

SE9 AREAS OF LOCAL GREEN SPACE

Eight areas of open space were designated in the original NDP, adopted June 2019, listed within Policy BR9. This NDP Review seeks to retain these designations, referred within Policy BR6.

The only changes to Policy BR6 relate to wording to improve clarity. Therefore, all sites proposed for designation within the NDP review have been previously assessed against the tests listed in paragraph 107 of the NPPF (December 2024):

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.*

Paragraph 106 of the NPPF (December 2024) states:

*“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.**”*

As such, the sites already designated as Local Green Space should be able to be carried through to the NDP Review without re-assessment. There is already a presumption that these areas will be retained for recreation, local amenity or as breaks in the built form. Future development will not be permitted on such areas, except small-scale facilities for sport, leisure and assembly, where such facilities cannot be provided elsewhere, and there is a proven need for such facilities in the area. Areas of proposed Local Green Space are listed below with their criteria and are indicated on Map 5.

Local Green Spaces

Area 1. The Recreation Ground and Sports Field. This provides the main recreational facility for the village and is home to the local football and cricket teams. Both are well supported locally and, when not in use for matches, the area is used for village events. An assessment is conducted at the end of this evidence document to confirm that Parcel 1b meets the requisite criteria to make it suitable for designation as Local Green Space.

Area 2. Green space near church. As well as providing a green area amongst the built environment, this site prevents any further encroachment of development around the medieval St John's Church – a site of historic interest.

Area 3. The Play Park. Again, providing an open area amongst the built environment, this site is well used, not only by local children but also those from the surrounding villages. Although the original wooden play equipment has now been largely removed due to deterioration, the Parish Council has recently established a working group to raise funds for replacement equipment. The site remains highly valued by the community as an informal recreation and gathering space, complementing the rural aspect of the nearby Elder Road Green Space.

Area 4. 'Podgers' and West Street green space. A small area of green space at the Western end of West Street at the junction with the hamlet of Shitterton, providing a visual break between these two communities. Podgers represents a site of significant historical interest as it is home to the stillfunctioning village pump which, in days gone by, was used for filling steam engines.

Area 5. Souls Moor SNCI and village nature reserve. An unspoilt water meadow rich in wildlife close to the heart of the community, designated common land. The nature reserve contains a wealth of flora and fauna and is managed by volunteers of the Bere Regis Wildlife Group. One of the finest chalk streams in the south of England flows through the site, contributing to its ecological significance.

Area 6. Bitchams Mead green space. An area of green space on the northern bank of the Bere Stream, which features a rich diversity of wildlife and streamside features, as well as the footpath linking Shitterton with the village centre. The area is well used by residents and forms part of a DDA compliant, circular route around the SNCI and Local Nature Reserve enabling villagers of all ages and abilities access to this important green space.

Area 7. Elder Road extension. Close to the village centre, mainly in flood plain, this small piece of woodland has the potential to complete the streamside nature reserve and link the Bitchams Mead and the Elder Road local green spaces. Currently in private ownership, should the site become available, we would wish to integrate it with the SNCI and Local Nature Reserve and provide a continuation of the circular walk.

Area 8. Elder Rd green space. This area is a local nature reserve. The area consists of some youth recreational facilities, together with the Scout Hut. To the south is an area of SNCI and grazed common land. The site is extremely well used by villagers and is rich in ecological interest. The nature reserve contains a wealth of flora and fauna and is managed by volunteers of the Bere Regis Wildlife Group. One of the finest chalk streams in the south of England flows through the site.

Map 5: Local Green Spaces



Policy BR5: Local Green Space

The following sites, as shown on Map 5, are designated as Local Green Space, where development that might harm their reason for designation will not be allowed except in very special circumstances:

- 1 – The Recreation Ground and Sports Field;
- 2 – Green Space around the Church;
- 3 – The Play Park;
- 4 – “Podgers” and West Street green space;
- 5 – Souls Moor SNCI and village nature reserve;
- 6 – Bitchams Mead green space and nature reserve;
- 7 – Elder Road extension; and
- 8 – Elder Road Green Space.