further comment.

A policy relating to Local Green Spaces will be included in emerging policy.

Designating land as Local Green Space should:

- Be consistent with local planning of sustainable development
- Complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services

How to submit

The Deadline for submission is: **Friday 26th July 2019**

To be completed online via the link on the website.

If you have any queries please contact us:

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or

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