DESIGN SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE - APPENDIX 1

BLUE AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

PURPOSE OF APPENDIX 1

This guidance provides detailed policy advice on the delivery of **blue and green infrastructure and residential private open space** in East Ayrshire further to policy *OS1: Green and Blue Infrastructure* and associated Schedule 1 of the LDP. It also provides further detailed guidance in relation to play provision further to the requirements set out in LDP policy PLAY1.

What is Green and Blue Infrastructure?

Green and blue infrastructure is the green and blue features of natural and built environments which create new, or enhance existing spaces and connections, in turn delivering benefits to people and nature.

Considering green spaces or connections as infrastructure arises because environmental elements such as woodland, greenspaces and watercourses can provide valuable services in an ecological context. Green and blue infrastructure can deliver functions and services such as shelter, access and travel, urban cooling, flood attenuation, pollution mitigation and local food production – both in isolation and as parts of wider ecosystems. It can also have significant benefits on public health and wellbeing, for example providing opportunities for physical activity and exercise as well as benefits to improve physical and mental health. Well-managed and maintained spaces can create opportunities for all sections of the community to interact. They can promote a sense of place and be a source of community pride. They can also offer opportunities for people to play an active part in caring for the local environment. The multi-functional nature of green infrastructure is one of its fundamental benefits and can operate at differing spatial levels.

What is expected of developers?

Where appropriate, development should incorporate multi-functional blue and green infrastructure (blue spaces and green spaces, such as rivers, ponds, community parks and civic spaces) and nature-based solutions (actions to protect, manage and restore natural ecosystems from challenges, such as climate change) to enhance biodiversity, create new and improved linkages to other open spaces and contribute towards flood management. Further, LDP Policy OS1 ensures that these open spaces will be well designed and accessible, catering to the needs of the community to support wellbeing.

DESIGN APPROACH

Green and blue infrastructure is integral to placemaking and is underpinned by the six qualities of successful places. A green and blue infrastructure (or landscape framework) approach is a key component of development design and should be considered at the early concept design stage of all development proposals.

In addition to the requirements set out in the urban design section of this guidance, developers should undertake a landscape framework approach which includes the following when designing green and blue infrastructure in their development proposals:

- As part of the context appraisal of the development site, undertake habitat and hydrological assessments of the site, where appropriate, through the pre-application process. Developers should demonstrate how these assessments and appraisals have informed their green and blue infrastructure design;
- Establish opportunities to achieve multi-functionality in development proposals by bringing green, and where relevant, blue infrastructure functions together;
- Build in accordance with the Building with Nature Standards, which is a qualitative benchmark for good green infrastructure design; and
- Establish and demonstrate how green and blue infrastructure/open spaces are to be maintained and managed in the future.

The Council encourages developers to utilise the Place and Wellbeing Outcomes when designing green and blue infrastructure in development.

Figure 1: Place and Wellbeing Outcomes

DELIVERING MULTI-FUNCTIONAL GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

In order to create green/blue infrastructure that offers multiple benefits, developers should consider how infrastructure can provide a range of functions.

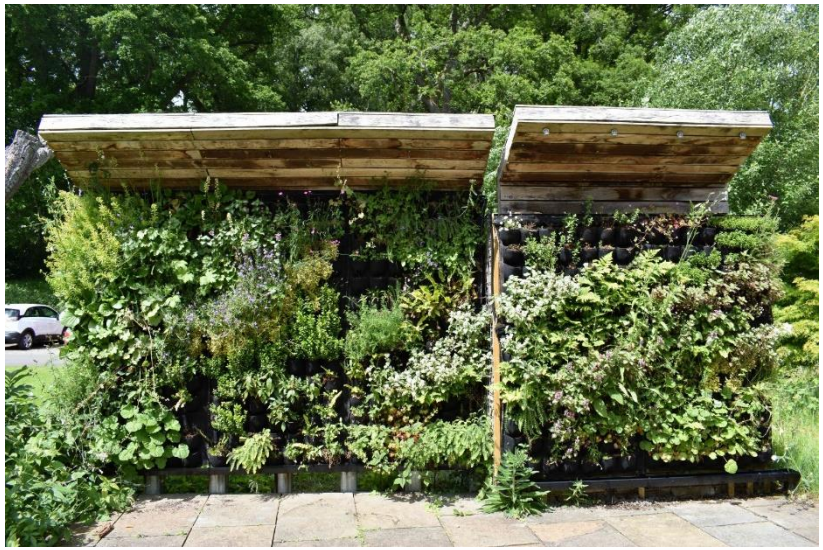
Function 1 - Water management

Green and Blue Infrastructure plays a critical role in climate change mitigation and adaptation, including reducing flood risk and managing water through mitigation measures, such as sustainable urban drainage systems.

Development proposals should integrate naturalised Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) features into the design of green and blue infrastructure in new development. Where they are part of open space obligations they should be safe and accessible, creating an attractive and distinctive setting for new developments whilst building-in resilience to changing climates. The Council encourage a more innovative approach to incorporating SUDS into new development given the various components of SUDS that can be included.

Naturalised SUDS should be designed to effectively manage surface water, slowdown water runoff, provide areas to store water and water infiltrate into the ground. The scale of the SUDs should be appropriate to the size and scale of the development. SUDS can include a number of different components to manage rainfall. These components can include:

- Soakaways
- Wetland areas
- Rain gardens/filter strips
- Permeable surfaces
- Trees
- Green roofs and living walls
- Swales



These components of SUDS not only manage flood risk but can also improve habitats for wildlife, enhance biodiversity and improve people's health and wellbeing.

There are examples of SUDS which are of low quality design, such as that shown in Figure 2. However, there are some good examples of high quality designed SUDs (see Figure 3) which function as they should but are aesthetically pleasing at the same time thus enhancing a sense of place and wellbeing for people and creating opportunities for attracting wildlife and enhancing biodiversity.

Figure 2: Poor example of SUDS integration

NOTE: If a site is subject to low/medium/high surface water flooding, then the site design will need to be appropriate to the 1:200 year plus climate change event level with a discharge rate limited to 4.5 litres/second/hectare.

Figure 3: Good examples of types of SUDS

Function 2 - Habitat enhancement/creation

Habitat creation and enhancement in new development can play a significant role in climate change adaptation and mitigation, reversing biodiversity loss, managing biodiversity conservation, and preserving and enhancing habitat networks.

All development proposals should seek to create, conserve and/or enhance biodiversity on site, and habitat networks within and adjacent to the site in order to reverse biodiversity loss. This can be achieved by conserving those areas already rich in biodiversity on site and incorporating a variety of semi-natural habitats including native hedges, grasslands, ponds and scrub that link in with these existing areas and networks outwith a development site.

Green and blue infrastructure should strengthen and create improved ecological connections and where possible expand on existing habitat networks for wildlife.

Native marginal planting should be integrated into landscaping in development to maximise habitat diversity.

Function 3 - Contribution to access networks

All development proposals should maintain and enhance the quality and connectivity of access networks, successfully integrating active travel routes (linking work places, schools, community and recreation facilities and public transport hubs) and creating attractive routes linking into green and blue infrastructure. These networks should create safe, welcoming and accessible spaces that meet the varying needs of different population groups.

A key element in establishing and developing green networks is through linking existing green spaces by utilising existing suitable green corridors such as parkland and cemeteries, canal and riverside routes or the core path network as well as by creating new connections such as converting, when appropriate, disused railway lines etc.

Off-road multi-functional travel access routes should be provided in new development to create opportunities for walking, cycling and wheeling. These routes should integrate successfully with existing active travel routes, be safe for all ages and abilities and enable full accessibility for all with no barriers.

Function 4 - Amenity and recreational open space value

Open space is critical to the amenity and recreational value of existing and new places. Well planned, high quality open space will make somewhere a better place to live in or spend time in and will also provide opportunities for recreation and physical activity, contributing to healthy lifestyles.

Amenity and recreational green infrastructure/open spaces should be multi-functional, enhance natural assets and features and be well located and connected by safe, attractive and well thought out routes and green networks. They should be designed to cater for the needs of the community and be accessible to a variety of users, regardless of age, gender or disability. Open spaces should also be designed to maximise use throughout the year and not be weather dependent.

Trees and landscaping are critical to both the amenity of new developments and to helping to tackle the nature crisis, as per LDP2 policy NE4 Nature Crisis. The purpose of new planting within a development should be determined at the beginning of the design process through a Landscape Framework. Developers should include a diverse mix of trees, plants and shrubs in landscaping schemes wherever feasible and wherever possible retain existing habitats and use native species.

NOTE: All new landscaping should be an integral part of the design so that appropriate species and locations can be selected, not considered late on in the design process in order to deal with gap sites left over following site design.

TREES IN GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE DESIGN

Existing trees

Applicants should:

- prioritise the successful retention of existing healthy trees;

Where there are existing trees on site, all development proposals must be supported by the submission of a Tree Survey, Tree Constraints Plan and Tree Protection Plan in order to demonstrate how proposals will accord with the provisions of LDP2 policies ***NE8: Trees, Woodland, Forestry and Hedgerows, OS1, NE4 and NE9*** as well as NatureScot's Mitigation Hierarchy in line with the requirements of NPF4.

NOTE: The Council will does not support **the deliberate clearing of sites** as a pre-emptive step to the planning application process. Where there is evidence that valuable natural habitats, trees or woodlands have been deliberately cleared prior to submission of a planning application or during the planning application process, **the Council's position will be to view the site as if this had not taken place.** Instead **the original ecological potential of the site will be used to form the basis of the acceptability of any development proposals**.

Proposed new tree planting

Applicants should:

- Seek to incorporate as many species varieties as possible on order to achieve species diversity. This should be suitable to the site conditions[1];
- Select the largest potential tree that can be accommodated in a given location in order to maximise biodiversity benefits;

[1] Soil type, hydrology, functional ecology, environmental tolerance, mature size, crown density among other factors, will have implications on the appropriate selection of species. The Trees & Design Action Group have prepared ***Tree Species Selection for Green Infrastructure: A Guide for Specifiers.*** This can be used to assist in appropriate tree selection tailored to the specific context of the site.

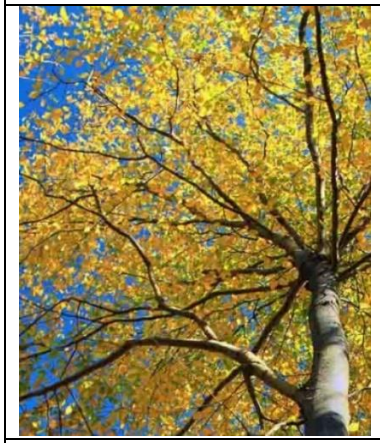
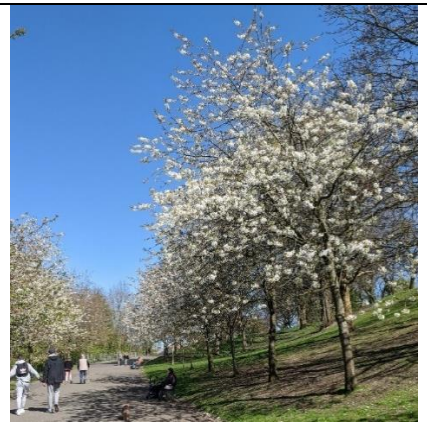
- Prioritise large canopy trees;
- Ensure that quality tree stocks are utilised (see BS 8545:2014 for specifications);
- Plan and sufficiently resource post-planting care for three to five years (as detailed in BS 9545:2014)

Well planted, well selected new trees will deliver the mature canopy of the future

Tree selection

Appropriate tree selection is vitally important to the overall design of a site – it is an opportunity to plant the right tree in the right place, in order to maximise benefits and longevity and ensure that there will be no adverse impacts on proposed buildings/residential units, infrastructure and vice versa . Trees can be selected to fulfil a variety of different purposes[2], including visual interest and aesthetic value:

[2] Tree selection within a given development proposal should consider a range of factors, including the location and context, different species are suitable for paved areas, transport corridors, parkland, gardens and SUDS. Developers should consider constraints, tree size, crown characteristics, environmental tolerance (shade, drought, waterlogging), rooting environment and ecosystem services. *See* ***Trees and Design Action Group: Trees Species Selection for Green Infrastructure*** *for Guidance on suitable species for given locations and uses.*

Features:		
		
Ornamental bark [Betula utilis]	Ornamental bark [Acer griseum]	Fruiting
		
Colour	Flowering	Colour (Acer x freemanii)

		
Large tree with dense canopy	Moderately dense crown	Fruit (Monarch Birch *Betula maimowicziana*) [image: TDAG]

Size, crown and ornamental characteristics are of greatest importance to the aesthetic contribution trees make to green infrastructure.

SUDS and trees

Different SUDS methods can create a range of environments suitable for tree planting, however, trees which are tolerant of waterlogging will be required.

Table 1 - Recommended tree species for SUDS developments

Common Name		
Silver wattle	Spaeth's alder	Chennar tree
Cappadocian maple	Common alder	Swamp White oak
Freeman maple	Silver birch	Pin oak
Boxelder maple	River birch	Willow oak
Silver maple	Downy birch	White willow
Red maple	Honey locust	Bay-leaved willow

Italian alder	Sweet gum	Weeping willow
Grey alder	London plane	Swamp cypress

** This list is not exhaustive*

Source(s):
Trees and Water Sensitive Urban Design by Greenblue Urban;
Tree Species Selection for Green Infrastructure: A Guide for Specifiers by Trees & Design Action Group



The Council will provide further advice and guidance within the **Trees and Development Non-Statutory Planning Guidance** document.

All development proposals should seek to protect, enhance, and where applicable, create and enlarge natural features and habitats which form East Ayrshire's green and blue network, helping to further develop the Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN). The Council will support development proposals which seek to ensure that there will be no unacceptable adverse environmental impacts resulting in degradation, fragmentation, isolation or net loss of green and blue infrastructure, unless it can be demonstrated that the overall integrity of the network will be maintained.

In addition to the planting of trees, introducing a diverse mix of shrubs and plants into a landscaping scheme is fundamental to enhancing biodiversity and contributing to the health and wellbeing of those that will utilise green infrastructure on site. Developers are encouraged to use Nature Scot's Developing with Nature Guidance (Developing with Nature guidance | NatureScot) to inform the design of a landscaping scheme. In particular, the suggested measures set out under the themes of *planting for nature*, *providing homes for nature* and *managing water with nature,* should be considered and incorporated into schemes where possible and practical.

NOTE: As per NPF4 policy 23 – Health and Safety, development proposals will be designed to take into account suicide risk and consider prevention measures in development, in particular green and blue infrastructure.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE/OPEN SPACE MINIMUM STANDARDS

Policy OS1, supported by Schedule 1 of LDP2, sets out the open space standards for new development across East Ayrshire, broken down by development type.

Type of development	**Open space typology**		
	Amenity	**Recreational**	**Residential Private**
Retail and Leisure (Over 5 hectares in area or have a gross floor area of more than 10,000 square metres)	✓	✓	✗
Business (Over 5 hectares in area or have a gross floor area of more than 10,000 square metres	✓	✓	✗
Industry & Distribution (Over 5 hectares in area or have a gross floor area of more than 10,000 square metres	✓	✓	✗
Residential	**Development areas of less than 0.5 hectares but where 4 - 9 units are proposed.**		
Detached/ semi detached	✓	✗	✓
Terraced houses	✓	✗	✓
Flats	✓	✗	✓
Residential	**Development areas of less than 0.5 hectares but where between 10-50 units are proposed.**		
Detached/ semi detached	✓	✓	✓
Terraced houses	✓	✓	✓
Flats	✓	✓	✓

Residential	**Developments between 51 and 200 housing units or a development area of greater than 0.5 hectares**		
Detached/ semi detached	✓	✓	✓
Terraced houses	✓	✓	✓
Flats	✓	✓	✓
Residential	**Developments comprising more than 200 housing units**		
Detached/ semi detached	✓	✓	✓
Terraced houses	✓	✓	✓
Flats	✓	✓	✓
Other residential types			
Nursing Homes	**Flexible**	**Flexible**	✓
Special Needs Housing	**Flexible**	**Flexible**	✓
✓ **means the development must conform to LDP standards.**			

As per the table above, LDP2 categorises 2 different types of open space; amenity green infrastructure/open space and recreational green infrastructure/open space.

Amenity green infrastructure/open spaces are defined as natural and semi-natural open spaces, green corridors, landscape framework incorporating informal recreation spaces and green spaces in and around houses (excluding garden ground).

LDP2 requires all new residential developments of 4 or more units to provide amenity green infrastructure/ open space on site in line with the 20 square metres per household standard, as required by the Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy.

Recreational green infrastructure/open spaces are defined as equipped play areas, play parks, public parks and gardens, outdoor sports facilities (such as green gyms), sports pitches, allotments, civic spaces etc. Play areas and play parks can be spaces for young children and/ or older children / young adults.

LDP2 requires all new residential developments of 10 or more units to provide recreational green infrastructure/open space to the quantitative standards, as set out in LDP2 Schedule 1 which are in line with the Council's Green Infrastructure Framework. With regard to those sites between 10 and 200 units, the minimum standards for new residential developments will be implemented through the process, as set out in the flow chart in LDP Schedule 1.

The flowchart should be considered alongside the Green Infrastructure Framework, which forms non-statutory planning guidance to the LDP, to determine if that particular settlement has a surplus or deficit of public open space and to confirm whether there is a Green Infrastructure mapped area of recreational open space within 250m of the boundary of each individual residential plot. For clarity, developments of more than 200 units will be required to provide recreational open space/green infrastructure on site.

Residential private open space is also required to be provided, in line with the standards set out in Schedule 1.

Establishing whether a settlement has a surplus or deficit in open space provision?

The Green Infrastructure Framework provides the evidence base for implementing the open space requirements identified in LDP Schedule 1. An updated open space audit, to inform a revised green infrastructure framework, was carried out in 2023. Table 2 below outlines headline results of the audit relative to each settlement.

The open space audit combines both quantitative and qualitative assessments of open spaces, focussing only on existing areas of 0.2ha or above. Across East Ayrshire, each settlement should have 5.2 hectares of quality and accessible open space per 1,000 of the population. Quality is defined as achieving more than 50% in the qualitative assessment. Accessibility is defined as being 250m from home to a quality open space.

In terms of the qualitative assessment, all sites over 0.2 hectares have been assessed across a range of criterion, focusing on:

- Accessibility and connectivity
- Attractiveness
- Contribution to biodiversity and ecological networks
- Active, supporting health and well being
- Community Support

In order to assess quality, the actual combined score across the criteria has been compared to the maximum possible score to arrive at a % quality score for each site.

A key outcome of the audit is to know which settlements have a sufficient supply of quality and accessible public open space (exludes privately owned / maintained public space), for the benefit of all residents, and which have a deficit and improvements are needed. Table 2 below, illustrates the outcome of this analysis. The open space audit will be subject to updates to enable new open space provision to be included.

	Meets Accessibility Standards	**Total Open Space**	**Total Under 50%**	**Total 50%-80%**	**Total Over 80%**	**Total Quality**	**Recommended Open Space**	**Surplus/Deficit**

						Open Space		
Auchinleck	Y	68	53.8	14.2	0	14.2	18.92	-4.72
Catrine	Y	24.7	6.6	18.1	0	18.1	10.81	7.29
Sorn	Y	8.2	0.6	7.6	0	7.6	1.82	5.78
Muirkirk	Y	36.8	12.5	24.3	0	24.3	7.21	17.09
Mauchline	N	7.4	2.7	4.4	0.3	4.7	20.39	-15.69
Ochiltree	N	3.2	0.5	2.7	0	2.7	5.46	-2.76
Stewarton	N	48.9	20.2	28.7	0	28.7	34.22	-5.52
Kilmaurs	N	7.4	2	5.4	0	5.4	13.82	-8.42
Fenwick	Y	12.6	11	1.6	0	1.6	5.14	-3.54
Dunlop	Y	17.5	0.6	16.9	0	16.9	5.99	10.91
Lugton	Y	0.4	0.4	0	0	0	0.42	-0.42
Galston	Y	39.8	4.2	8.8	26.8	35.6	24.7	10.9
Lugar/Logan	Y	11.3	3.4	7.9	0	7.9	6.14	1.76
Cumnock	Y	96	19.6	48.4	28	76.4	44.78	31.62

Newmilns	N	10.4	4.1	6.3	0	6.3	14.35	-8.05
Darvel & Priestland	N	17	3.8	3.9	9.3	13.2	19.95	-6.75
New Cumnock	Y	71	6	63.4	1.6	65	13.79	51.21
Dalmellington	Y	51.9	36.5	15.4	0	15.4	7.07	8.33
Dalrymple	Y	9.6	5.9	3.7	0	3.7	8.69	-4.99
Bellsbank	Y	27.8	10.2	17.6	0	17.6	6.64	10.96
Waterside	Y	0.3	0.3	0	0	0	0.73	-0.73
Patna	Y	14.1	12.3	1.8	0	1.8	10.82	-9.02
Rankinston	Y	1.7	1.7	0	0	0	1.35	-1.35
Drongan	Y	34.3	4.2	30.1	0	30.1	15.92	14.18
Crosshouse	Y	3.7	0.6	3.1	0	3.1	13.95	-10.85
Knockentiber	Y	1.4	0	1.4	0	1.4	4.16	-2.76

Gatehead	Y	0.9	0.9	0	0	0	2.6	-2.6
Crookedholm	Y	3.2	1.6	1.6	0	1.6	2.6	-1
Hurlford	Y	35.8	35.8	0	0	0	23.22	-23.22
Kilmarnock	Y	435.7	87.4	268.2	80.1	348.3	239.89	108.41

Table 2: Summary of settlement review findings, in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility of space

This assessment represents the starting point for the Schedule 8 Diagram 1 Flow chart process.

Is there an on-site requirement or an off-site contribution to be made?

When a settlement is deemed to have a deficit of open space, for developments of between 10-200 units, the recreational open space process illustrated in Schedule 1: Diagram 1 is invoked i.e. on-site recreational open space must be provided.

When a settlement is deemed to have a surplus of open space, Schedule 1 gives scope for, in certain circumstances, existing areas of open space to be upgraded rather that new spaces created.

Where this open space does not require upgrading, contributions will be sought towards projects identified in the Green Network and Green Infrastructure Strategy Settlement Green Network Action Plans.

Accessibility standard

International research into the impacts of green infrastructure/ open space strongly indicates the benefits for health and quality of life where recreational green infrastructure/ open space is conveniently located i.e. about a 5 minute walk from home. For the purposes of implementing policy OS1, and Schedule 1, a 5 minute walk is deemed to mean *a walk of approximately 250m 'door to space'.*

In achieving permeable developments, with green pathways linking to and through a hierarchy of appropriately designed open spaces, design innovation should not be unduly constrained.

Where the policy requirement calls for on-site recreational open space, that space should be at least 0.2ha in area and easily accessible by residents and this should be taken to mean 'within approximately a 5 minute walk'.

Off-site Contributions Process

Where a payment is required in lieu of on-site recreational green infrastructure space, this should be provided to the Council in advance of planning consent being granted or will be the subject of a Section 75 Obligation attached to the consent for that development.

With regard to the level of funding that will be sought from developers of market housing, should they be required to make payment towards the improvement of alternative, off-site recreational green infrastructure/ open space, this amount will be set at a level equivalent to a percentage of the expected sale cost of each unit that is built on the area of the site, which would have normally formed recreational open space i.e. if the area of open space required would have equated to space for 3 houses

Calculating off-site green infrastructure/open space contributions

The percentage levels are set as follows:

- 2.5% of the expected sale cost for each residential unit from £0 to £75,000
- 5% of the expected sale cost for each residential unit over £75,000 and up to and including £150,000

- 7.5% of the expected sale cost for each residential unit over £150,000 and up to and including £250,000
- 10% of the expected sale cost for each residential unit over £250,000 upwards.

If, for example, the area of open space required would have equated to space for 5 houses and the expected sale cost is £150,000, the calculation would be:

5% of £150,000 = £7,500.
£7,500 x 5 units = £37,500
Open space contribution **= £37,500**

NOTE 1: The Council will in certain circumstances take a flexible approach on the amenity open space standard, but only where the developer can demonstrate why the required standard cannot be met.

NOTE 2: Any new residential development which does not accord with the minimum standards and/or the four stage process for providing green infrastructure/open space will not be supported by the Council.

NOTE 3: There will be no requirement for Affordable Housing developments to make payment towards the improvement of alternative, off-site recreational green infrastructure/open space. Instead green infrastructure to the minimum standards must be provided on site unless note 1 applies.

Developments comprising more than 200 housing units Developments of more than 200 residential units will be required to provide the minimum standard for recreational green infrastructure/open space on site, as these larger sites will undoubtedly put greater pressure on the existing resource.

Development proposals incorporating unusable amenity and/or recreational open spaces will not be supported as green and blue infrastructure, in terms of the required quantitative standard.

Management and stewardship of green and blue infrastructure

Development proposals should provide effective green and blue infrastructure management and maintenance plans wherever this is necessary.

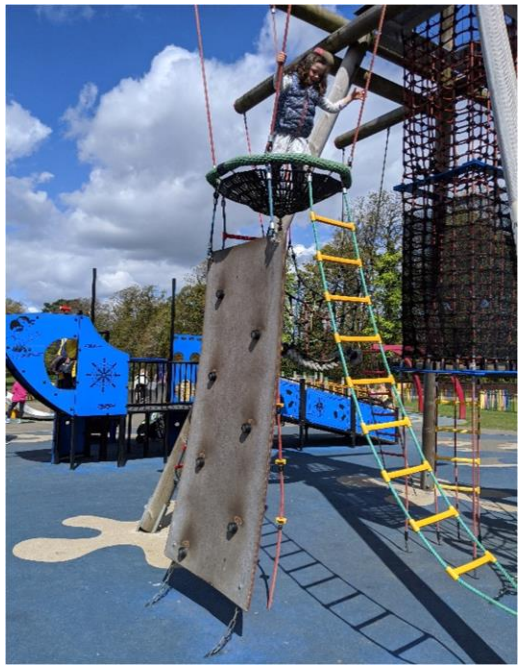
Developers should provide a plan detailing the green infrastructure functions and maintenance requirements, and the party responsible for these, and demonstrate funding arrangements for their long-term delivery to the satisfaction of the Council, in order to ensure that the quality, functionality and integrity of green infrastructure is retained. This plan should be submitted at the planning application stage.

Where appropriate, the Council will work with developers and other bodies concerning the maintenance and management of new open spaces as outlined within PAN 65: Planning and Open Space.

PLAY PROVISION

Access to good quality play provision is recognised as having a significant positive impact on children from an early age. This is acknowledged through the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 which legislates for children's play and Article 31 of the UNCRC (incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 which relates to a child's right to play and rest.

New, replacement or improved play provision should, as far as possible and as appropriate:



- provide stimulating environments with safe objects to explore, allow freedom of movement, and provide a variety of experiences;
- be inclusive to provide equal opportunities to experience play;
- be suitable for different ages of children and young people;
- be easily and safely accessible by children and young people independently, including those with a disability;
- should be reasonably flat with a safe surface and have sufficient drainage;
- should have secure but attractive and inviting boundaries e.g brightly coloured fencing/railing or use of natural hedging) to ensure safety of all using the play area;
- incorporate landscaped features including trees and other forms of greenery that do not compromise passive surveillance;
- form an integral part of the surrounding neighbourhood ensuring coherence between play areas and the surrounding built environment;
- be well overlooked for passive surveillance;
- be robust and future maintenance considered; and
- be linked directly to other open spaces and play areas

Opportunities for play should be provided in major residential developments (including smaller developments which are part of phased larger developments) requiring recreational space provision through LDP Schedule 1 for publically accessible, safe, welcoming spaces for formal, informal and incidental play. A mix of equipped and natural play equipment and innovative approaches to play is encouraged. Major developments should contain multiple opportunities for play including opportunities for

recreational use where appropriate – see LDP2 Schedule 1 for definitions of recreational open space. These play areas should encourage spontaneous opportunities for play throughout a development and incorporated into multifunctional green spaces. Play facilities within smaller developments will also be encouraged.

Play facilities should be of good quality, be accessible and meet the needs of different age groups and abilities in order to satisfy needs within the community. All play areas require to be of a standard acceptable to the Council and should be within close proximity to accessible public paths.

Areas of formal, informal and incidental play provision will be included within the minimum quantitative standard calculations of recreational open space requirements.

Pre-Application Advice and Planning Application Stage

Pre-application advice is encouraged to be sought to ensure that proposed play provision is acceptable and should be integrated into the landscape framework.

When submitting a planning application, developers are encouraged to submit detailed plans specifically relating to the play areas to be provided to ensure that the qualitative and quantitative standards of green infrastructure are being met.

Development proposals that include new streets and public realm should incorporate the principles of this Design supplementary guidance, Designing Streets and inclusive design principles as well as the place and wellbeing outcomes to enable children and young people to play and move around safely and independently; maximising the opportunities for informal and incidental play in the neighbourhood.

It should be demonstrated how play areas are to be integrated successfully in development and how they will promote play for all ages and abilities.

In exceptional circumstances, the Council may consider developers contributing to the upgrading of existing facilities where they are situated adjacent to the site and where co-location is deemed suitable.