

Local communities can identify green spaces for special protection (where new development is ruled out other than in very special circumstances). These are known as Local Green Spaces (NPPF 2019 para.s 99-101)

In order to qualify for the designation, it is important to demonstrate that the green space:

- is in **reasonably close proximity** to the community it serves
- **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
- is **local in character** and is **not an extensive tract of land**
- **is likely to endure** beyond the plan period (ie the green space is likely to continue to be valued and there are no existing planning consents or allocations in the development plan that would mean it should be developed)

How close is “in reasonably close proximity”?

There are no prescribed distances, however in general 800m is considered reasonable walking distance, so where a local green space is further from a settlement, special consideration should be given to the extent to which it is access and enjoyed. If public access is a key factor, then the site should normally be within easy walking distance of the community served.

What is “demonstrably special” and of “local significance”?

There is no specific guidance on this, but evidence of consultation showing strong support, the formation of ‘Friends of...’ type groups or other actions that make clear the space is of particular local interest should be cited. Where a Green Space is special because of a specific function it serves, and there may be a reasonable prospect of this function being relocated to another site, it would not be prudent to designate the site as a local green space (and suitable protection may already be given under general policies protecting community assets). Sites can be in private landownership and there does not need to be public access.

What is “an extensive tract of land”?

There is no prescribed upper size limit, so this is a matter of judgement in knowledge of the local context. In particular the reference to ‘local in character’ should be considered – if there is no notable difference in character between the proposed site and the surrounding fields, then the space may not readily qualify. Certainly some spaces in excess of 5ha have been considered to be too extensive by Neighbourhood Plan examiners, but it is a matter of judgement in light of local circumstances.

What if there is already an existing level of protection?

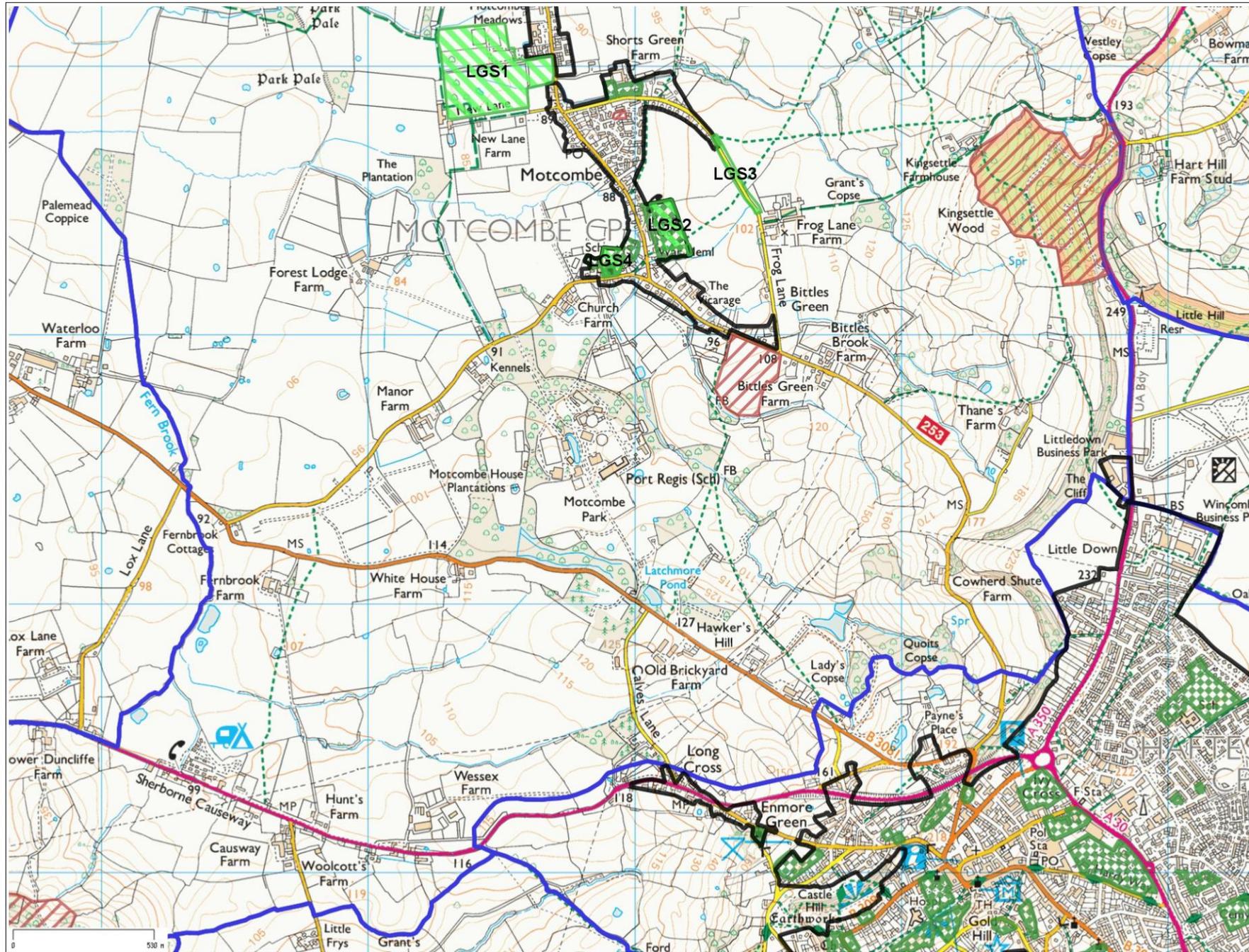
Different types of designations are intended to achieve different purposes. If land is already protected by another designation, consideration should be given to whether any additional local benefit would be gained by designation as Local Green Space. North Dorset has an ‘Important Open and Wooded Areas; designation dating from the 2003 adopted Local Plan but the reasons for the designation are no longer known as the records underpinning them were not retained by the Local Planning Authority. It was confirmed during both the 2003 and 2015 Local Plan examinations that these needed to be reviewed and that such a review could be through a Neighbourhood Plan.

The following table illustrates how the various spaces meet the NPPF tests:

Local Green Space	Size (ha)	Distance (if > 400m from settlement)	Local Significance				Locally Important (% agree)	Existing statutory designations	Overview
			Landscape Value	Historic Significance	Recreation Value	Wildlife Value			
LGS1: Motcombe Meadows and Allotments	10.5	n/a (adjoining settlement)	Medium	Low	High	Medium	94% (69% allotments)	None	A very well used yet tranquil recreation area with allotments, tree planting and pond. It supports many species of butterfly; barn owls and other birds; and the local deer population often frequent the meadows. Transferred to Motcombe Parish Council as part of S106 planning agreement. Included in the QEII Fields in Trust Although larger than some in the context of Motcombe this is the main accessible open space and maintained specifically for the community's use It includes a bridleway link to Gillingham (also on to Turnpike & Coppleridge).
LGS2: Memorial Hall playing field	1.6	n/a (adjoining settlement)	Medium	Medium	High	Low	89%	None	Well used by villagers, it provides an excellent venue for Village activities. This field was donated to the community by Lord Stalbridge in 1926 (with the Hall opening in 1928) and is administered by the Motcombe Memorial Trust. It includes a footpath link to Shorts Green Lane (which in turn links to Kingsettle Woods). The area around the hall and children's play area has been excluded to provide more flexible policy approach to buildings within these peripheral areas that would meet the wider recreational purposes of the Trust.
LGS3: Frog Lane avenue	0.8 (inc highway)	n/a (adjoining settlement)	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	90%	None	The oak trees to either side are owned and maintained by the owners of Frog Lane Farm, and form a distinctive avenue. The highway and verges are well used by walkers and provide extensive views to the east and west, as well as a local wildlife corridor
LGS4: St Mary's Churchyard	0.6	n/a (adjoining settlement)	Low	High	Medium	Medium	85%	Conservation Area / Listed Building curtilage	A tranquil churchyard belonging to the Church of England. It surrounds the Grade II* St Mary's Church. It is managed with wildlife as part of the Living Churchyards Project, overseen by the Dorset Wildlife Trust.

The following table illustrates other spaces that were assessed but did not readily meet the NPPF tests:

Other Green Spaces	Reason for Assessment	Size (ha)	Distance (if > 400m from town)	Local Significance				Locally Important (% agree)	Existing statutory designations	Conclusions
				Landscape Value	Historic Significance	Recreation Value	Wildlife Value			
Land to rear of Motcombe Primary School	Local Plan IOWA designation	0.2	n/a (adjoining settlement)	Low	Medium	Medium	Low	n/k	Conservation Area / Listed Building curtilage	No public access, recreation limited to school used. Historic significance as setting to Grade II Listed Building and Conservation Area already covered by relevant legislation
Land to rear of Barne House and Church Walk	Local Plan IOWA designation	0.5	n/a (adjoining settlement)	Low	Medium	Low	Low	n/k	Conservation Area / Listed Building curtilage	No public access. Historic significance as setting to Grade II Listed Buildings and Conservation Area already covered by relevant legislation
Land south of Shorts Green Courtyard	Local Plan IOWA designation	0.6	n/a (adjoining settlement)	Medium	Low	Low	Medium	n/k	None	Area of unmanaged verge of no real notable value, reason for original designation not known.
Open Space in The Limes / Willow Way	Public Open Space	0.1	n/a (adjoining settlement)	Low	Low	Medium	Low	n/k	None	Small amenity area planted with trees within a modern housing estate – of limited local significance given size and location
Kingsettle Woods	Publicly accessible woodland	17	1.2km	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	87%	TPO, AONB	Woodland Trust site, ancient woodland and local landmark. However size and distance from settlement fail the LGS criteria.
Duncliffe Wood	Publicly accessible woodland	10 (within parish)	> 3km	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	n/k	None	Woodland Trust site (although the majority of the wood lies in the adjoining parish) and local landmark. However size and distance from settlement fail the LGS criteria.
Land adjoining Shires Meadow	Suggested by objectors to site's allocation	4.8 (most of field)	n/a (adjoining settlement)	Medium	Low	Low	Low	n/k	None	Although a pleasant green field including views from footpath it is of no recognisable local significance and merited few suggestions at the initial household survey stage.



Legend

- Green Spaces 
- Discarded LGS 
- Settlement Boundaries 
- IOWA 
- Parishes 