



APPENDIX 3

LOCAL OPEN SPACE IN RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT



PUBLIC LOCAL OPEN SPACE STANDARDS IN RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Developer/Council Responsibilities

The developer's responsibilities will relate solely to local open space requirements to meet the needs of residents occupying the new housing provided by that developer.

The approach to local open space will differ depending on the size of the housing development:

i) Developments of less than 10 dwellings

No local open space will be required unless the scheme constitutes a phase of a larger development.

ii) Developments of 10-99 dwellings

Developers will be required to provide new local open space if the housing site is in an area where the latest information indicates that there is a shortfall, taking into account both the existing population and the needs of residents of the new development. Generally, the larger the development the more likely it is that local open space will be required.

Where new local open space is required the developer will provide sufficient land and play equipment to serve the needs of the new residents and the Council may negotiate with the developer to provide additional land and equipment to create an area to serve both existing and new families. In these circumstances the local open space could be provided either within the new housing site or nearby in a place which is equally safe and convenient for new and existing residents.

iii) Developments of 100+ dwellings

On large development sites, developers will provide land and play equipment to serve the recreation needs of the new residents, within the development site. Where the new residential development is in an area where there is an existing shortfall of local open space, the Council may negotiate with the developer to provide new recreation land and play equipment over and above that needed to serve the new development itself. In these circumstances a play area which can be safely and conveniently accessed by both the new and existing residents will be sought within the new residential development site.

Where development of a large residential site is to be phased, or built as several small or medium sized schemes which individually would require only a small amount of local open space, the Council will assess the overall local open space requirements of the whole site, and will negotiate with each developer for a contribution. The local open space should be provided in an appropriate central location to serve the whole area.



The developer will be expected to design the local open space area, in consultation with the Council, and to lay it out and maintain it for at least a 12 month period. Provided that the standard of work and maintenance has been acceptable, the Council will become responsible after 12 months for adoption and maintenance. However, developers will be expected to pay a commuted sum to the Council, or to agree similar arrangements to cover the cost of maintaining the site and equipment for a 20 year period, and to safeguard the land as public open space. In circumstances where the housing development is likely to take a year or more to build, there may be a time limit for construction and completion of the play area, to ensure that it becomes usable at an early stage.

In some circumstances the Council may consider it more appropriate for a developer to contribute to the improvement or upgrading of an existing recreation facility which is within safe and convenient walking distance of the development site, by payment of a commuted sum. This approach may be pursued where investment in an existing facility will have significant benefits for both the new residents and the wider community.

New Open Space Requirements

Assessments and standards of children's play space and outdoor sports facilities are based on those recommended in the National Playing Fields Association Standard. The National Playing Fields Association Standard is a minimum of 2.4 hectares of outdoor playing space per 1000 population. This standard should be met as follows:

- Facilities for youth and adult outdoor sports use (such as pitches, greens, courts and running tracks): 1.6 to 1.8 hectares of outdoor sports per 1000 population;
- Outdoor equipped children's playgrounds: 0.2 to 0.3 hectares per 1000 population; &
- Casual or informal children's playing space within housing areas: 0.4 to 0.5 hectares per 1000 population

To meet the standards each area of public open space should fulfil the following criteria:

- i) be within 400 metres walking distance of the new houses;
- ii) be of an appropriate size (at least 0.2ha in area);
- iii) normally to contain a safe, stimulating play area for children in accordance with the standards set out below; and
- iv) to contain areas specifically intended for passive informal recreation, including seating.



Equipped Children's Play Space - Standards

A standard equipped children's play space should consist of:

- i) three "elements" of static play equipment of robust design. An element is defined as play equipment sufficient for use by three children at any one time. An example of a play area containing three elements is a slide, climbing frame and swings, or a combination construction providing for a range of play and exercise activities; and
- ii) a recognised and approved safety play surface meeting the relevant minimum British Standard.

The standard play space (3 elements) would serve a development of up to 100 dwellings. Larger sites will require an additional element for each 30 dwellings and a corresponding increase in play surface area.

The children's play area should be enclosed by a hedge, wall or a fence, with a self-closing gate, particularly along any edge of the site which is bounded by a road. This will help to make the area safer for children to use and to keep out dogs.

