

Local Green Spaces

What are Local Green Spaces?

Within the Neighbourhood Planning process, communities have the option of designating certain areas of land as Local Green Spaces (LGS). This is described in the National Planning Policy Framework as “a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities.” These spaces need to be “demonstrably special to the local community” based on a combination of the following criteria:

- Proximity
- Beauty
- Historical significance
- Recreational value
- Tranquillity
- Wildlife value

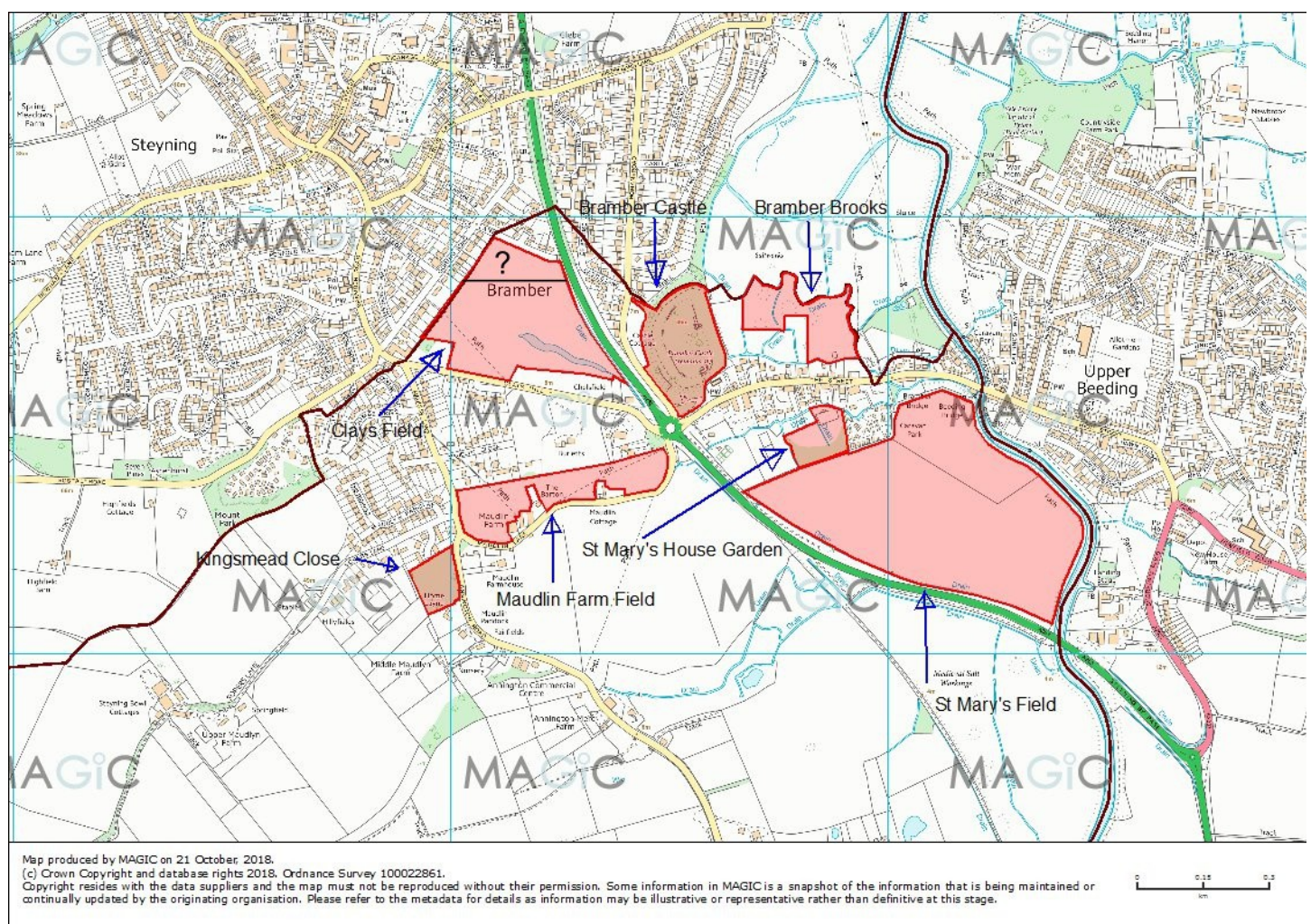
In addition, areas of green space should not be excessively large.

Designating an area gives it protection consistent with that of an area of Green Belt. In planning terms, this is a high level of protection and development on such land would be considered to be inappropriate and could only be justified on the grounds of very special circumstances.

The importance to the local community of protecting the areas' Green Spaces was clearly evidenced in the results of the Neighbourhood Plan Survey carried out for SWAB in 2014.

However, designation does not in itself confer any rights of public access over and above what exists at present. So it does not mean that land which is currently private will be opened up for public access. Nor would there be any new restrictions or obligations on landowners by virtue of their land being designated.

The Environment and Countryside Focus Group have considered a number of areas for LGS designation as shown on the map below:-



These areas were tested against the set criteria and the results are summarised below:-

Bramber Brooks

This is an area of unimproved floodplain of over 17 hectares though less than 5 hectares are within Bramber parish. That part of the Brooks within the parish is effectively split into two: an area due to become a Local Nature Reserve and a private, fenced-off, area.



Once the nature reserve is officially confirmed it will have a protected status for at least 21 years (i.e. longer than the duration of the Neighbourhood Plan). The private part has no public access and, though meeting most of the required criteria, was not considered suitable for LGS designation.

Bramber Castle

This ancient ruin sits in a site of about 4 hectares in area. In the middle, the original motte is now covered in trees. The grassy bailey has for centuries been a place of recreation and is much used by local people for picnics, dog walking and informal games. The surrounding moat is now quite wooded but can be walked around for a tranquil stroll.

Although meeting most of the criteria, this is currently fully protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument and does not need further protection from us.



Clays Field

Clays Field is a large grassy area of over 8 hectares on the edge of Bramber but conveniently situated within easy walking distance of the village and Steyning. It has many mature trees scattered throughout as well as an attractive small lake home to numerous ducks and similar wildlife.



A section of the field along the northern perimeter may be designated for housing development. The whole field is probably too large for a LGS but, depending on the proposed development, the southern section meets all the necessary criteria.

Kingsmead Close

This is an area of just over a hectare of scrubby woodland at the corner of Maudlin Lane and

Annington Road. The only access is via a 5-bar gate at



the end of Kingsmead Close. It is within the South Downs National Park but there is no public access. It does not meet enough of the criteria to merit inclusion as a LGS.

Maudlin Farm Field

This pretty agricultural field is crossed by a footpath going from the main part of Bramber to the houses on Maudlin Lane. Known by some locals as the "Bunny Field" for obvious reasons it is nevertheless popular not



only with dog walkers but also with hikers as the footpath is part of the Monarch's Way and, at the eastern end of the field, joins another long-distance path, namely the Downslink. The field meets most of the criteria and though it currently has the protection afforded by the South Downs National Park it is worth considering designating it as a LGS.

St Mary's Field

This is a large field (over 20 hectares) to the south of The Street behind St Mary's House and therefore within the South Downs National Park. In the past it has been occasionally used for sheep grazing but is now mostly reverting to scrub and is prone to flooding in winter. It meets some of the criteria but is (a) too large and (b) totally within the National Park and so is not considered for inclusion as a LGS.



St Mary's House Garden

St Mary's House is a Grade I listed 15th century timber-framed house with a hectare of beautiful gardens situated in the centre of the village. The inter-connected grounds include a wild garden with its newly-created wildlife pond. The western half of the garden (i.e. that part containing the wildlife pond) is within the South Downs National Park.



The house and gardens are protected by a charitable trust for the foreseeable future so, although it meets all the LGS criteria, it will not be put forward for inclusion.