



Lydiard Millicent Neighbourhood Development Plan

Local Green Space Topic Paper
August 2026 v1.1

Contents

1. Introduction.....	2
2. Methodology.....	4
3. Assessment.....	7
4. Conclusion.....	16

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The planning policies of the Lydiard Millicent Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive, and safe places.
- 1.2. Paragraphs 106 and 107 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF – December 2024)¹ allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them as Local Green Space (LGS). The power has the effect of imposing similar controls to those that apply within the Green Belt, effectively protecting the site from most development.
- 1.3. Designating land as LGS should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. LGS should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period. 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.
- 1.4. The LGS 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) *is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.*
- 1.5. LGS are part of the network of recreational and other spaces defined by Wiltshire Core Strategy Core Policy 52 as 'Green Infrastructure'. The Wiltshire Green Blue Infrastructure (GBI) Strategy adopted in February 2022² provides an overarching strategy for the next eight years, including local green spaces as an integral part of the GBI network.

Wiltshire Green Blue Infrastructure (GBI) Strategy page 29

Our shared long-term vision for Wiltshire's GBI Network...

Wiltshire's multi-functional network of high quality, biodiverse and accessible green and blue infrastructure is widely valued by our communities, businesses and visitors. Managed sustainably through strong leadership and partnerships, the green and blue

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/8-promoting-healthy-and-safe-communities>

² <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-bio-green-blue-infrastructure>

infrastructure network provides a range of well-being benefits for people, places and nature across Wiltshire.

As a result of working with natural processes to support delivery of multi-functional ecosystem services, Wiltshire is better able to adapt to a changing climate and biodiversity loss has been reversed.

Networks of green and blue spaces and corridors in the countryside and our towns support access to nature and healthy lifestyles and provide high quality landscapes and beautiful places for people to live, work and visit.

- 1.6. Within the Lydiard Millicent designated neighbourhood area there are a number of valued green spaces which should be identified and assessed as candidate sites for LGS as part of the NDP process.
- 1.7. The purpose of this LGS report is to summarise how candidate sites were first identified and assessed in accordance with paragraph 107 of the NPPF, including feedback from public consultation.

2. Methodology

2.1 The green area will need to meet the criteria set out in paragraph 102 of the NPPF.

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) is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

2.2 Additionally, the National Planning Practice Guidance states:

"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."

2.3 Other designations of land, such as green belt or conservation area status, do not necessarily preclude or support designation as LGS. But it is necessary to consider whether the additional designation is necessary and would serve a useful purpose.

2.4 In applying the NPPF criteria, there is no precise definition of 'close proximity', but 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.

2.5 In considering whether a space is demonstrably special to a local community, it is clearly important to engage with the community and to assess how the community uses a space. It is also important to engage with any owners of the land in question.

2.6 Consideration of whether the green space is local in character and not an extensive tract of land suggests spaces within a locality, rather than, for example, extensive green areas in the countryside around a settlement. There is no minimum area, provided land can meet the criteria at paragraph 102 of the NPPF.

2.7 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.

Identifying LGS

- 2.8 LGS candidate sites were initially suggested by members of the Steering Group and local residents as part of the community questionnaire. A total of 23 sites were identified.

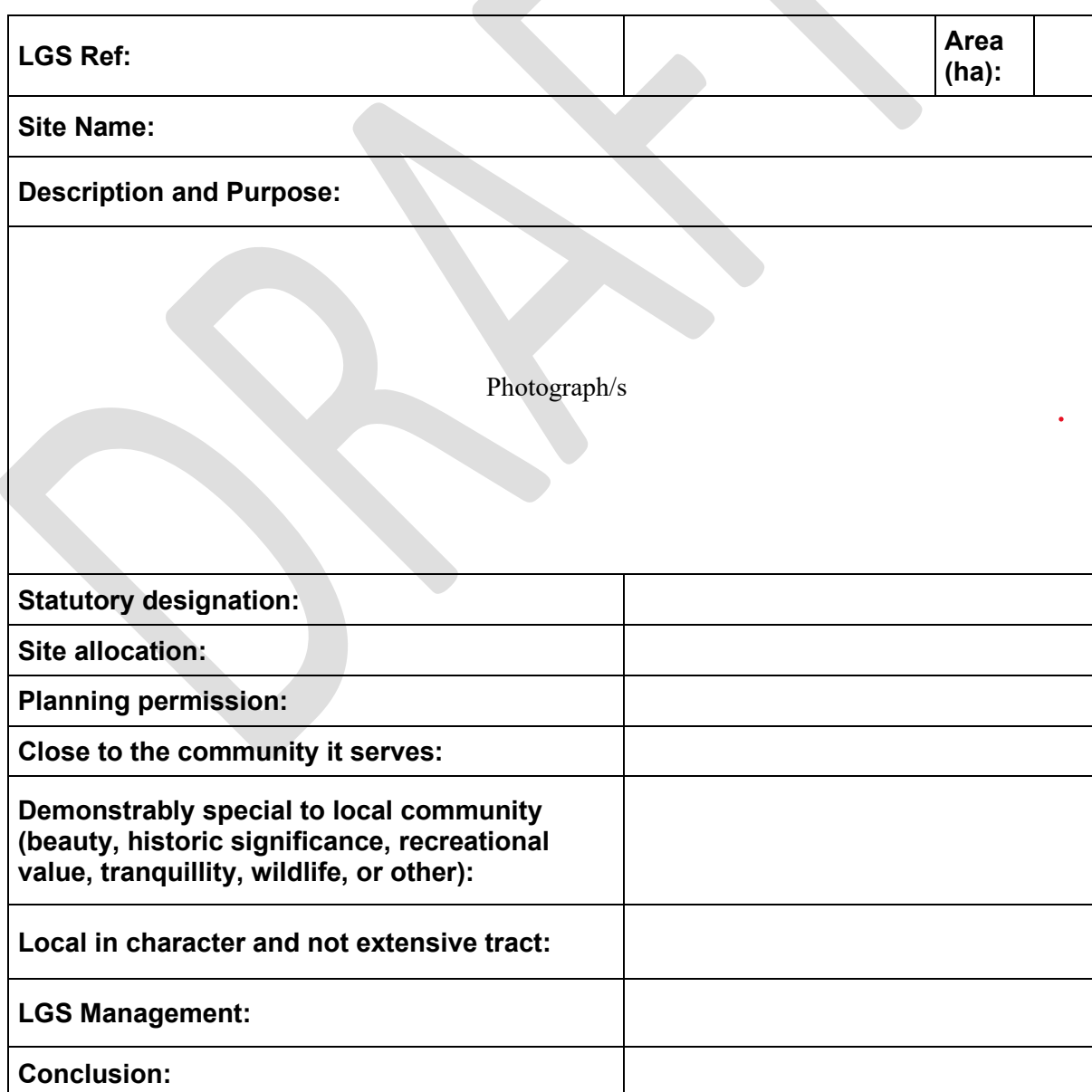
Initial Scoping

- 2.9 An initial scoping exercise was undertaken to screen out sites which did not meet the LGS criteria. While the PPG acknowledges that LGS sites do not necessarily need to be publicly accessible, it is considered that in order to be designated in the NDP, the site does need to serve and benefit the community. Sites which have no public access such as unrestricted access, or accessible through by a public right of way, and for which no evidence has been provided to demonstrate that they have been, or could be, used by the community it serves have been excluded from further assessment.

Candidate Site	Initial Scoping Assessment
1. Recreational Field, Meadow Springs SN5 3NH	Taken forward for assessment
2. Community Field, Church Place, SN5 3LS	Taken forward for assessment
3. The Mews, Meadow Springs	Taken forward for assessment
4. Village Green, Lydiard Green	Taken forward for assessment
5. Lydiard Plain	Screened out – This nomination is too broad to be included in the assessment.
6. Friths Copse	Taken forward for assessment
7. Webbs Wood	Screened out – This nomination is too broad to be included in the assessment.
8. Echo Lodge Meadows Nature Reserve	Screened out – This nomination is too broad to be included in the assessment.
9. Lydiard Park	Screened out – This nomination is too broad to be included in the assessment.
10. Areas between Holborn and Stone Lane/land currently within Local Gap	Screened out – This nomination is too broad to be included in the assessment.
11. School Playing Field	Screened out – This nomination is too broad to be included in the assessment.
12. Land to rear of Sun Inn and Forge Fields	Screened out – This nomination is too broad to be included in the assessment.
13. Land adjacent to Bailey Piece	Screened out – This nomination is too broad to be included in the assessment.
14. Field at Greenhill entrance, SN4 8EH	Screened out – This nomination is too broad to be included in the assessment.
15. Brickkiln Copse	Screened out – This nomination is too broad to be included in the assessment.

- 2.10 A total of 5 sites were therefore taken forward for assessment, using the NPPF criteria, field and map surveys.
- 2.11 The proforma at Figure 1 has been completed to assess each LGS candidate site. LGS management objectives are defined to understand how managed change of LGS may arise in accordance with 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.
- 2.12 All LGS will be subject to public consultation to seek community opinions on the values identified. Landowners of LGS candidate sites will be contacted about proposals to designate any part of their land as LGS and will have opportunities to make representations in respect of proposals in a draft plan.

Figure 1 – LGS assessment proforma

LGS Ref:		Area (ha):	
Site Name:			
Description and Purpose:			
Photograph/s 			
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:			

3. Assessment

3.1 The following pages provide the assessment of LGS candidate sites.

Site Reference (candidate sites)	Name
CS1	Recreational Field, Meadow Springs
CS2	Community Field
CS3	The Mews, Meadow Springs
CS4	Village Green, Lydiard Green
CS5	Friths Copse, Greatfield

LGS Ref: LM NP LGS #1		Area (ha):	3.02
Site Name: Recreational Field, Meadow Springs, SN5 3NH			
Description and Purpose: The field is a flat area of land and is valued for its recreational purpose, club house and beauty, including a distinctive view across Swindon to the hill beyond. The field is used extensively all year round. There is a children's playground, Lydiard Millicent Junior FC play matches during the football season and practice on weekday evenings throughout the summer. There are 14 teams aged from 5 to 18. Five cricket teams use the cricket pitch during the summer. The pitch is grass which is unusual and preferred by teams over artificial pitches. Jubilee Club House is fully equipped with changing rooms, meeting rooms and a kitchen. The Parish Council Office is also located in the building. The field is used by residents for exercise and for dog walking. The recreational field is accessed from the centre of the village and is easily accessible on foot from the main road through the village (The Street) via Chestnut Springs			
			
Statutory designation:	None		
Site allocation:	None		
Planning permission:	PL/2023/10048 – Improvements to facilities at Jubilee Club House		
Close to the community it serves:	Yes – lies adjacent to the settlement and is easily accessible off Meadow Springs. A space that is well used throughout the year and enjoyed by many people.		
Demonstrably special to local community (beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity, wildlife, or other):	Yes - wildlife, tranquillity, recreational value and beauty.		

Local in character and not extensive tract:	Yes – Defined parcel of land in the north of the village.
LGS Management:	Owned and managed by LMPC. The field is maintained throughout the year through a Grounds Maintenance contract which covers the play area, hedges and the field. The grass is kept to a maximum length of 25mm to allow football to be played all year round and the cricket outfield is kept to a length of 10mm during the cricket season. The club house is maintained as necessary by LMPC and is used as the Parish Office as well as changing facilities for the recreation field.
Conclusion:	In 2021 Made NP. The site meets the LGS criteria and will therefore be retained as a designation within the NDP.

LGS Ref: LM NP LGS #2		Area (ha):	0.29
Site Name: Community Field, SN5 3LS			
Description and Purpose: The Community Field is next to the Parish Hall, opposite the church and is within the conservation area. It overlooks the cemetery to the south which is also managed and maintained by LMPC. The field was purchased by the Parish Council to protect it and is currently used by the Parish Hall for functions. It was originally planned to turn the field into a play park/relaxation area. The field was used for 3 days of VE Day celebrations in 2025 organised by the Parish Council and a village fete in August 2026 organised by the Trustees of the Parish Hall. Both were very well attended. Planning permission was granted for change of use from agricultural to recreational (PL/2025/00557). There is a wall between the road/footpath and the field. The footpath is quite narrow at this point and LMPC would like to create an alternative footpath within the field to make access to the pre-school and primary school (left in picture below) safer for parents and children walking from the main village area.			
			
Statutory designation:	None		
Site allocation:	None		
Planning permission:	PL/2025/00557 – change of use from agricultural to recreational		
Close to the community it serves:	Yes - In the centre of the village next to the church and Parish Hall and is easily accessible off Church Place and adjacent Public Rights of Way. Enjoyed by the community through regular events.		

Demonstrably special to local community (beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity, wildlife, or other):	Used for recreational purposes. It is used for community events such as VE Day celebrations and fetes. It is in the conservation area and is included in the key views document. It allows a clear view from All Saints Church across open fields.
Local in character and not extensive tract:	Yes – Defined parcel of land which is situated centrally within the village.
LGS Management:	Owned by LMPC, rented to Parish Hall Trustees through a contract. The area covered by a grounds maintenance contract which ensures the field is mowed fortnightly from April to September
Conclusion:	In 2021 Made NP. The site meets the LGS criteria and will therefore be retained as a designation within the NDP.

LGS Ref: LM NP LGS #3		Area (ha):	0.06
Site Name: Green Space and link path between The Mews and Meadow Springs, SN5 3NH			
Description and Purpose:			
			
Statutory designation:	None		
Site allocation:	None		
Planning permission:	No		
Close to the community it serves:	Part of the main housing development in the village of Lydiard Millicent. Easy access on foot from the main road through the village (The Street) via Chestnut Springs		
Demonstrably special to local community (beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity, wildlife, or other):	Yes – tranquillity and recreational value. Good for relaxing, walking dogs or exercise in general.		
Local in character and not extensive tract:	Yes – Defined parcel of land within the existing Meadow Springs development, situated within the north of the village.		
LGS Management:	Owned and managed by LMPC. Managed as part of the grounds maintenance contract. Grass is cut every two weeks March to October and the path is kept clear of weeds.		
Conclusion:	The site meets the LGS criteria and can be taken forward for designation as Local Green Space within the NDP.		

LGS Ref: LM NP LGS #4		Area (ha):	0.19
Site Name: Village Green, Lydiard Green, SN5 3LP			
Description and Purpose: Lydiard Green is a registered Village Green (registered in 1976). Footpath LMIL38 runs through the Green across to Greatfield (also part of LM Parish). There are 3 WWII pillboxes, one on the Green and the others on private land but next to the Green and public footpath			
			
Statutory designation:	Village Green		
Site allocation:	None		
Planning permission:	None		
Close to the community it serves:	Yes		
Demonstrably special to local community (beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity, wildlife, or other):	Yes - wildlife, tranquillity, recreational value and beauty. Three WWII pillboxes are either on or visible from the Green (marked in dark red). The green was part of the defensive line GHQ Stop Line Red during the war.		
Local in character and not extensive tract:	Yes		
LGS Management:	Owned and managed by LMPC. The main area of the green is mowed and strimmed every two weeks from March to the end of October and for the rest a metre wide strip is strimmed to keep the public footpath clear for walkers.		
Conclusion:	The site meets the LGS criteria and can be taken forward for designation as Local Green Space within the NDP.		

LGS Ref: LM NP LGS #6		Area (ha):	8.82
Site Name: Friths Copse, SN4 8EQ			
Description and Purpose:			
			
Statutory designation:	Privately owned		
Site allocation:	None		
Planning permission:	None		
Close to the community it serves:	Yes - On the Western fringes of the main village but next to the Greenhill and Greatfield communities. The woodland is accessible with Public Rights of Way LMIL16 and LTRE25 running through the centre, with LTRE26 running along its western boundary.		
Demonstrably special to local community (beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity, wildlife, or other):	A biodiverse wildlife tranquil woodland that offers walkers a beautiful environment to exercise and experience a real sense of peace. Even more so at bluebell time.		
Local in character and not extensive tract:	Yes – A defined parcel of woodland in the west of the parish.		

LGS Management:	Privately owned but open access to the public. Part in LM and part in LT.
Conclusion:	This wood offers an area of resilience to future climate change as well as an area of great beauty and tranquility to the community. The site therefore meets the LGS criteria and can be taken forward for designation as Local Green Space within the NDP.

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4. Conclusion

4.1 Following the assessment, a total of 5 areas are recommended for designation in the neighbourhood plan, as follows:

- LGS1 Recreational Field, Meadow Springs
- LGS2 Community Field
- LGS3 The Mews, Meadow Springs
- LGS4 Village Green, Lydiard Green
- LGS5 Friths Copse, Greatfield

4.2 The Local Green Spaces are shown on the map overleaf.