

LOCAL GREEN SPACE DESIGNATION

TECHNICAL GUIDANCE NOTE

Corby Borough Council
Part 2 Local Plan
May 2018

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This technical guidance note has been prepared by Corby Borough Council in order to assist local communities in helping to identify potential Local Green Space allocations within the Borough. Any identified Local Green Space will be allocated within the Part 2 Local Plan for Corby, currently in production.

1.2 Local Green Space designations is a way to provide special protection against development for green areas that are of particular importance to local communities. Designated local green spaces are afforded the same level of protection as green belts, ruling out development in all but very exceptional circumstances. Any type of green space could be suitable for designation and may also include land where sports pavilions, boating lakes or structures such as war memorials are located, allotments, or urban spaces that provide a tranquil oasis. However national policy makes it clear that Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. The designation should only be used:

- where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- where the green area 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
- where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

Designation Criteria for Local Green Spaces

1.3 The proposed designation of spaces must be based on evidence that demonstrates successfully why the green area is special to a local community and holds a particular local significance. Blanket designation of all/most green areas or open space within an area is not appropriate.

1.4 A potential Local Green Space should meet the criteria set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Planning Practice Guidance. These criteria are not specific, but act as guidance which should then be interpreted at a local level. Corby Borough Council has set out its own local guidance below in Table 1 and Table 2.

1.5 In order to aid the submission of evidence to support the designation of a proposed space, a questionnaire has been created (see Appendix 1 of this guidance note). Those commenting on a nominated space should complete a separate response form for each space. Evidence already submitted to the Council will be used in conjunction with any completed forms when determining the suitability of designation. Those objecting can use the same response form.

1.6 The following guidance reflects the local interpretation of national guidance and national planning policy. It expands on the principles established in national policy to provide a consistent and transparent methodology for identifying Local Green Spaces in the Borough.

Table 1: Site Constraints Criteria

All proposed Local Green Space submissions to the Council are to be assessed against all the criteria 1-7, listed in table 1.

Criteria	Explanation of criteria/evidence
1. There is no current planning permission which once implemented would undermine the merit of a proposed Local Green Space designation.	Local Green Space designation would not normally be appropriate where the land has planning permission for development. Special exceptions to this would be those sites which are large enough to accommodate a green space designation as part of the development or where planning permission is no longer capable of being implemented.
2. The proposed Local Green Space is not land allocated for development as part of the Local or Neighbourhood Plan or required to meet the Borough's development needs.	<p>It will not be appropriate to designate spaces that are allocated or proposed for development in the Local or Neighbourhood Plan unless it can be shown that the Local Green Space could be incorporated within the site as part of the allocated development.</p> <p>The designation of Local Green Spaces should be consistent with the local planning for sustainable development and complement investment in homes, jobs and other essential services.</p>
3. The Local Green Space designation would provide protection additional to any existing protective policies and its special characteristics could not be protected through any other reasonable and more appropriate means.	<p>It is only appropriate to designate spaces that are already protected by another designation where it would provide additional benefit to the community.</p> <p>Existing designations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Protection Areas • Sites of Special Scientific Interest • Registered Historic Park and Garden • Local Nature Reserve • Ramsar sites
4. The site proposed for designation is local in character and is not an extensive tract (of land 19ha in size or greater).	<p>Designated spaces would normally be fairly contained with clearly defined edges.</p> <p>An independent examination into a Neighbourhood Plan concluded with the Inspector deciding not to designate an area as a Local Green Space because he considered its size of 19 hectares to be an extensive tract of land¹.</p>

¹ <https://www.no5.com/news-and-publications/news/978-no5-barristers-successful-in-persuading-neighbourhood-plan-examiner-to-refuse-local-green-space-designation/>

		Corby Borough Council will therefore use this as a suitable measure.
5.	The proposed Local Green Space must be within close proximity to the community it serves	<p>National policy states that to be designated as a Local Green Space the area should be reasonably close to the community they serve. The proximity of a Local Green Space to the community it serves will be dependent on local circumstances including why the green area is seen as special. For example if public access is a key factor, then the site would normally be within easy walking distance of the community served. Sites should feel part of the local area, sites which are entirely isolated from the community will not be considered appropriate.</p> <p>Natural England has set a range of accessibility standards for natural sites and areas within easy reach of people's homes. The 2010 ANGSt guidance recommends that everyone, wherever they live, should have an accessible natural green space no more than 300 metres (5 minutes' walk) from home which is considered to be an appropriate walking distance.</p>
6.	The sites special characteristics and any uses or activities which form parts of the case for its designation can be maintained and managed during the Local Plan period.	The space should be capable of enduring beyond 2031.
7.	The space must be demonstrably special to the local community	Blanket designation of all/most green areas or open space within an area is not appropriate. The space must be demonstrably special by meeting at least one of criterion 8-12, in Table 2.

Table 2: Supporting Evidence Criteria

Robust evidence must exist to satisfy at least one of the criteria listed below.

Criteria	Explanation of criteria/evidence
8.	<p>The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its beauty</p> <p>This would include the visual attractiveness and aesthetic value of the site; and its contribution to townscape, landscape, character and/or setting of the settlement. Features on sites such as woodland and water could also contribute to the overall value of the site. It would be expected that the area contributes significantly</p>

		to the local identify and character of the area and plays an important role in defining the sense of place of the area.
9.	The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its historical significance	<p>The site is viewed to be of local significance because of its historic importance to the community. For example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are recognised historic assets on site • The site links back to a historic person or event • The site has retained historical features and boundaries
10.	The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its recreational value	<p>The site holds a local significance for recreation providing an important asset for the community for a particular activity or for a range of activities. Although most green and open spaces will fall within this category and offer some form of recreational value, the aim is to identify why a particular area offers something unique and could not realistically be accommodated on the sites that would serve the community</p> <p>National guidance states that 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.</p>
11.	The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its tranquility	<p>The site submitted is viewed to be of importance to the local community because of the tranquility it provides, offering a place for quiet reflection and peaceful enjoyment. It would need to demonstrate the following qualities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A feeling of remoteness or quiet contemplation • A general inability to see man-made structures such as roads, power-lines or excessive lighting • Has a general lack of artificial noise from vehicles or industry
12.	The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its richness of wildlife	<p>For a site to be considered suitable for Local Green Space status for its richness of wildlife, it would need to relate to one or more of the following:</p>

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- Be designated for its wildlife value (e.g. Local Wildlife Site or Pocket Park)
 - Include a combination of important landscape features such as ancient Hedgerows, Ancient Woodland, Veteran trees, pockets of woodland and wildflower meadow
 - Support a unique and/or diverse range of wildlife. This would need to be evidenced by records, ecological surveys and/or expert advice.

- 1.7 School and college playing fields and grounds would not normally be suitable for designation. This is because national guidance states that the space must be capable of enduring beyond the plan period. In order to address future needs for school places there may be a need to reconfigure the arrangement of school buildings and playing fields. The National Planning Policy Framework states that local planning authorities should give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools. Therefore, educational sites (grounds and playing fields) would not normally be suitable for designation.
- 1.8 Highway land/roadside verges would not normally be suitable for designation. This is because national guidance states that the space must be capable of enduring beyond the plan period. Land adjoining an existing highway is the subject of 'Permitted Development' rights, which could be used to bring forward development that may be contrary to a Local Green Space designation, but would not require planning permission to be granted. Highway land may also be utilised in bringing forward future highway/transport schemes. Therefore, highway land/roadside verges would not normally be suitable for designation.

Appendix 1 – Local Green Space Designation Questionnaire

1	General Information	Tick if relevant evidence provided
1.1	Name and address of site <i>Some sites have several names and all known names should be given</i>	
1.2	Site location plan <i>The plan can be at any scale, but must show the location and boundaries of the site. Please indicate the scale.</i>	
1.3	Organisation or individual proposing site for designation <i>In terms of organisation, this would normally be a Parish Council or formally recognised community group</i>	
1.4	Ownership of the site (if known) <i>Information on land ownership can be obtained from <link to Land Registry> Some sites may not be recognised however local people may know the owner.</i>	
1.5	Is the owner of the site aware of the potential designation? Do they support the designation? <i>Sites may be designated as Local Green Space even if there are objections from the site owners.</i>	
1.6	Photographs of site	

	<i>Please insert photograph(s) of site here or attach separately</i>	
2	Site Constraints Criteria	
2.1	<p>Planning History</p> <p>Is there currently any planning permission on this site which, once implemented, would undermine the merit of a Local Green Space designation?</p> <p><i>Local Green Space designation would not normally be appropriate where the land has planning permission for development.</i></p> <p><i>Special exceptions to this would be those sites which are large enough to accommodate a green space designation as part of the development or where planning permission is no longer capable of being implemented.</i></p> <p><i>Information on current planning applications can be found at https://www.corby.gov.uk/home/planning-and-building-control/online-planning-applications</i></p>	
2.2	<p>Development Allocation</p> <p>Is the proposed Local Green Space land which is allocated for development as part of the Local Plan, a Neighbourhood Plan or is required to meet the Borough’s development needs?</p> <p><i>It will not be appropriate to designate spaces that are allocated or proposed for development in the Local or Neighbourhood Plan unless it can be shown that the Local Green Space could be incorporated within the site as part of the allocated development.</i></p> <p><i>The designation of Local Green Spaces should be consistent with planning for sustainable development and complement investment in homes, jobs and other essential services.</i></p> <p><i>Further information on the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plans can be found at <link to CBC Planning Policy page></i></p>	

2.3	<p>Existing Designations</p> <p>Is the proposed Local Green Space designation already an existing designation? Does the proposed Local Green Space provide protection that is additional to any existing protective policies? Can its special characteristics not be protected through any other existing designation?</p> <p><i>Existing designations include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Special Protection Areas</i> • <i>Sites of Special Scientific Interest</i> • <i>Registered Historic Park and Garden</i> • <i>Local Nature Reserve</i> • <i>Ramsar sites</i> <p><i>It is only appropriate to designate spaces that are already protected by another designation where it would provide additional benefit to the community.</i></p>	
2.4	<p>Is the proposed Local Green Space designation an ‘extensive tract of land’ that is, or exceeds, 19 hectares in size?</p> <p><i>The Council considers a site of 19 hectares or more to be an ‘extensive tract of land.’ Extensive tracts of land cannot be designated as Local Green Space.</i></p>	

2.5	<p>Is the proposed Local Green Space designation ‘local in character’?</p> <p><i>Consider the following questions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Does the site feel as though it is part of the local area and can it be explained why?</i> - <i>Can you provide robust evidence to demonstrate successfully that it connects physically, visually and socially to the local area?</i> 	
2.6	<p>Proximity to communities</p> <p>Is the proposed Local Green Space within close proximity to the community it serves?</p> <p><i>National policy states that to be designated as a Local Green Space the area should be reasonably close to the community they serve. The proximity of a Local Green Space to the community it serves will be dependent on local circumstances including why the green area is seen as special. For example if public access is a key factor, then the site would normally be within easy walking distance of the community served. Sites should feel part of the local area, sites which are entirely isolated from the community will not be considered appropriate.</i></p> <p><i>Natural England has set a range of accessibility standards for natural sites and areas within easy reach of people’s homes. The 2010 ANGSt guidance recommends that everyone, wherever they live, should have an accessible natural green space no more than 300 metres (5 minutes’ walk) from home which is considered to be an appropriate walking distance.</i></p>	

2.7	<p>Beyond Plan period (>2031)</p> <p>Can the proposed Local Green Space’s special characteristics and/or any uses/activities that form part of the case for designation be maintained and managed beyond the period of the Local Plan (2031)?</p> <p><i>The space should be capable of enduring beyond 2031.</i></p>	
3	<p>Supporting Evidence Criteria</p>	
<p><i>For this section, robust evidence submitted must be submitted to the local planning authority and must satisfy at least one of the 5 identified criteria listed below</i></p>		
3.1	<p>The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its beauty</p> <p><i>This would include the visual attractiveness and aesthetic value of the site; and its contribution to townscape, landscape, character and/or setting of the settlement. Features on sites such as woodland and water could also contribute to the overall value of the site. It would be expected that the area contributes significantly to the local identify and character of the area and plays an important role in defining the sense of place of the area.</i></p>	
	<p><i>Evidence can be inserted or attached here.</i></p>	
3.2	<p>The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its historical significance</p> <p><i>The site is viewed to be of local significance because of its historic importance to the community. For example</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>There are recognised historic assets on site</i> • <i>The site links back to a historic person or event</i> • <i>The site has retained historical features and boundaries</i> 	

3.3	<p>The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its recreational value</p> <p><i>The site holds a local significance for recreation providing an important asset for the community for a particular activity or for a range of activities. Although most green and open spaces will fall within this category and offer some form of recreational value, the aim is to identify why a particular area offers something unique and could not realistically be accommodated on the sites that would serve the community.</i></p> <p><i>National guidance states that 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.</i></p>	
3.4	<p>The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its tranquility</p> <p><i>For a site to be considered suitable for Local Green Space status for its richness of wildlife, it would need to relate to one or more of the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Be designated for its wildlife value (e.g. Local Wildlife Site or Pocket Park)</i> <i>• Include a combination of important landscape features such as ancient Hedgerows, Ancient Woodland, Veteran trees, pockets of woodland and wildflower meadow</i> <i>• Support a unique and/or diverse range of wildlife. This would need to be evidenced by records, ecological surveys and/or expert advice.</i> 	

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When completed, please send this form to the following address:

Local Plans
Corby Borough Council
Deene House
New Post Office Square
Corby
NN17 1GD

You can also email the form directly to the following email address: planning.services@corby.gov.uk

For queries regarding the form, please use the email address above or telephone 01536 464158.