

Syderstone Neighbourhood Plan



Local Green Space
Assessment
August 2025

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Introduction

Syderstone is preparing a neighbourhood plan which will include a policy designating areas of Local Green Space which are particularly valued by the community. A robust process has been followed to determine which green spaces within Syderstone should be designated:

- Initial ideas were suggested by residents as part of consultation activities in March 2024. 62 people chose to answer Q15 which asked people which green spaces they would like to protect in the area. Everyone who answered supported the idea of protecting green space in the parish. The spaces that were mentioned multiple times were: the allotment, play area/recreation field, the pond, Syderstone Common and Womack Woods. These were reviewed to consider whether they would meet the national criteria for designation with regard to the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance.
- A site visit was undertaken by the working group for all sites and further evidence gathered including:
 - a) Reviewing any historic evidence related to the green spaces on the Historic England website and via Heritage Gateway;
 - b) Reviewing Statutory or Local Designations within mapped data sources available in the public domain via Natural England, Historic England, Norfolk County Council, and the Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk website.
- An assessment against the national criteria for Local Green Space was made for each of the potential areas;
- Landowners were contacted to make them aware that their land was being considered for local green space designation and to invite them to make representations;
- A final decision was recommended by the Steering Group, and confirmed by the parish council, as to which green spaces to designate.

This document provides the assessment and reasoning of all 5 areas of green space visited or suggested for us to investigate to include in the neighbourhood development plan. The next section provides the assessment and explanation of the 5 green spaces we feel are justified and supported to be a LGS in the Syderstone Neighbourhood Plan.

Policy Context

Local Green Space designation is a way to provide special protection for green areas of particular importance to local communities. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in 2012 (revised December 2024) introduced the concept of Local Green Space designation.

The NPPF sets out that communities should be able to identify green spaces of particular importance through neighbourhood plans. Determining:

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 not an extensive tract of land¹.

In addition, the National Planning Practice Guidance states:

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.

Other designations, such as Special Areas of Conservation, do not necessarily preclude or support designation as a Local Green Space. However, it is necessary to consider whether the additional designation is necessary and would serve a useful purpose.

In applying the NPPF criteria, close proximity would normally mean easy walking distance, which based on Natural England standards would mean 1.25 miles or less.

Consideration of whether the green space is local in character, and not an extensive tract of land, suggests spaces within a locality, rather than for example, extensive green areas in the countryside.

The Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan includes strategic policies for the neighbourhood area. Planning Practice Guidance on Neighbourhood Planning sets out that plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan if it is to meet the basic conditions. Policy LP26 of the local plan sets out that the Borough Council will support local communities in designating local green space for protection in neighbourhood plans.

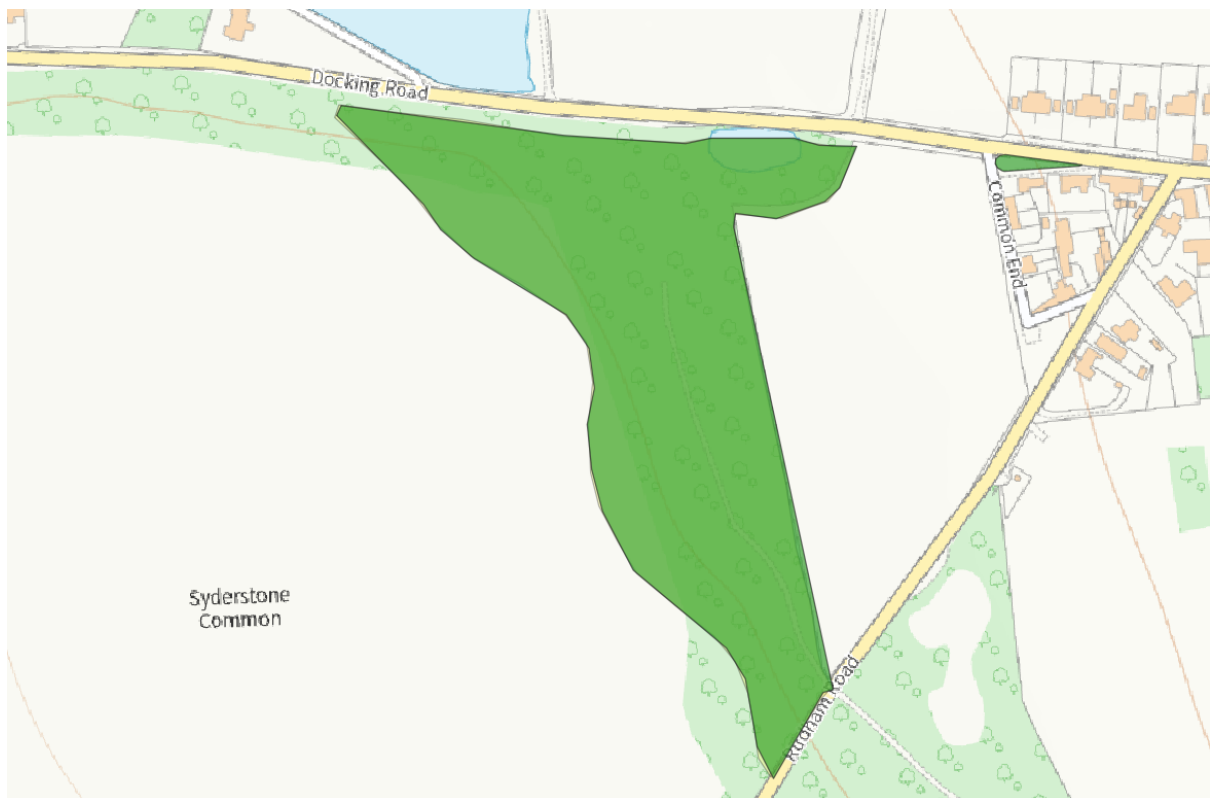
Assessment of the green spaces being designated

The Local Green Space Assessment Tool from My Community: Neighbourhood Planning Local Green Spaces² has been used as the basis to assess each site identified by the community. This includes:

¹ National Planning Policy Framework ([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/431394/NPPF-2019.pdf))

² <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/making-local-green-space-designations-neighbourhood-plan/>

LGS1- Syderstone Common North including the village pond (County Wildlife Site)



Site Details

Criteria	Description
Site	Syderstone Common North (County Wildlife Site) and village pond,
Description and purposes	This 2.5ha site is situated at the north-west corner of the Syderstone common and is half a kilometre away from the Norfolk Wildlife Trust reserve, Syderstone Common, and directly adjacent to the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Syderstone Common. The site consists of dense acid scrub over a poor acid grassland flora, with some wooded areas to the north-west and south. A small pond is present to the north-east of the site. There is an accessible path through the site for residents and visitors to use.

Checklist

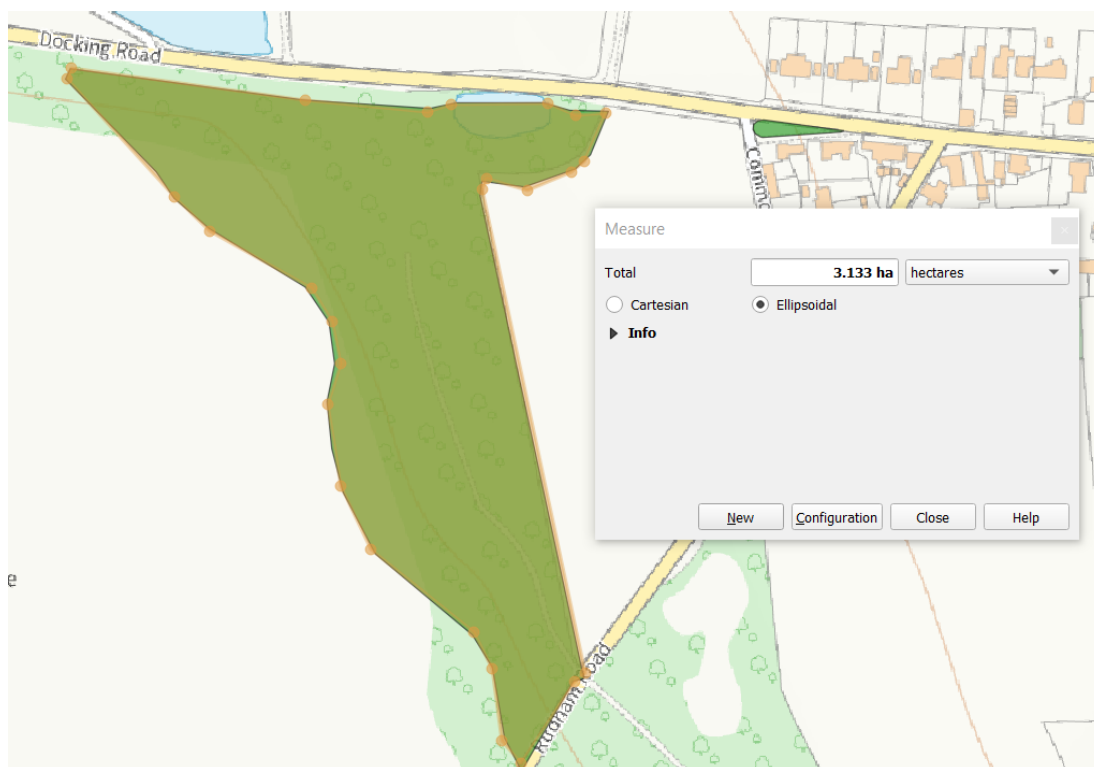
Criteria	Description
Statutory designations - ie CWS, listed status, SSSI, SPA, NNR, SAC	• Syderstone Common County Wildlife Site • Adjacent to Syderstone Common Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) • Parts of the woodland are identified as deciduous woodland on the England Priority Habitat Inventory. Adjacent to other priority habitats such as lowland heathland.
Site allocations	None
Planning permissions	None

NPPF Criteria

Criteria	Description
Close to the community it serves.	This site is on the outskirts of the parish. However, is within walking distance of the village.
Demonstrably special to the local community (beauty, historic significance, recreational, tranquillity, wildlife or other)	Demonstrably special for wildlife and recreational value. There is an accessible path that people can use through Syderstone common and the consultation analysis from the initial community survey conducted in Syderstone in March 2024 showed that this area in the parish is special to the community. It is an area people can enjoy for recreational purposes and observing wildlife. The last habitat survey conducted on this site was in 2015. The habitat is grassland. The CWS report description states: <i>This site is situated at the north-west corner of the common and is half a kilometre away from the Norfolk Wildlife Trust reserve, Syderstone Common, and directly adjacent to the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Syderstone Common.</i> <i>The site consists of dense acid scrub over a poor acid grassland flora, with some wooded areas to the north-west and south. A small pond is present to the north-east of the site. Scrub is dense in places and scattered to the north-west of the site. It is dominated by gorse (Ulex europaeus) with some common broom (Cytisus scoparius), hawthorn (Crataegus monogyna) and blackthorn (Prunus spinosa).</i>

Criteria	Description
	<i>The site is bordered to the east by an old established thick blackthorn (Prunus Spinosa) hedge. As you move south through the site the hedge line opens up and the hedge species changes to hawthorn (Crataegus monogyna), this section being defunct in nature. The western boundary of the site is open to the neighbouring set-aside land. The pond is present on the circa 1879 OS map. It is surrounded by dense scrub including goat willow (Salix caprea), common elder (Sambucus nigra) and great willowherb (Epilobium hirsutum).</i> <i>Dry grassland borders the scrub around the pond to include ragwort (Jacobaea vulgaris), false oatgrass (Arrhenatherum elatius) and sheep's fescue (Festuca ovina). Yellow flag iris (Iris pseudacorus), common reedmace (Typha latifolia) water-forget-me-not (Myosotis scorpioides) silver weed (Argentina anserine), with great willowherb (Epilobium hirsutum) dominant. Two mature willows reside. Marginal species include, water mint (Mentha aquatica), gypswort (Lycopus europaeus), sort rush (Juncus effuses), selfheal (Prunella vulgaris) and spotted lady's thumb (Persicaria maculosa). Lesser stitchwort (Stellaria graminea), mugwort (Artemisia vulgaris), spear thistle (Cirsium vulgare), cleaver (Galium aparine) and broad-leaved dock (Rumex obtusifolius) are rare on the north bank.</i> <i>The underlying grassland west of the pond is poor and dominated by grasses such as Yorkshire fog (Holcus lanatus) false oat-grass (Arrhenatherum elatius) and cock's-foot (Dactylis glomerata). There are a few abundant herbs present including germander speedwell (Veronica chamaedrys) and lady's</i>

Criteria	Description
	<i>bedstraw (Galium verum)</i>. Rosebay willowherb (<i>Chamerion angustifolium</i>) is also abundant on the site with ragwort (<i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>) frequent. As you move south through the site towards the woodland you pass through an area of short rabbit grazed grassland. Heath bedstraw (<i>Galium saxatile</i>) is locally dominant, with lady's bedstraw (<i>Galium verum</i>) and germander speedwell (<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>) dominant. Woodsage (<i>Teucrium scorodonia</i>) can be found. This area is very heath-like. Secondary woodland is present in the north-west and south of the site. Ground flora in the southern wooded area consists of harebell (<i>Campanula rotundifolia</i>) and germander speedwell (<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>). Five or so English oaks (<i>Quercus robur</i>) reside here. The area is sparsely vegetated under the woodland canopy. Young emerging broad buckler fern (<i>Dryopteris dilatata</i>) is present. Wood sage (<i>Teucrium scorodonia</i>) and Yorkshire fog (<i>Holcus lanatus</i>) is locally abundant. Sheep sorrel (<i>Rumex acetosella</i>) is locally dominant. Ground ivy (<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>) is present. Small skipper (<i>Thymelicus sylvestris</i>) small blue (<i>Cupido minimus</i>) and a meadow brown (<i>Maniola jurtina</i>) butterflies were seen on this site.
Local in character and not extensive tract of land.	According to County Wildlife Site records the site area is around 2.5 hectares However measuring the green space we wish to designate on the map over the CWS shape file it is 3.133ha. It is local in character to Syderstone. It would not necessarily be considered an extensive tract of land.



Photos of the adjacent Syderstone Common (SSSI)



LGS2- Syderstone Village Sign Green Space



Site Details

Criteria	Description
Site	Syderstone Village Sign Green Space
Description and purposes	This green space is south of The Street as one would enter the village from Docking Road. There is the parish village sign, a park bench and large tree present on the green space.

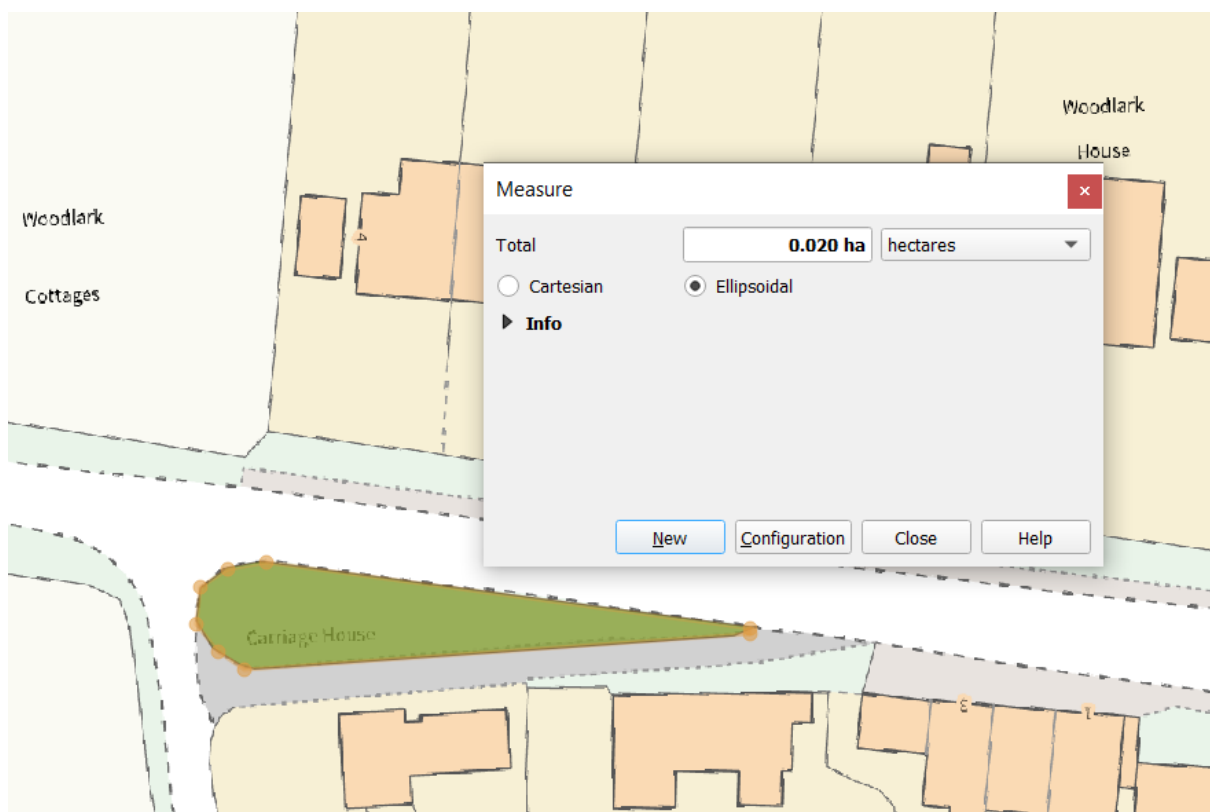
Checklist

Criteria	Description
Statutory designations - ie CWS, listed status, SSSI, SPA, NNR, SAC	None
Site allocations	None
Planning permissions	None

NPPF Criteria

Criteria	Description
Close to the community it serves.	The village sign is close to the core of the village and within 500m walking distance to other community facilities and residential dwellings.
Demonstrably special to the local community (beauty, historic significance, recreational, tranquillity, wildlife or other)	This space is special for the village's identity. It holds significance in that it has the sign for people to know they have entered Syderstone. There is recreational significance that residents/passersby can sit in this space to rest. The consultation analysis from the initial community survey conducted in Syderstone in

Criteria	Description
	March 2024 showed that this area in the parish is special to the community with some referencing this space as a place to designate.
Local in character and not extensive tract of land.	The green space is approximately 0.02ha. It is local in character to Syderstone serving the purposes of the local area only. It would not necessarily be considered an extensive tract of land.



LGS3- Syderstone Recreation Ground and Play Area



Site Details

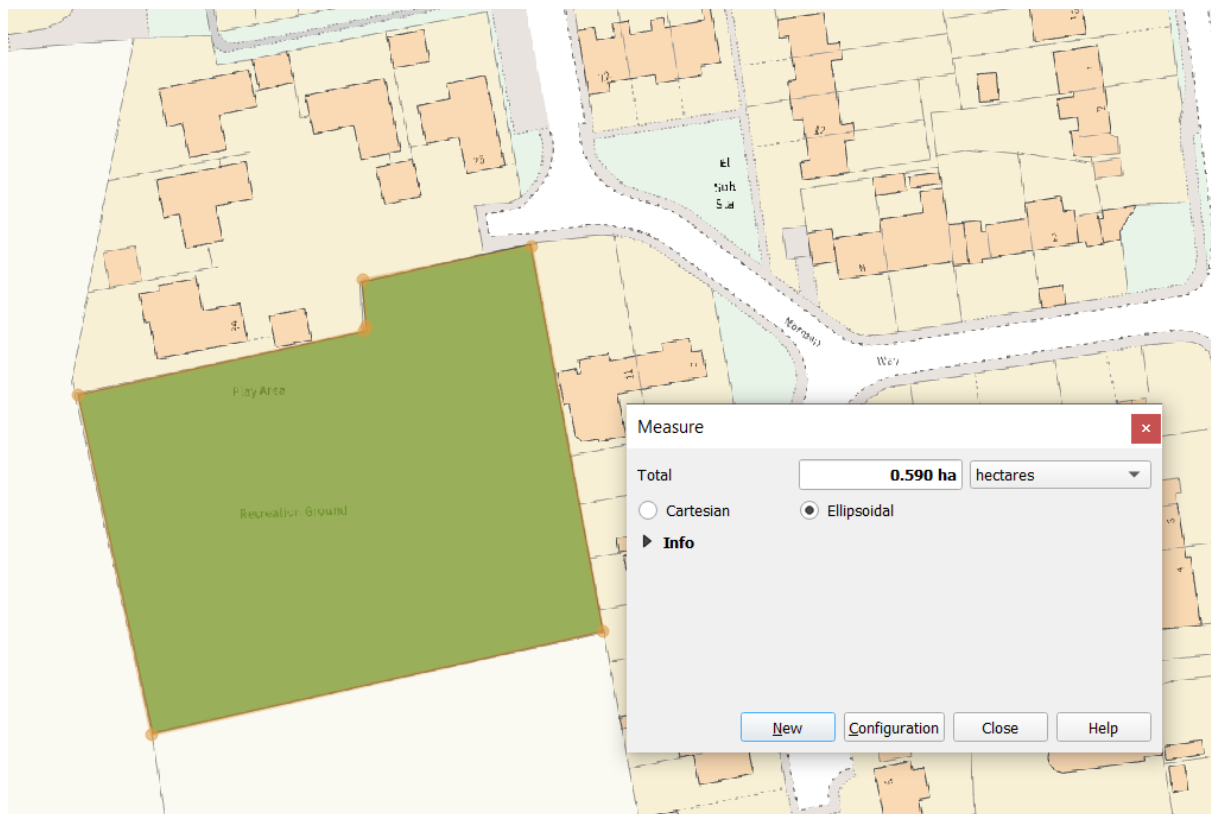
Criteria	Description
Site	Syderstone Recreation Field and Play Area.
Description and purposes	The playing field sits in the built-up part of the village West of Norman Way. This play area is used by the residents and visitors for recreational purposes.

Checklist

Criteria	Description
Statutory designations - ie CWS, listed status, SSSI, SPA, NNR, SAC	None
Site allocations	None
Planning permissions	None

NPPF Criteria

Criteria	Description
Close to the community it serves.	The playing field is within the core of the village and within 300m walking distance to other community facilities and residential dwellings. Residents can get to this local green space by walking along a kerbed footpath.
Demonstrably special to the local community (beauty, historic significance, recreational, tranquillity, wildlife or other)	A large, grassed area which includes children's play equipment used for exercise and recreational use by the community. We consider it to be demonstrable special for recreational and health and well-being value. The consultation analysis from the initial community survey conducted in Syderstone in March 2024 showed that this area in the parish is special to the community with some referencing this space as a place to designate.
Local in character and not extensive tract of land.	The recreational ground is approximately 0.59ha. It is local in character to Syderstone serving the purposes of the local area only. It would not necessarily be considered an extensive tract of land.



LGS4- Village Sign Greenspace, Corner of Norman Way



Site Details

Criteria	Description
Site	Village Sign Green Space, Corner of Norman Way
Description and purposes	This green space is on the corner of Norman Way and people would see this as one would enter the village from Mill Lane. There is the parish village sign (currently under repair), a park bench and large tree present on the green space.

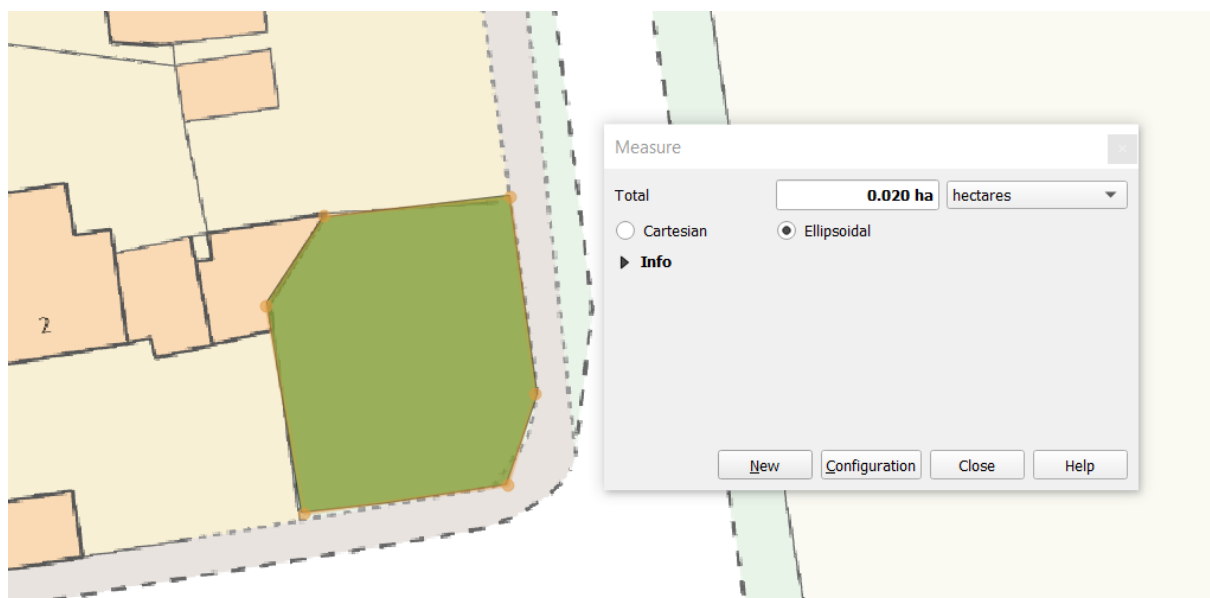
Checklist

Criteria	Description
Statutory designations - ie CWS, listed status, SSSI, SPA, NNR, SAC	None
Site allocations	None
Planning permissions	None

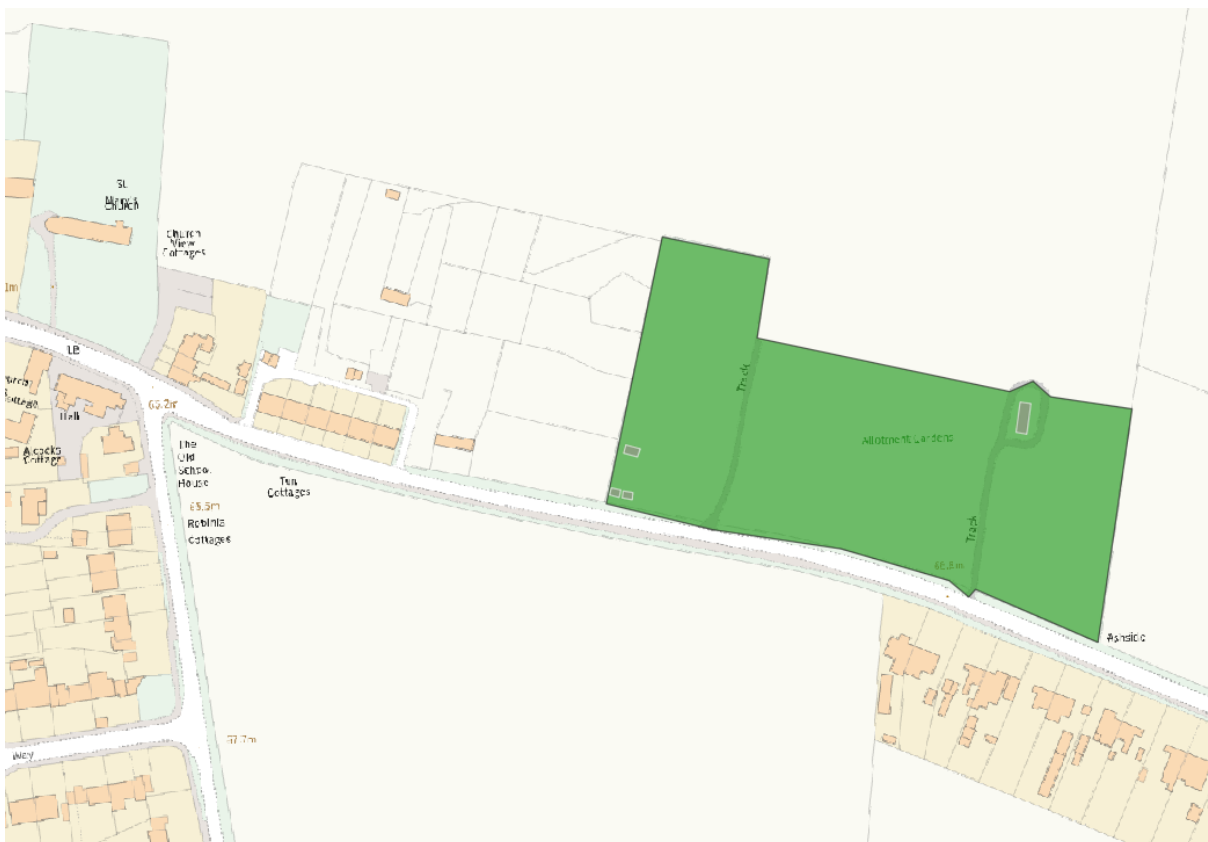
NPPF Criteria

Criteria	Description
Close to the community it serves.	The green space is within the core of the village and within 100m walking distance to other community facilities and residential dwellings.
Demonstrably special to the local community (beauty, historic significance, recreational, tranquillity, wildlife or other)	This space is special for the village's identity. It holds significance in that it has the sign for people to know they have entered Syderstone. There is recreational significance that residents/passersby can sit in this space to rest.

Criteria	Description
	The consultation analysis from the initial community survey conducted in Syderstone in March 2024 showed that this area in the parish is special to the community with some referencing this space as a place to designate.
Local in character and not extensive tract of land.	The green space is approximately 0.02ha. It is local in character to Syderstone serving the purposes of the local area only. It would not necessarily be considered an extensive tract of land.



LGS5- Allotments North of Ashside



Site Details

Criteria	Description
Site	Allotments North of Ashside
Description and purposes	The allotments are privately owned, with the allotment holders dealing directly with the landowners.

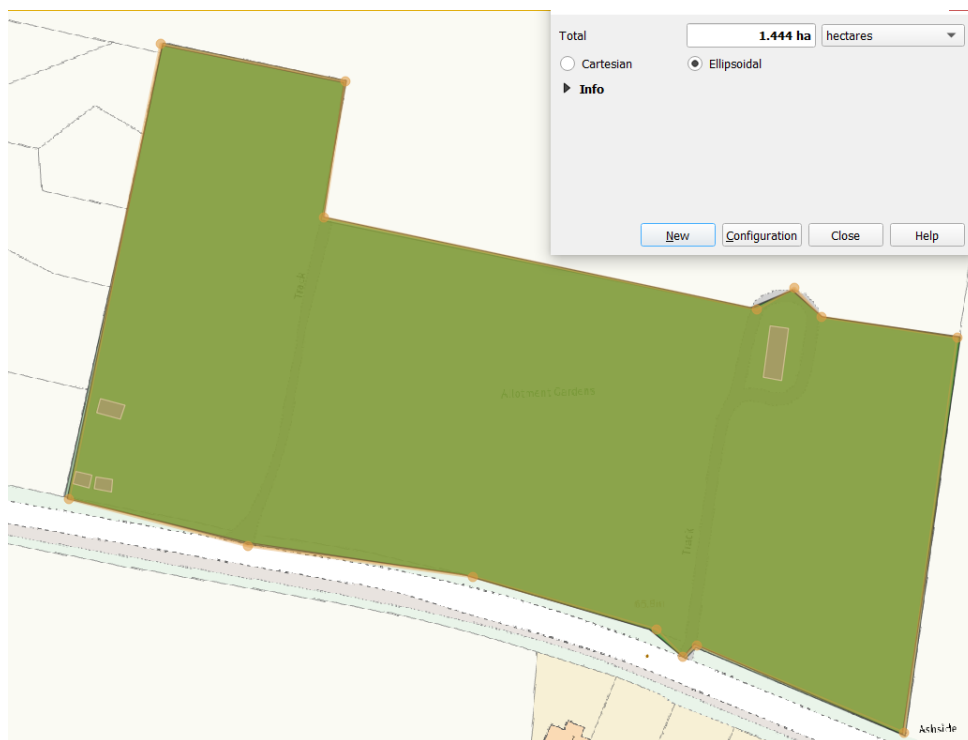
Checklist

Criteria	Description
Statutory designations - ie CWS, listed status, SSSI, SPA, NNR, SAC	None
Site allocations	None
Planning permissions	None

NPPF Criteria

Criteria	Description
Close to the community it serves.	The allotments are close to the core of the village and within 250-300m walking distance to other community facilities such as the village hall and residential dwellings. Residents can get to this local green space by walking along a kerbed footpath.
Demonstrably special to the local community (beauty, historic significance, recreational, tranquillity, wildlife or other)	Allotments are a great use for local communities for a variety of sustainable benefits including growing food for your own family, or to socialize with other residents. This space is required for local people to grow and produce food, whilst encouraging residents to exercise and get fresh air. Supports both sustainability and the green agenda.

Criteria	Description
	The consultation analysis from the initial community survey conducted in Syderstone in March 2024 showed that this area in the parish is special to the community who use it/or wish to and some referencing this space as a place to designate.
Local in character and not extensive tract of land.	The allotments are approximately 1.44ha including the built development. However, the green space is only 1.43ha. It is local in character to Syderstone serving the purposes of the local area only. It would not necessarily be considered an extensive tract of land.



Recommended Designations

From the assessment work, 5 Local Green Spaces have been determined to meet the national criteria for designation. These are highlighted below.

