

LOCAL GREEN SPACES – MARHAMCHURCH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN BACKGROUND EVIDENCE PAPER

PROPOSED LOCAL GREEN SPACES

- a) Whalesborough Woods (woodland adjacent to tow path from weir to Whalesborough lock)
- b) Grass area and car park at Helebridge outside Canal Museum (presently owned by Bude and Stratton Town Council)
- c) Marhamchurch School playing field
- d) Revel Field including Marhamchurch playpark
- e) Marhamchurch churchyard, cemetery and memorial garden
- f) War Memorial and surround including grass area by lynch gate in village square
- g) Land owned by Cornwall Council around the multi-use trail

INTRODUCTION

1. Green spaces bring a wide range of benefits and are treasured by local communities. The Marhamchurch Neighbourhood Plan aims to protect the most important green spaces in the parish for their recreational and aesthetic value, their role as wildlife habitats and in mitigating climate change, and their contribution towards healthy lifestyles and a sense of place.

POLICY BACKGROUND

2. National planning policy and guidance is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) respectively.
3. NPPF (2021) paragraph 101 allows local communities, through local and neighbourhood plans, to identify areas of Local Green Space which are of importance and should be provided special protection. It makes it clear that:
 - identifying 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; and
 - Local Green Space should only be designated when a plan is prepared or reviewed and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.
4. Paragraph 102 of the NPPF (2021) sets out the criteria that green space must meet in order to be designated as Local Green Space, stating that the designation should only be used:
 - *where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*

- *where the green area 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; and*
 - *where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.*
5. Additional guidance on Local Green Space designation is provided in Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) ID: 37 Paragraphs 005-022. The following paragraphs are of particular relevance:
- a) *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.*
 - b) *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.*
 - c) *If land is already protected by designation (e.g. AONB, conservation area), then consideration should be given to whether any additional local benefit would be gained by designation as Local Green Space.*
 - d) *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.*
 - e) *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.*
 - f) *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.*
 - g) *Provided land can meet the criteria at paragraph 100 of the National Planning Policy Framework there is no lower size limit for a Local Green Space.*
 - h) *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).*
 - i) *Areas 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.*

- j) 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.*
- k) 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.*

CONSULTATION

- 6. The plan designates several Local Green Spaces based on the results of surveys and consultations carried out as part of the plan preparation.
- 7. Protection of green spaces did not appear as a priority concern through the questionnaire or consultation day which took place ahead of publication of the draft plan. It is considered that this was likely to be a result of there being little or no perceived threat to the green spaces which exist in the parish.
- 8. Upon publication of the draft plan for consultation significant support was expressed for the proposed local green spaces. Some detailed concerns were raised and are addressed in the Response Report published alongside the submission version of the plan.
- 9. As a result of consultation the former railway line has also been removed from the list of proposed local green spaces (although it remains listed on the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Historic Environment Record as an important local heritage asset).
- 10. Land owned by Cornwall Council around the multi-use trail has been added to the list of proposed local green spaces.

BASIS FOR LOCAL GREEN SPACE PROPOSALS

- 11. All the local green spaces proposed are highly valued by the local community, capable of being managed and protected beyond the plan period and conform to the required criteria for a local green space, being:
 - reasonably close to the community they serve;
 - demonstrably special to the local community because of their beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity or richness of wildlife, and
 - local in character and not an extensive tract of land.

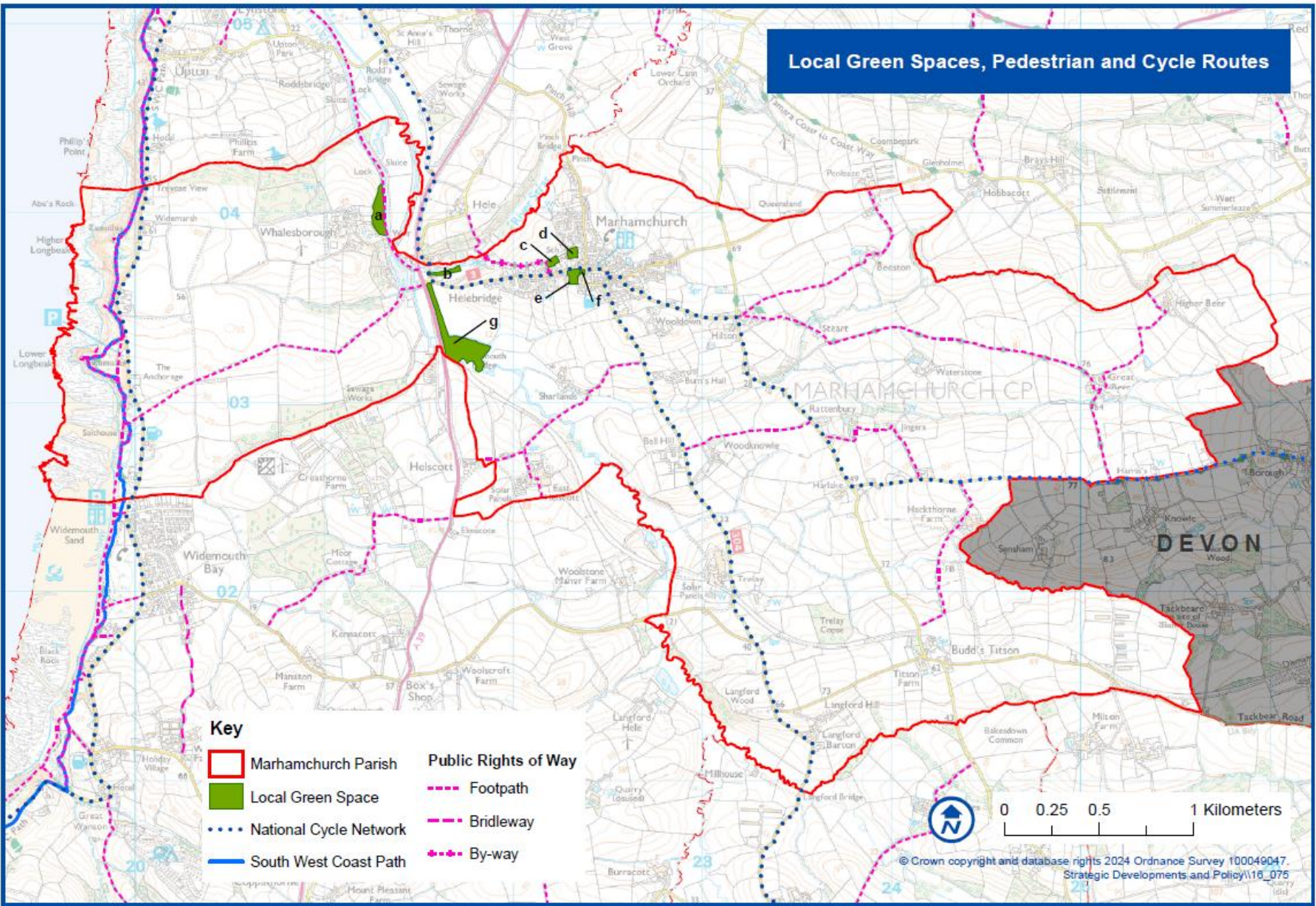
They include woodlands, meadows, grassed areas, parks, playing fields, play spaces and wildlife corridors.

- 12. The table below demonstrates how each of the local green spaces proposed in the plan satisfy the necessary criteria.

Local Green Space	Map reference	Proximity to settlement	Beauty and landscape value	Historic significance	Recreational value	Wildlife value	Existing designations	Summary
Whalesborough Woods (woodland adjacent to towpath from weir to Whalesborough lock)	a	c. 1km from village centre	High	Medium	Medium	High	None	A long established part of the parish scene, this is an area of woodland which makes a notable landscape contribution and is of value for local wildlife and biodiversity.
Grass area and car park at Helebridge outside Canal Museum (presently owned by Bude and Stratton Town Council)	b	At Helebridge, about 0.5km outside village	Medium	Medium	High	Medium	None	Of significance for its recreational value and also contributes to the appearance of an historic part of the parish.
Marhamchurch School playing field	c	In the village	Low	Low	High	Low	None	Again, primarily significant for its recreational value this area is also of some value to help frame the appearance of the village.
Revel Field including Marhamchurch playpark	d	In the village	Medium	High	High	Low	In the Conservation Area	Primarily significant for its recreational value this area is also of some value to help frame the appearance of the village.
Marhamchurch churchyard, cemetery and	e	In the village	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	Partly in the Conservati	Of clear historic value, this area is also important to the village setting and has some recreational ad wildlife and biodiversity value.

memorial garden								
Local Green Space	Map reference	Proximity to settlement	Beauty and landscape value	Historic significance	Recreational value	Wildlife value	Existing designations	Summary
The War Memorial and surround including grass area by lynch gate in village square	f	In the village	High	High	Medium	Low	None	Makes a valuable contribution to the village streetscene.
Land owned by Cornwall Council around the multi-use trail	g	At Helebridge, about 0.5km outside village	High	Low	Medium	High	None	Towards the valley, this area is of landscape, recreational, wildlife and biodiversity value.

Local Green Spaces, Pedestrian and Cycle Routes



Key

- Marhamchurch Parish
- Local Green Space
- ⋯ National Cycle Network
- South West Coast Path
- Public Rights of Way
- Footpath
- Bridleway
- By-way

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