

Local Green Space Nominations (May 2026)

Guidance Note and Frequently Asked Questions

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1 Call for Local Green Spaces 2026

- 1.1 Access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for health and the wellbeing of communities. The designation of land as Local Green Space through local plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Planning policies for managing development within Local Green Spaces are consistent with Green Belts and therefore the level of protection afforded through designation is high.
- 1.2 Local Green Spaces can only be designated when a Plan is being prepared or updated. We need your help to identify areas of Local Green Space across the borough. Through our new Local Plan, communities are invited to promote sites they consider meet the below criteria which are set out in national planning policy. All sites submitted will be assessed against the criteria and considered for designation through the new Local Plan.
- 1.3 The call for Local Green Spaces will run from **28 May to 23 July 2026 at 5pm.**

2 How can I nominate a green space?

- 2.1 To complete an electronic version of our nomination form, please visit our planning policy consultation portal at <https://consult.luton.gov.uk/kse/>. This is our preferred method of receiving comments). You must also agree (tick) the **Privacy Notice** in Section 6.
- 2.2 Alternatively, if you cannot use the Objective portal, you can visit our web page at <http://www.luton.gov.uk/newlocalplan> to download and provide a completed scanned response form which should be emailed to localplan@luton.gov.uk. Or send your printed hard copy response in an envelope to:

<p>Freepost Luton Borough Council</p> <p>Planning Consultation</p>
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- 2.3 You can also drop the form off at the Council Offices at the town hall marked for the attention of the Planning Policy Team, 2nd Floor, Luton Town Hall, George Street, Luton LU1 2BQ.
- 2.4 Please email us at the address above or leave a message for us on 07845034931, if you would like to ask for a paper copy of this response form to be sent to you.

3 What is Local Green Space?

- 3.1 Whilst areas of open space and land of environmental value has always been identified by the council within the Local Plan, the Local Green Space is a designation introduced by central government through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 3.2 The designation focusses on the importance of identified areas for the local community. National planning policy also makes it clear that this designation should be consistent with

wider planning policy for an area included the provision of new homes and employment opportunities, and it should not be seen as means to prevent wider development needs.

4 Policy Background

- 4.1 The [National Policy Framework December 2024 \(as amended February 2025\)](#) (NPPF) states that:

105. The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Designating land as Local Green Space should 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 updated, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.

106. The Local Green Space 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) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

107. Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts.

- 4.2 Further information on the Local Green Space designation is available in [Planning Practice Guidance](#). [Draft NPPF December 2025](#) rolls this forward in proposed Policy HC2 and HC8.

5 Frequently Asked Questions

What is the designation process?

- 5.1 We plan to undertake the following process for the potential designation of sites.
- 5.2 **Step 1:** Consultation with stakeholders, groups and the community as part of the local plan process (Scoping Consultation: Local Plan (Regulation 20) document).
- 5.3 Alongside the consultation on our issues and options paper we are undertaking a call for nominations for Local Green Spaces.
- 5.4 A further call for sites and call for nominations for local green spaces may be carried out at a later date.
- 5.5 **Step 2:** Assess the identified sites.
- 5.6 Once a list of potential sites is collated from a variety of sources, their suitability for designation as a Local Green Space will be assessed against the criteria set out later in this document
- 5.7 We will review the evidence provided through the site assessment forms and will evaluate whether each site is suitable for designation as a Local Green Space or whether any additional evidence is required.

- 5.8 If the evidence to be found sufficiently robust and the site satisfies all the criteria necessary for designation, provided the site is not already sufficiently protected by other designations, then the site will be proposed for Local Green Space designation. We may also use other sources of information, such as sites identified through a green infrastructure study or landscape character assessment, to identify further sites.
- 5.9 A full assessment of all sites considered for Local Green Space designation will be included within a supporting Local Green Space Assessment document accompanying a new local plan.
- 5.10 **Step 3:** Consult with councils, landowners, and other organisations.
- 5.11 Planning Practice Guidance clarifies that a Local Green Space does not need to be in public ownership. However, the guidance also states how the Local Planning Authority ***'should contact landowners at an early stage about proposals to designate any part of their land as Local Green Space'*** but also that 'landowners will have opportunities to make representations in respect of proposals in a draft plan'.
- 5.12 Following the national guidance, the council will contact landowners prior to the Regulation 23 Consultation on proposed local plan content and evidence so to ensure that landowners of sites proposed for designation are made aware that their site or sites are being proposed, and also provide details on how to sign up to the Local Plan consultation portal if they wished to comment on the proposal in support or objection.
- 5.13 **Step 4: Consult the community on proposed designations (Regulation 27 Consultation on the proposed local plan).**
- 5.14 We will consult on the proposed local green space designations through public consultation as part of the local plan process. Anybody can object or support policies or sites in a plan during the consultation process and we must consider these consultation responses.
- 5.15 All consultation responses received during the regulatory consultation stages will be considered and sites reassessed accordingly with the policy wording and mapping amended as required prior to the Regulation 34 submission of documents and information to the Secretary of State.
- 5.16 **Step 5: Examination and Adoption**
- 5.17 Under Regulation 34 (Submission of documents and information to the Secretary of State) the Local Plan will be submitted for examination to the Planning Inspectorate. If the Inspector agrees, the Local Green Spaces will be adopted through the local plan adoption process.

How will nominations be assessed?

- 5.18 To qualify as a Local Green Space, a site should fall within the criteria set out in the NPPF and further detailed in the planning practice guidance.
- Criterion 1: Land is not subject of a planning permission for development.
 - Criterion 2: The space is not allocated or proposed for development in the Local or Neighbourhood Plan
 - Criterion 3: The space is not an extensive tract of land and is local in character
 - Criterion 4: The space is within close proximity of the community it serves

- Criterion 5: The space is demonstrably special to the local community and holds particular local significance, for example, because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife.

- 5.19 These criteria provide guidance, which should then be interpreted at a local level. Successfully satisfying all five criteria does not, however, guarantee Local Green Space designation, as the site may already be sufficiently protected by existing designations.
- 5.20 We will consider any evidence submitted against any sub-criteria and come to a judgement as to whether or not to propose a site as Local Green Space, giving clear reasons as to why.

What could it mean for the space to hold a particular local significance because of its beauty?

- 5.21 Examples of this could be being referred to in landscape character assessments as being a particular point of interest, being in an area of landscape value, or within the Chilterns National Landscape.

What could it mean for a site to hold a particular local significance because of its historic significance?

- 5.22 Examples of this could include whether there are any historic buildings or heritage assets on the site (e.g. listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, registered parks and gardens), or important historic landscape features on the site (e.g. old hedgerows, historic garden features, historic ponds / waterways), or the site playing an important role in the historic development of the town.

What could it mean for the space to hold a particular local significance because of its recreational value?

- 5.23 Examples of this could include the site being used for playing sport, for formal or informal recreation.

What could it mean for a site to hold a particular local significance because of its tranquillity?

- 5.24 Examples of this could include whether there are no roads or busy areas close by, providing relative tranquillity to the local area.

What could it mean for a site to hold a particular local significance because of its richness in wildlife?

- 5.25 Examples of this could include the site being formally designated for its wildlife value (e.g. a district of county wildlife site), the site having notable species present or notable biodiversity interest or value.

How does Local Green Space designation relate to development?

- 5.26 [NPPG](#) (Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 37-007-20140306) explains 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.

What if land has planning permission for development?

- 5.27 [NPPG](#) (Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 37-008-20140306) explains that the 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.

What types of green area can be identified as Local Green Space?

- 5.28 [NPPG](#) (Paragraph: 013 Reference ID: 37-013-20140306) explains that the green area will need to meet the criteria set out in [Paragraph 107](#) of the National Planning Policy Framework. 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.

Who decides which areas will qualify for protection as Local Green Space?

- 5.29 In the preparation of this Local Plan, it will be up to the Local Planning Authority (Luton Council) to come to an objective and balanced decision, based on the evidence that is available to us. Local Green Spaces can only be designated within a Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan.

What happens if a site is not designated as a Local Green Space?

- 5.30 Nominations will be assessed in accordance with the criteria outlined in this document and in national planning policy and guidance. If a site is not considered to meet the criteria, it will not be proposed for designation in the Local Plan. Applicants, landowners, the community and other stakeholders will be able to comment on the draft Local Plan during periods of public consultation. Any comments will be considered as part of the Local Plan preparation process.

Does land designated as a Local Green Space need to be in public ownership?

- 5.31 [NPPG](#) (Paragraph: 019 Reference ID: 37-019-20140306) explains that a Local Green Space does not need to be in public ownership. However, the local planning authority (in the case of local plan making) or the qualifying body (in the case of neighbourhood plan making) should contact landowners at an early stage about proposals to designate any part of their land as Local Green Space. Landowners will have opportunities to make representations in respect of proposals in a draft plan.

Can land designated as a Local Green Space be crossed by Public rights of Way?

- 5.32 [NPPG](#) (Paragraph: 018 Reference ID: 37-018-20140306) explain sites that may be considered for designation as Local Green Space may be crossed by [public rights of way](#). 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.

How big can a Local Green Space be?

- 5.33 [NPPG](#) (Paragraph: 015 Reference ID: 37-015-20140306) explains that there are no hard and fast rules about how big a Local Green Space can be because places are different and a degree of judgment will inevitably be needed. However, [Paragraph 107](#) of the National Planning Policy Framework is clear that Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green area concerned is not an extensive tract of land. Consequently, blanket designation of open countryside adjacent to settlements will not be appropriate. In particular, designation should not be proposed as a 'back door' way to try to achieve what would amount to a new area of Green Belt by another name.

Is there a minimum area?

- 5.34 [NPPG](#) (Paragraph: 016 Reference ID: 37-016-20140306) explains that provided land can meet the criteria at [Paragraph 107](#) of the National Planning Policy Framework there is no lower size limit for a Local Green Space.

How close does a Local Green Space need to be to the community it serves?

- 5.35 [NPPG](#) (Paragraph: 014 Reference ID: 37-014-20140306) explains that the proximity of a Local Green Space to the community it serves will depend on local circumstances, including why the green area is seen as special, but it must be reasonably close. For example, if public access is a key factor, then the site would normally be within easy walking distance of the community served.

Who will manage Local Green Space?

- 5.36 [NPPG](#) (Paragraph: 021 Reference ID: 37-021-20140306) explains that management of land designated as Local Green Space will remain the responsibility of its owner. If the features that make a green area special and locally significant are to be conserved, how it will be managed in the future is likely to be an important consideration. Local communities can consider how, with the landowner's agreement, they might be able to get involved, perhaps in partnership with interested organisations that can provide advice or resources (ppg)

What about public access?

- 5.37 [NPPG](#) (Paragraph: 017 Reference ID: 37-017-20140306) explains that 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.

What if land is already protected by Green Belt or as Metropolitan Open Land (in London)?

- 5.38 [NPPG](#) (Paragraph: 010 Reference ID: 37-010-20140306) explains that if land is already protected by Green Belt policy, or in London, policy on Metropolitan Open Land, then consideration should be given to whether any additional local benefit would be gained by designation as Local Green Space.

What if land is already protected by designations such as National Park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Scheduled Ancient Monument or conservation area?

- 5.39 [NPPG](#) (Paragraph: 011 Reference ID: 37-011-20140306) explains that different types of designations are intended to achieve different purposes. If land is already protected by designation, then consideration should be given to whether any additional local benefit would be gained by designation as Local Green Space.

Can all communities benefit from Local Green Space?

- 5.40 [NPPG](#) (Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 37-009-20140306) explains that Local Green Spaces may be designated where those spaces are demonstrably special to the local community, whether in a village or in a neighbourhood in a town or city.

What about new communities?

- 5.41 [NPPG](#) (Paragraph: 012 Reference ID: 37-012-20140306) explains that new residential areas may include green areas that were planned as part of the development. Such green areas could be designated as Local Green Space if they are demonstrably special and hold particular local significance.

Would designation place any restrictions or obligations on land owners?

- 5.42 [NPPG](#) (Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 37-020-20140306) explains that designating a green area as Local Green Space would give it protection consistent with that in respect of Green Belt, but otherwise there are no new restrictions or obligations on landowners.

6 Your contact details

Name(Required):
Company/Organisation (Optional):
Address (Required):
Postcode (Required):
Telephone (Optional):
Email (Required):

Would you like to be notified of future updates of planning policy and plan making stages including the New Local Plan for Luton? Please tick if you wish to be added to our database (Optional).	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	
Please tick all topics that apply below that you are interested in.	
Consultation on proposed Local Plan content and evidence?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Publication of the Planning Inspectorate observations or advice?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consultation on the proposed Local Plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Submission of the proposed Local Plan to the Secretary of State for independent examination?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information about the independent examination, documents/evidence submitted and opportunity to appear?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Decisions and recommendations of the examiner?	<input type="checkbox"/>
The adoption/approval of the Local Plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>
All of the above?	<input type="checkbox"/>
None of the above?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other planning policy making?	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please review the Privacy Notice and tick that you agree to it in order for us to publish your site information and legally hold your contact/personal details privately which won't be published (Required).
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>

7 Privacy Notice

- 7.1 We are committed to protecting your privacy when you use our services. This privacy notice explains how we use your information you and how we protect your privacy.
- 7.2 A planning service specific privacy notice is also included below and explains what we do with your data within the planning service, where it is different to the main policy below. We'll also provide information about who we may share your information with and why.
- 7.3 If you have any concerns or questions about how we look after your personal information, please contact us at dataprotection@luton.gov.uk.

***Please note: the above email address is for data protection queries and subject access requests only.**

Data controller

Luton Council

- Luton Council, Town Hall, George Street, Luton, LU1 2BQ

Data protection officer

Donna McLeod

- Luton Council, Town Hall, George Street, Luton, LU1 2BQ

8 Planning service Privacy Notice

- 8.1 We're committed to protecting your privacy when you use our services. We have a data protection officer who makes sure we respect your rights and follow the law.
- 8.2 If you have any concerns or questions about how we look after your personal information, please contact us at dataprotection@luton.gov.uk.
- 8.3 As the planning department for Luton Council, we deal with:
- planning policy
 - planning applications (including minerals and waste, listed buildings, trees and high hedges)
 - planning enforcement and appeals

Personal data

- 8.4 Personal data we will hold, include:-

- name
- address
- email address
- telephone number
- land ownership/ interest details
- signatures
- special category data (such as health conditions, disabilities, bank statements, tenancy agreements etc.)

8.5 We receive application information either directly from the application or via a planning agent on their behalf. Information is provided to us via:

- the Planning Portal
- email
- paper copy
- online form
- direct secure access to our document management system
- consultation portal

84.6 We also receive comments, representations, allegations, requests and questions via our online planning register planning consultation portal, email, letter and online forms and payments via the planning portal online payment portal, our own online payment portal, via BACS and cheques. The planning service will also be using a drone to improve our information gathering in the Borough to aide our Planning Enforcement investigations, our assessment of planning applications, our monitoring of developments, existing uses and the survey of sites for the potential for site designation for planning policy purposes.

8.7 The planning department your personal data to:

- make decisions and provide advice on planning applications
- make planning policies
- work with neighbouring authorities on strategic policies
- respond to allegations of unlawful development
- monitor development
- enter legal agreements, serve notices and promote the best use of land

Lawful basis

Personal Data

8.8 Article 6 (c) - processing is necessary for the compliance with a legal obligation to which the controller is subject

Special category data

8.9 Article 6(e) - processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller.

Supporting information

8.10 The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 requires that public consultation be carried out as part of the decision-making process for planning applications.

- 8.11 [The Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2026](#) set out the procedure for the adoption of a local plan, which too requires various stages of consultation.
- 8.12 To allow us to make decisions, we must be provided with relevant personal data. In a small number of circumstances individuals will provide us with “special category data” in support of their application (e.g. evidence of medical history). Processing of personal data is necessary to allow us to evaluate the impact of any development or policies in the Local Plan when undertaking its planning functions. For example, the address of a representor’s property may be relevant in this context. We are unable to consider the harm or otherwise from a scheme to the representor’s property or amenities where the representation is anonymised and the location of the property is not disclosed.
- 8.13 We are obliged under the regulations to make some information available on our planning register. This is a permanent record of our planning decisions that form part of the planning history of a site, along with other facts that form part of the “land search”.
- 8.14 Your contact details and comment are recorded on our secure planning system. If you have requested to be entirely anonymised, only your comment will be recorded. If you have submitted an anonymous comment, we will not be able to inform you of any committee and/or appeal details.
- 8.15 Information on Planning Enforcement cases will be reviewed case by case to see what can be disclosed to the public. Any data or information that may be used in future formal litigation will be retained and not disclosed under legal privilege.
- 8.16 Any personal and private information obtained by drone use will only be used internally and not shared publicly or externally unless consented by the individual.
- 8.17 Please see the [Planning Advisory Service’s Planning and GDPR Guide](#) for more information.

Who we share your information with:

- other teams and services within Luton Council where law permits, or it is necessary to do so
- the Planning Inspectorate
- planning committees
- external consultees (e.g. fire service, water companies, the police, the environment agency, natural England, historic England, active travel England etc.)

Why we share your information

- 8.18 We are obliged to consult within the council, with external agencies and with residents depending on the nature of your application.
- 8.19 We will make details of planning applications available online so that people can contribute their comments, this will include the applicant/agent’s name and address.
- 8.20 We apply redactions to personal contact details e.g. telephone numbers, email addresses and signatures from public view. However, we will continue to hold the unredacted version on our planning system and this can be viewed by planning staff when necessary.
- **Please note:** agent’s details are not normally classed as personal data.

- 8.21 We also redact special category data e.g. supporting statements that include information concerning your health and any information deemed confidential e.g. bank statements, tenancy agreements etc.
- 8.22 We will sometimes need to share the information we have with other teams within the council, to receive comments related to the decision-making process.
- 8.23 If you are submitting supporting information which you would like to be treated confidentially or wish to be specifically withheld from the public register, please label this appropriately. You can do this by contacting developmentcontrol@luton.gov.uk.

Planning Enforcement

- 8.24 We will keep completely confidential any details received about a planning enforcement complaint, including the details of the person making the complaint.
- 8.25 Further details regarding this is provided in the Council's adopted [Planning Enforcement Charter](#)
- 8.26 We will update the complainant on process with an enforcement complaint (as per the Planning Enforcement Charter).

Any automated decision making or profiling

None.

Transfer of data to another country

- 8.27 No information within planning is transferred to another country. None of the systems we use are hosted abroad.
- 8.28 The majority of personal information is stored on systems in the UK. But there are some occasions where your information may leave the UK either in order to get to another organisation or if it's stored in a system outside of the EU.
- 8.29 We have additional protections on your information if it leaves the UK ranging from secure ways of transferring data to ensuring we have a robust contract in place with any third party who may transfer it out of the EU.
- 8.30 If we need to send your information to an 'unsafe' location we'll always seek advice from the Information Commissioner first.

Retention ('how long we keep your information for')

8.31 The data will be kept in accordance with our retention schedule. We only keep information for as long as it is needed. This will be based on either a legal requirement (where a law says we have to keep information for a specific period of time) or accepted business practice.

Exercising your rights

8.32 You have the right to ask us to amend or delete your data as well transfer or limit its use.

8.33 Each request will be considered individually. Where we are required to keep your data by law, we may be unable to action your request. In all circumstances we will explain our decision making in writing to you.

8.33 Please see our main privacy statement using the green button below if you want more information on how:

- we keep your data safe
- to request a change to the records we hold
- to make a complaint