

South Gloucestershire

LOCAL PLAN

2018-2036

Local Green Space Designation Guidance Note February 2018

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Government's National Planning Policy Framework ([NPPF](#), paragraphs 76-78) introduced a new designation of Local Green Space (LGS) in March 2012. Local Green Space designation is a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities. This guidance sets out how the LGS designation is being interpreted and applied within South Gloucestershire in the context of the emerging South Gloucestershire Local Plan 2018 – 2036 (SGLP). This guidance note updates the versions produced in preparing the Policies Sites and Places Plan (PSP Plan), reflecting on the outcomes of the Examination in Public held for that Plan in 2017.
- 1.2 The designation of a Local Green Space can only be made through a Local or Neighbourhood Plan. The council has recently adopted its PSP Plan (November 2017), within which, [Policy PSP4](#) (Designated Local Green Spaces) restricts inappropriate development on land designated as Local Green Space. The list of spaces designated as Local Green Space are set out at Appendix 2 of the [PSP Plan](#). These designated spaces can be viewed on an interactive map [here](#).
- 1.3 The council is consulting on the South Gloucestershire new Local Plan 2018 – 2036 Consultation Document 5 February – 30 April 2018. The Consultation Document contains a specific discussion point (point C), which relates to Local Green Spaces and how these could be addressed in the Local Plan. To support the discussion point, details on those spaces which were not designated in the PSP Plan have been made available. This guidance note sets out the process for reassessing these spaces for designation in the SGLP 2018 – 2036. It also provides detail for those wishing to:
 - comment on existing designated spaces;
 - comment on spaces nominated to the PSP Plan but not designated, or;
 - nominate new spaces for designation.
- 1.4 The Inspector carrying out the Examination in Public on the PSP Plan concluded that the council should reassess those spaces nominated but not designated as part of the SGLP 2018 - 2036. The review of these spaces, along with any new nominations received, will be undertaken in accordance with this guidance note, taking into account the developments planned as part of the Joint Spatial Plan, the new Local Plan and comments received on the discussion points to the Consultation Document. A reassessment of spaces has not yet been carried out. More information on the assessment process is set out in the rest of this guidance note.
- 1.5 The list of spaces (including mapping), and the reasons why they were not designated in the PSP Plan can be found on the council's [Local Green Space Designations website](#). Comments on these spaces, existing designated spaces and the nomination of new spaces are invited until 30 April 2018. A response form is available to view on the council's [Local Green Space Designations website](#). Landowners may also use the response form to comment on proposed nominations which affect their land. Further consultation with landowners will be necessary as the Local Plan progresses.

- 1.6 Officers will assess the suitability of each space for designation in the SGLP 2018 – 2036. Following this assessment, the council intends to do further consultation in 2018 on Local Green Spaces, prior to the submission of the SGLP for Examination in Public, which is carried out by an independent Inspector.

2. The Policy Context

2.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF (<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/policy/achieving-sustainable-development/delivering-sustainable-development/8-promoting-healthy-communities/>) provides the following information on Local Green Space Designations, which the new Local Plan and any Local Green Space proposed by the council for designation, must be in conformity with:

76 Local communities through local and neighbourhood plans should be able to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them. By designating land as Local Green Space local communities will be able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances. Identifying land as Local Green Space should therefore 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 reviewed, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.

77 The 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), tranquility or richness of its wildlife; and*
- *where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.*

78 Local policy for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with policy for Green Belts.

2.2 Additional guidance is provided in the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) - <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/open-space-green-space-and-rights-of-way-2/local-green-space-designation/>

2.3 Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans

Local Green Spaces can be designated in Local Plans (such as the SGLP 2018 – 2036) or Neighbourhood Plans.

2.4 A policy relating to Designated LGS (PSP4) has been adopted in the PSP Plan (November 2017). The PSP Plan also includes a policy on undesignated open spaces within urban areas and settlements (PSP5). These policies can be viewed here: www.southglos.gov.uk/policiesitesandplaces. These will be carried forward into the SGLP 2018 – 2036. The preparation of the SGLP 2018 - 2036 will involve: reassessing those

nominated spaces not designated in the PSP Plan¹; a review of comments made on existing designated spaces; and consideration of whether to designate newly nominated spaces. In considering newly nominated spaces the Consultation Document (February 2018) seeks views on whether they would be more appropriately designated through a Neighbourhood Plan.

3. Process for Designation

Step 1: February 2018 - South Gloucestershire Council will set out the reasons why spaces were not designated in the PSP Plan. It will also set out the process for reviewing LGS as part of preparing the SGLP 2018 – 2036, (i.e. this Guidance Note). These will be subject to consultation until 30 April 2018.

Step 2: Parish or Town Councils or Ward Members in Unparished Areas submit information on behalf of their communities², relating to existing designated spaces; previously rejected spaces that are to be reassessed; or to propose new spaces. Comments should be submitted using the form available on the Local Green Space Designations website, providing a map to clearly identify the boundary of the space and supporting evidence/justification by 30 April 2018.

Step 3: South Gloucestershire Council will attempt to contact all known landowners of nominated Local Green Spaces during 2018 and provide them with an opportunity to comment.

If a landowner objects to the designation of a space, they should provide justification for their objection. In addition, if they consider the space has development potential they should submit a Call for Sites form. More information on the Call for Sites process and the response form can be found here: www.southglos.gov.uk/callforsites

Step 4: South Gloucestershire Council will review all the evidence submitted in support of the nomination of a space and consider the following: national guidance (see section 2); and local guidance (see section 4). This includes considering proposed development locations for homes, jobs and other services (including liaison with internal council departments such as transport/highways and property services acting as the landowner of the council's own estate) to determine if the space is suitable for designation. This will take place prior to the preparation of the draft (publication) version of the Local Plan, and be kept under review prior to submission and through the independent Examination. Please see details set out in section 4.

Step 5: The final list of spaces will be incorporated into the publication version of the Plan. If a space is going to be proposed by the council for designation within the SGLP 2018 - 2036, the affected landowners (if known) will be contacted as part of the consultation on the publication version of the Plan. Formal representations will be invited and passed onto the independent Inspector following submission of the new Local Plan for Examination in Public.

¹ Please note where nominated spaces were withdrawn through the PSP Plan process they will not be reassessed in the SGLP 2018 – 2036 unless they are re-nominated as a new space. Please see Appendix 1 for a list of these spaces. This is because support from the local community (Parish or Town Council or Ward Member in Unparished Areas) is an important consideration.

² If you are a member of the community wishing to comment/nominate on a space, please liaise with your parish or town council, or your Ward Member in unparished areas.

Submission of the Plan

The proposed designation of spaces will be “tested” through the plan process. Local Plans are formally scrutinised by an independent Planning Inspector, who will ensure that the plans are robust and based on sound evidence.

Formal designation of LGS will take place when the SGLP 2018 – 2036 is adopted, currently anticipated to take place in 2019.

4. Criteria for Designation

4.1 National Planning Policy Framework and the supporting Planning Practice Guidance states that Local Green Space designation is a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities. 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.

4.2 Local Green Space:

- should only be designated when a Local or Neighbourhood Plan is prepared or reviewed;
- should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services; and
- must be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.

4.3 National policy also states that 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), tranquility or richness of its wildlife; and
- where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

4.4 The proposed designation of spaces must be based on evidence to demonstrate why the green area is demonstrably 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.

4.5 A potential Local Green Space should meet the criteria set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (see section 2 and paragraphs 4.1-4.4). These criteria are not specific, but act as guidance which should then be interpreted at a local level. South Gloucestershire Council has set out its own local guidance in paragraphs 4.8 onwards, and in Tables 1 & 2 below. Included within these, in accord with the NPPF and NPPG, is the need to ensure the designation of a nominated Local Green Space is consistent with the requirement to plan for sustainable development and whether the designation would complement the delivery of homes, jobs and other essential services.

4.6 In order to aid the submission of evidence to support the designation of a proposed space, a response form has been created, which is based on the guidance set out below (this is separately available on the [Local Green Space Designations website](#)). Those commenting on a designated space, a nominated space not currently designated or nominating a new 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.

4.7 The following guidance reflects the local interpretation of national guidance and national planning policy and also the outcomes of the Examination in Public of the PSP Plan, where the Inspector found the process for designating Local Green Spaces sound. The Strategic Planning Policy and Specialist Advice team will assess the suitability of designating spaces. Other council departments will be consulted, such as Education, Open/Community Spaces, Highways and Transport, to seek their views where relevant. This is considered necessary to ensure that spaces meet with criteria and do not conflict with future sustainable development in South Gloucestershire.

4.8 Educational sites, school and college playing fields and grounds

Educational sites, school and college playing fields and grounds will not be suitable for designation (including land held by South Gloucestershire Council's Children, Adults and Health Department for education). 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) will not be suitable for designation. This approach was supported by the Inspector who considered the PSP Plan.

4.9 Highway Land/Roadside Verges and transport infrastructure

Highway land/roadside verges will not 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 will not be suitable for designation. This approach was supported by the Inspector who considered the PSP Plan.

4.10 South Gloucestershire Council's Strategic Planning Policy and Specialist Advice team will review whether the designation of the LGS would be contrary to the NPPF and NPPG, in particular whether the designation of a space would be consistent with the requirement to plan for sustainable development and whether the designation would complement the delivery of homes, jobs and other essential services. South Gloucestershire Council's Strategic Planning Policy and Specialist Advice team will work with the Strategic Transport department to consider all LGSs where potential conflict with future transport infrastructure projects might occur. Subject to the responses on the Consultation Document February 2018 discussion point C (within Part 3), the council intends to use a 15m buffer (excluding this area from designation) relating to future transport investment, where relevant. This approach was supported by the

Inspector who considered the PSP Plan. If once the 15m buffer has been applied, if sufficient space remains, it will be assessed against the criteria and considered for designation.

4.11 In addition, the council will reassess those parts of spaces not designated in the PSP Plan where a 15m highway buffer was used as the reason for exclusion from designation.

4.12 Landowners and leaseholders of nominated LGS will be contacted, where known (identified through land registry searches or by the nominator – usually the relevant Parish/Town Council or Ward Member in Unparished Areas. If no landowner can be identified, a notice will be put on the space). This will include South Gloucestershire Council Property Services team, who are responsible for a considerable number of spaces which are in public ownership. South Gloucestershire Council's Property Services team will respond, as landowners of LGS. They will be treated by the council's Strategic Planning Policy and Specialist Advice team in a way which is consistent with any other landowner response. It should be noted that, where it is considered that part of a nominated space is not suitable for designation, the remaining area of the space will be considered in relation to its appropriateness for designation.

4.13 In addition to the above, subject to the responses on the Consultation Document February 2018 discussion point C (with Part 3), the council also intends to assess whether spaces already protected for other purposes would derive additional local benefit from LGS designation and also assess whether several designated spaces together would constitute an extensive tract of land, as set out by the Inspector of the PSP Plan.

Table 1: National Criteria

Every space must meet **all** the criteria 1-5, listed in table 1.

Criteria		Explanation of criteria / evidence prompts
1.	Has a map been provided that clearly identifies the boundary of the space?	It was considered important that an accurate map be provided for a space to clearly identify its boundary. If it is not possible to map the space it will be considered inappropriate for designation.
2.	It will rarely be appropriate to designate spaces that are the subject of a planning permission for development.	<p>Is the space the subject of a planning permission for development?</p> <p>Information on planning permissions is available from: http://developments.southglos.gov.uk/online-applications</p> <p>Local Green Space designation will rarely be appropriate where the land has planning permission for development. Exceptions could be where the designation would be compatible with the planning permission or where planning permission is no longer capable of being implemented.</p>
3.	It will not be appropriate to designate spaces that are allocated or proposed for development in the Local Plan or a 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>Is the space allocated or proposed to be allocated in a Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan?</p> <p>Existing allocations can be viewed on the Policies Map: www.southglos.gov.uk/policiesmap.</p> <p>The designation of Local Green Spaces should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services.</p> <p>The NPPG states that: 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.</p> <p>The space should be capable of enduring beyond the plan period.</p> <p>If you are a landowner who considers a nominated space has development potential, you should</p>

		<p>submit a Call for Sites submission form. More information on the Call for Sites process and the submission form can be found here: www.southglos.gov.uk/callforsites</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>The space must not be an extensive tract of land and must be local in character.</p>	<p>Designated spaces would normally be fairly contained with clearly defined edges.</p> <p>Spaces over the size of 19 hectares have been highlighted as not being suitable for designation in accordance with an independent Examiner’s decision relating to a Neighbourhood Plan. This approach was supported by the PSP Plan Inspector. We are therefore using this as a suitable measure.</p> <p>Adjoining spaces will be treated as one space, unless distinctly different is use, and must therefore meet the above 19 hectare threshold in combination.</p> <p>Why does the space “feel” local in character and scale, in respect of the local community that the space serves?</p> <p>Is the proposed space larger than other areas of land in the vicinity? Is it contained with clearly defined edges?</p> <p>How does the space connect physically, visually and socially to the local area?</p> <p>Blanket designation of all open spaces, green belt or open countryside adjacent to settlements is not appropriate.</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>The space must be within close proximity to the community it serves.</p>	<p>The space would normally be within easy walking distance of the community it serves and closely related to the community/settlement.</p> <p>How close is the space to the community it serves?</p> <p>Who uses or enjoys the space?</p> <p>What is the connection/relationship of the space to those who use or enjoy the space?</p>

<p>6.</p>	<p>The space must be demonstrably special to the local community.</p>	<p>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 the following local criterion, explained in more detail within Table 2 below.</p> <p>The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beauty; or • Historic significance; or • Recreational value; or • Tranquility; or • Richness of wildlife; or • Some other reason. <p>Other relevant evidence: Is the proposal to designate supported by any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A friends group - Local community groups - A parish plan etc. - The Town/Parish Council - The Ward Member(s) - The MP <p>Note: Support for the designation would not provide sufficient justification for designation by itself, but it does aid in indicating how a particular space is demonstrably special to the community.</p>
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Table 2: Demonstrating Local Significance

All spaces must meet at least one of the following criteria:

Criteria		Explanation of criteria / Evidence prompts
7.	The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its beauty.	<p>This relates to the visual attractiveness of the space, and its contribution to townscape, landscape, character and/or setting of the settlement, which would normally be expected to be significant.</p> <p>How is the proposed space of particular local significance, in respect of its beauty?</p> <p>Is the space covered by other landscape or townscape designations? (e.g. Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Conservation Area)</p> <p>Does the space have a literature or art connection?</p>
8.	The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its historic significance.	<p>How is the proposed space of particular local significance, in respect of its historic significance?</p> <p>Does the proposed space or elements of the space have local historical significance?</p> <p>Are there any historic buildings or structures on the space? (e.g. listed building or scheduled monument)</p> <p>Are there any important historic landscape features on the space? (e.g. veteran trees or old hedgerows)</p> <p>Does the space have a historic literature or art connection?</p> <p>Does the space relate to any historic rituals?</p>
9.	The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its recreational value.	<p>How is the proposed space of particular local significance, in respect of its recreational value?</p> <p>What variety of recreational activities (e.g. type of formal and or informal recreation) does the space get used for?</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>

10.	The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its tranquility.	<p>How is the proposed space of particular local significance, in respect of its tranquility?</p> <p>Green spaces may provide value to the local community in terms of providing an oasis of calm, perhaps in a busy town, or a space for quiet reflection. Why is the space considered to be tranquil?</p>
11.	The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its richness of wildlife.	<p>How is the proposed space of particular local significance, in respect of its richness of wildlife?</p> <p>Is the proposed space formally designated for its wildlife value? (e.g. is it a SSSI, SNCI or Local Nature Reserve).</p> <p>Are any important habitats or species found on the space?</p> <p>Does the proposed space support species of fauna or flora protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended); Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 or Habitat Regulations 2010; species and habitats listed on the South Gloucestershire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP); or species and habitats listed by the Government as being of Principle Importance for Biological Diversity in Britain under Section 41 of the Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006 (Priority Species and Habitats)?</p> <p>Does the proposed space support species of birds listed on the Red, Amber or Green Lists of Species of Conservation Concern or notable assemblage of invertebrates?</p> <p>Does the proposed space support irreplaceable habitats such as ancient semi-natural woodland and veteran trees?</p> <p>Does the proposed space function as part of a wildlife corridor or green infrastructure enabling the dispersal and favourable status of species of flora and fauna?</p> <p>Specific evidence of such wildlife may be gathered from the local Biological Records Centre or local community groups.</p>
12.	The proposed space is of particular local significance because of another reason not covered by criteria 7-11.	<p>Are there any other reasons why the proposed space has a particular local significance for the local community?</p>

5.0 The Next Steps

5.1 The consultation on the new Local Plan (2018 – 2036) Consultation Document ends on the 30 April 2018. You may submit details regarding Local Green Spaces using the response form on the [Local Green Space Designations website](#) by 30 April 2018. The council will review all responses/evidence submitted following the completion of the consultation and finalise the list of Local Green Spaces. It is currently proposed to consult on a final list of spaces later in 2018, prior to the Examination in Public on the SGLP 2018 - 2036, which is carried out by an independent Inspector.

Further details of the SGLP 2018 – 2036 can be found here: www.southglos.gov.uk/newlocalplan.

Appendix 1

LGS withdrawn from nomination in the PSP Plan

Space Details			
Green Space Code	Parish/Town Council / Unparished Area	Ward	Name of Nominated Space
LGSD016	Aust	Severn Ward	The green space (triangle) of land at Elberton including the wide verges.
LGSD059	Charfield	Charfield Ward	Park
LGSD061	Charfield	Charfield Ward	School Playing Field
LGSD501	Charfield	Charfield Ward	Fields behind Manor Lane and Hawthorne Close
LGSD140	Hanham Abbots	Longwell Green Ward	Land from Bickley Farm to Bickley Woods
LGSD141	Hanham Abbots	Hanham Ward	Land adjacent Bickley Woods SSSI (previously, not named)
LGSD750	Hanham Abbots	Hanham Ward	Land at rear of Hanham Hall
LGSD272	Sodbury	Cotswold Edge Ward	Field behind Old Sodbury Village Hall
LGSD274	Sodbury	Cotswold Edge Ward	Colts Green (Badminton Estate) - (Grass Verge)

LGSD941	Sodbury	Cotswold Edge Ward	Old Sodbury Play Area & Football Pitch (Coombs End)
LGSD963	Thornbury	Thornbury North Ward	The Playing Fields behind the former grammar school buildings (fronting Gloucester Road).
LGSD398	Unparished Area	Woodstock Ward	Beacon Rise Primary School Playing Fields
LGSD403	Unparished Area	Woodstock Ward	John Cabot Academy grounds
LGSD409	Unparished Area	Woodstock Ward	Kingswood Congregational Church Grounds
LGSD412	Unparished Area	Woodstock Ward	Orchard Road Allotments (Lantern Bottom Allotment Gardens)
LGSD416	Unparished Area	Woodstock Ward	Courtney Primary School, Playing field
LGSD1140	Winterbourne	Frenchay and Stoke Park Ward	Malmains Drive - Frenchay
LGSD1150	Winterbourne	Winterbourne Ward	Corners of Nichols Lane/Cloisters - Winterbourne
LGSD1156	Winterbourne	Winterbourne Ward	Junction of High Street, Flaxpits Lane and Dragon Road - Winterbourne
LGSD1157	Winterbourne	Winterbourne Ward	Marsh Close - Winterbourne

LGSD1160	Winterbourne	Winterbourne Ward	Perry Close - Winterbourne
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