PLAN MID DEVON

Local Green Space

Consultation package for parish and town councils

Consultation period: 17/09/2026 – 07/01/2027

Closing date: Thursday 07 January 2027

Return to: gsibley@middevon.gov.uk

1. Invitation and purpose

Mid Devon District Council is preparing Plan Mid Devon, a new local plan covering the period 2026–2046. The plan will guide future development and the use of land across the district, while identifying those places and environmental assets that warrant protection.

As part of the evidence gathering for Plan Mid Devon, the Council is undertaking a review of Local Green Space designations across the district and inviting parish and town councils to nominate additional sites for consideration.

Local Green Space is a specific planning designation established through national planning policy. It provides particular protection for green areas that are demonstrably special to the communities they serve. It is not a general designation for every valued open space, recreation ground, playing field or area of countryside. To qualify, land must satisfy all the relevant tests in the National Planning Policy Framework, be supported by proportionate evidence and have a clearly defined boundary capable of being shown on the policies map.

The Council's approach distinguishes between three categories of site:

- Local Green Spaces designated through the adopted Mid Devon Local Plan will be reviewed by the Council to determine whether their designation, justification and boundaries remain appropriate and should be carried forward into Plan Mid Devon. Parish and town councils are not being asked to reassess these sites through this consultation, although any relevant updated information may be submitted to assist the Council's review.
- Local Green Spaces designated through made neighbourhood plans form part of the statutory development plan and have already been subject to the neighbourhood plan preparation, examination and making process. Parish and town councils are not being asked to renominate or reassess these sites through this consultation. As Plan Mid Devon progresses, existing Local Green Space designations will be taken into account alongside any emerging proposals through the normal plan-making process.
- Parish and town councils are being invited to nominate genuinely new Local Green Spaces that are not already designated through either the adopted Local Plan or a made neighbourhood plan.

The principal purpose of this consultation is therefore to identify any additional green areas that parish and town councils consider may meet the national requirements for designation as Local Green Space. For each new site proposed, the Council will require a clearly defined boundary map, information about the site and its ownership, and sufficient evidence to demonstrate why the particular space is close to the community it serves, demonstrably special and of particular local significance, local in character and not an extensive tract of land.

The submission of a site does not mean that it will automatically be designated. The Council will assess all nominations consistently against the National Planning Policy Framework, Planning Practice Guidance, the emerging spatial strategy for Plan Mid Devon and other relevant planning evidence. Suitable sites may then be taken forward for consultation as proposed Local Green Space designations through the subsequent stages of preparing Plan Mid Devon.

Following this consultation, the Council will assess the nominated sites against the requirements of national planning policy and guidance. The detailed assessment methodology and the findings for individual sites will be set out in a Local Green Space Topic Paper forming part of the evidence supporting Plan Mid Devon.

2. National policy context

2.1 National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published on 17 August 2026 replaces the December 2024 Framework. It distinguishes between plan-making policy and national decision-making policy. Local Green Space designation is addressed by plan-making policy HC2 and development affecting designated Local Green Space is addressed by national decision-making policy HC8.

Under policy HC2, Local Green Space designation should be limited to land that:

- is in 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, tranquillity or richness of wildlife; and
- is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

Designation must also be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and the provision of sufficient land for homes, jobs and other needs. It should occur when a plan is prepared or updated and should be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.

2.2 Planning Practice Guidance

The Government's Planning Practice Guidance explains how the national tests should be applied. Its main practical points are:

- designation should not undermine the identification of sufficient suitable land to meet development needs;
- designation will rarely be appropriate where land has an implementable planning permission, although this is not an absolute prohibition;
- where land already has another designation, the additional local benefit of Local Green Space designation should be demonstrated;
- there is no fixed maximum or minimum size, but blanket designation of open countryside or a 'back door' Green Belt is inappropriate;
- public access is not essential: land may be valued for wildlife, history or beauty even where access is restricted;
- a public right of way alone does not justify designation of a linear corridor;
- land may be privately owned, but landowners should be contacted at an early stage; and
- designation does not transfer ownership or management responsibility and does not itself create public access rights.

3. Current development-plan position

The statutory development plan currently includes the adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013–2033 and five made neighbourhood plans. Local Green Spaces already designated through made neighbourhood plans are not the subject of this call for nominations. These existing designations will be taken into account through the preparation of Plan Mid Devon and do not need to be submitted again at this stage.

Source	Current position	Treatment in this exercise
Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan	Policy DM24 identifies seven Local Green Spaces.	The Council will review whether these should be carried forward into Plan Mid Devon, including their boundaries and continuing justification.
Made neighbourhood plans	Cullompton, Silverton, Tiverton and Willand designate Local Green Spaces. Crediton does not designate any.	Local Green Spaces identified through made neighbourhood plans will be taken into account in preparing Plan Mid Devon and do not need to be put forward again through this consultation.
New nominations	No development-plan status unless and until included in an adopted or made plan.	The Council will assess nominations and decide which, if any, should be proposed in Plan Mid Devon.

4. How this work will feed into Plan Mid Devon

This consultation provides parish and town councils with an opportunity to identify green spaces that are particularly important to their communities and may merit consideration as Local Green Space. The Council will subsequently assess the nominated sites against national planning policy and guidance, with suitable sites considered through the preparation and consultation of Plan Mid Devon.

5. Data Management

The data collected in this form is used only for its intended purpose, or in pursuance of any other legitimate interest held by the Council, and is held in accordance with the Council's Records Management Policy. Your personal information may also be processed to facilitate the provision of services in respect of any of the Council's activities or for the prevention and detection of crime and fraud. Under the UK General Data Protection Regulation 2016 & Data Protection Act 2018, Mid Devon District Council is the Data Controller for the information you have given us. For more information, visit our Website.

New Local Green Space nomination form

Instructions

Use one form for each site. Attach a boundary map and supporting evidence. Do not use this form for a site already designated as Local Green Space through the adopted Mid Devon Local Plan or a made neighbourhood plan.

A. Nominator details

Parish / town council:

_____

Lead contact name and role:

_____

Email and telephone:

_____

B. Site identification

Proposed name of Local Green Space:

_____

Address or location:

_____

_____

Approximate area (hectares, if known):

_____

Brief description of the land, its boundaries and current use:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Boundary map attached: ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

Please identify any part of the nomination that includes buildings or developed land and explain why it forms an integral part of the green area:

_____

_____

_____

C. Ownership and management

Owner's name and contact details (if known):

_____

_____

Is the parish/town council the owner? ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ **Partly**

Has the owner been informed of the nomination? ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ **Not known**

Please summarise any owner comments or attach correspondence:

_____

_____

_____

Who currently manages or maintains the site?

_____

_____

D. Community and proximity

Which community does the site serve?

_____

_____

How is the site close to that community? Include approximate distance, physical relationship and walking access where relevant:

_____

_____

_____

_____

How and by whom is the site used or experienced? State whether access is public, restricted or absent:

_____

_____

_____

_____

E. Why the site is demonstrably special

Complete every relevant category. A site need not satisfy all categories, but evidence must demonstrate at least one form of particular local significance.

Beauty:

Describe the site-specific visual or landscape qualities and provide photographs, assessments or community evidence where available.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Historic significance:

Explain the association with local history, heritage assets, events, traditions or archaeology and identify sources.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Recreational value:

Describe the activities, frequency and range of users, facilities and community role. Public access should be evidenced where relied upon.

_____
_____
_____
_____

Tranquillity:

Explain why the site is experienced as tranquil, considering noise, movement, enclosure, setting and community evidence.

_____
_____
_____
_____

Richness of wildlife:

Identify habitats, species, ecological records, surveys or knowledgeable sources. Avoid unsupported general statements.

_____
_____
_____
_____

Other reason:

Explain any other site-specific local significance not captured above.

_____
_____
_____
_____

F. Local character and scale

Why is the site local in character? Explain its relationship to the settlement, neighbourhood and surrounding landscape:

_____
_____
_____
_____

Why is the proposed boundary focused and not an extensive tract of land or blanket countryside designation?

_____
_____
_____
_____

G. Planning and other designations

Is the land affected by a planning permission? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known

If yes, provide the application reference and explain the status and compatibility with the proposed designation:

_____

_____

_____

Is the land allocated, proposed for allocation, submitted through a call for sites, or required for infrastructure? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known

If yes, provide details:

_____

_____

_____

H. Evidence and submission details

List all documents, photographs, survey results, records or other evidence attached:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Checklist

- ☐ One form completed for this site
- ☐ Clear boundary map attached
- ☐ Ownership information supplied where known
- ☐ Evidence provided against all relevant Local Green Space tests
- ☐ Site-specific community evidence attached
- ☐ Planning status and other designations checked

Name:

_____

Position:

_____

Date:

_____