

**REPORT FROM:** ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: PLANNING BUILDING CONTROL & REGULATORY SERVICES

**TO:** EXECUTIVE

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**PENDLE LOCAL PLAN  
LOCAL GREEN SPACE REPORT AND METHODOLOGY**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- (1) To inform Members of the sites nominated for designation as Local Green Space.
- (2) To advise Members of the officer recommendations on the designation of sites as Local Green Space and request that Members approve the Local Green Space Report and Methodology for public consultation.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (1) That Members note the content of this report.
- (2) That Members agree to publish the officer recommendations on the designation of sites as Local Green Space and make it available for a four-week public consultation, to allow interested parties to comment on the Council's recommendations.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (1) To prepare a robust and credible evidence base for the policies in the Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition 2021-2040.
- (2) To progress towards submission of the Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition 2021-2040 to the Secretary of State for independent examination, in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, as amended.

## **ISSUE**

### **Background**

In 2012, the National Planning Policy Framework ["NPPF"] introduced the concept of Local Green Space ["LGS"]. This policy designation provides special protection for green areas of land that are of particular importance to a local community.

LGS sites can only be designated when the Local Plan (Pendle Council) or a Neighbourhood Plan (Town or Parish Council) is prepared or updated.

A total of 37 LGS sites, covering an area of over 93 hectares have already been designated in the borough's four adopted neighbourhood plans, prepared by the town and parish councils for Trawden Forest (2018), Barrowford (2019), Kelbrook & Sough (2022) and Colne (2023). These sites are listed in Appendix 3 of the attached report.

On Thursday 25 May 2023, the Executive approved the first draft of the Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition ["Local Plan"] for public consultation. The consultation, held between 23 June and 18 August 2023, sought further LGS site nominations to provide full coverage across the borough.

An additional 55 site nominations have been assessed.

### **The importance of Green Space**

Green spaces help to make our towns and villages sustainable places to live. They are diverse in character, ranging from large formal parks and gardens to small informal grassed areas. They bring social, economic and environmental benefits, including:

- Making a significant contribution to the public realm and the quality and distinctiveness of our communities.
- Providing opportunities for sport and recreation, helping to support healthy lifestyles and promote community-wellbeing
- Offering a diverse range of habitats, making a significant contribution to biodiversity and helping to address the effects of climate change.

The designation of LGS sites must follow the criteria outlined in paragraphs 101-103 of the NPPF. Further guidance is contained in the Planning Practice Guidance ["PPG"] on Open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and local green space.

### **The designation of Local Green Space**

To qualify for designation as LGS, sites should be:

1. Reasonably close to the community they serve.

There is no definition of 'reasonably close' so it is for individual planning authorities to decide. It is likely to vary depending on the size of the community to which the LGS site relates, the size of the green space or the value placed on it by the community.

2. Demonstrably special to a local community.

Evidence must be provided to show how the land is used by the local community and that it holds a particular local significance, by addressing one or more of the following criteria:

(a) Beauty

The site should be visually attractive or contribute to landscape character and or setting of the settlement. It may link up with other open spaces and allow views through or beyond the settlement which are valued locally.

(b) Historic significance

The land should provide a setting for, and allow views of, heritage assets or other locally valued features.

(c) Recreational value

It must have local significance for recreation, perhaps through the variety of activities it supports, and be of value to the community.

(d) Tranquillity

Provide an area of calm and a space for quiet reflection.

(e) Richness of wildlife

Provide a valuable habitat as recognised by some objective evidence, such as a designation as an ecological site.

3. Local in character and not an extensive tract of land.

The NPPF does not define what constitutes an 'extensive tract of land'. The criteria may differ between settlements depending on their physical size and population. The land to be designated would normally be fairly self-contained with clearly defined edges.

## The designation of Local Green Space

The attached LGS Report and Methodology looks at each of the site nominations received in response to the public consultation.

Planning officers have visited each site and carried out an independent assessment. Their findings are presented alongside the evidence submitted to justify why a site is considered to be of 'particular importance' to the local community.

The report will be made available so that interested parties can comment on the site assessments.

## IMPLICATIONS

<b>Policy:</b>	The Local Plan forms part of the statutory development. Planning law requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with policies of the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
<b>Financial:</b>	Public consultation will be carried out using the allocated budget.
<b>Legal:</b>	The Council is required to prepare a Local Plan to meet Government legislation.
<b>Risk Management:</b>	The Government is proposing significant reforms to the planning system. Should the Local Plan follow the timetable set out in the Local Development Scheme, these changes are unlikely to affect the adoption of the Local Plan, which must be submitted for examination before 30 June 2025.

<b>Health and Safety:</b>	None identified as a result of this report
<b>Sustainability:</b>	The economic, social and environmental impact of the policies in the Local Plan are addressed in the accompanying Sustainability Report and the Habitat Regulations Assessment.
<b>Community Safety:</b>	None identified as a result of this report
<b>Equality and Diversity:</b>	The impact of planning policies on equality and diversity are addressed through the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal.

## **APPENDICES**

(1) Local Green Space Report and Methodology

## **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- (1) National Planning Policy Framework (September 2023)
- (2) Planning Practice Guidance – Open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and local green space