**Diss and District Neighbourhood Plan**

**Local Green Spaces Working Group – Starter Pack**

**March 2020**

**Template for identifying sites with potential for designation as Local Green Spaces**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name/ location | Description and purpose | Quality, including any shortcomings | Statutory designations | Planning history | Close to the community | Demonstrably special | Local in character, not extensive tract | Other comments |
| *Open space near junction of King Street and Queens Road* | *Informal grassed open space. Used for walking through and informal children’s play* | *Grass is well maintained, but two sides are screened by high fences of rear gardens so poor surveillance* | *Local Nature Reserve;*  *Setting of listed building* | *Planning application for 3 residential dwellings, refused 2012* | *Only 100m from village centre* | *Recreational;*  *Historic;*  *Wildlife;*  *Tranquillity;*  *Other* | *About 0.5ha* | *Anecdotally this is valued by the residents and visitors alike* |
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**National Planning Policy Framework**

“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 100*

*The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:*

*a) in reasonably 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 is not an extensive tract of land.*

Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts.”

**National Planning Practice Guidance**

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

Local Green Space designation is for use in [Local Plans](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-plans--2) or [Neighbourhood Plans](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2). These plans can identify on a map (‘designate’) green areas for special protection.

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.

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.

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.

Different types of designations are intended to achieve different purposes. If land is already protected by designation (such as Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Site of Special Scientific Interest), then consideration should be given to whether any additional local benefit would be gained by designation as Local Green Space.

The green area will need to meet the criteria set out in [paragraph 100](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/8-promoting-healthy-and-safe-communities#para100) (see above) 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.

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.

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](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/8-promoting-healthy-and-safe-communities#para100) 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.

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 (eg 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.

Areas that may be considered for designation as Local Green Space may be crossed by [public rights of way](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/open-space-sports-and-recreation-facilities-public-rights-of-way-and-local-green-space#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.

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.

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.

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.