

# Gloucester City Council



DRAFT Supplementary  
Planning Guidance No.6

New Housing and  
Open Space

Policy, Design & Conservation Service



**GLOUCESTER**  
**CITY COUNCIL**  
Sustainable Development

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## **SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE 6: NEW HOUSING AND OPEN SPACE**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

#### **POLICY**

- In new housing developments, public open space should be provided and equipped on-site for sport, active recreation and children's play in line with the Council Standard of 2.8 hectares per 1000 people.
- On smaller sites, including individual homes, where the provision of public open space and associated facilities on-site in accordance with the Council Standard is not feasible, a financial payment will be sought to improve existing or create new public open space and associated facilities within the appropriate catchment area.
- We will seek public open space on, or adjacent to, the development site when thirty or more dwellings are proposed, financial contributions on smaller sites, and part contributions where full on-site provision is not possible (Figure 1).
- The policy does not normally apply to rest homes, nursing homes and most other institutional uses and replacement dwellings where there is no net gain.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION – ON-SITE PROVISION**

- Public open space should be provided on-site in areas of at least 0.2 hectares in size and of a reasonable shape for recreational and maintenance purposes. They should be designed and landscaped to comply with community safety considerations. Developers will be expected to show these areas clearly on the layout plans when making a planning application.
- All new residential development will be expected to provide the appropriate level of equipped children's play, sport and recreational facilities that are necessary and reasonable for the development to meet the needs of its residents. Negotiations will be based on Figure 2.
- A commuted sum for the future maintenance in perpetuity will be sought when public open space is provided on-site.
- We will seek to enter into a legal agreement with the applicant to secure the provision, laying out, equipping and future maintenance.
- All public open space and associated facilities which are intended to be offered by the developer for adoption by the Council, must be constructed to the satisfaction of the Council, as outlined in the legal agreement, prior to adoption.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION – OFF-SITE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION**

- The financial contribution required by dwelling size is shown in Table 4. The table will be updated annually to take into account current prices.
- All financial contributions should be made in the form of a cheque made payable to 'Gloucester City Council' and will be paid into the Public Open Space Fund.
- The money collected will be spent on public open space projects only, as identified in the Public Open Space Strategy, in the appropriate catchment area.

## SECTION ONE: EXPLANATION OF THE POLICY

### 1. WHAT IS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE?

This Supplementary Planning Guidance note is intended to guide developers of new housing schemes on the provision of public open space and the commuted sum for its future maintenance or financial contribution in lieu of on-site provision.

This document explains how the policies will be implemented whilst providing practical advice on where the public open space should be sited and designed. We intend to use this Supplementary Planning Guidance note to establish a set of procedures that will assist developers in making applications that should minimise any unnecessary delays in the planning process.

This Supplementary Planning Guidance note supplements policies OS.2, OS.3, OS.4 and OS.5 of the first stage deposit City of Gloucester Local Plan (2001) which are set out in Appendix I of this document.

This Supplementary Planning Guidance note will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.

### 2. WHAT IS PUBLIC OPEN SPACE?

We define 'public open space' as:

*'open space that is available for sport, active recreation or children's play, which is of a suitable size and nature for its intended purpose, and safely accessible and available to the general public'.*

This document refers to public open space only, not highway verges, incidental open space or amenity land in general.

The provision of public open space is required for most new housing development in recognition that the new residents will generate demand on facilities that will put pressure on the existing provision of public open space and facilities in the locality of the proposal. The provision of safe, conveniently located and attractive communal public open space integrated into, or within close proximity to residential areas can improve the quality of life and residents which in turn has social and health benefits to the residents of the proposed development.

### 3. THE NEED FOR AN EQUITABLE APPROACH

It is a well accepted principle that new housing development should include the provision of public open space. In the past, the Council has only sought the provision of public open space in new residential developments of 35 dwellings and over. This meant that below this artificial threshold, no public open space was required to be provided by the development. Such a situation is clearly inequitable and resulted in a large number of small or medium sized developments taking place whilst making little or no contribution to the provision of public open space and facilities in the city and placing greater demand on existing formal sport and children's play facilities. The cumulative impact of these developments can only be addressed by adopting a pro rata approach and making all new dwellings contribute.

In 2000 we produced a draft Public Open Space Strategy for public consultation which assessed the current provision of public open space in the city. The Local Plan Review for the period to 2011 has given us the opportunity to adopt an equitable approach to the provision of public open space throughout the city, which could be applied to all new housing developments, including single dwellings and small housing sites, not including replacement dwellings.

Where the opportunity exists for public open space to be provided on-site as an integral part of the development, it should be provided on-site. Where full, or part provision, is not possible within the development site a financial contribution system for public open space provision has been set up which allows developers to make appropriate financial contribution to create new or fund improvements to the public open space facilities in the locality. All financial contributions will be paid into the Public Open Space Fund (Appendix J).

#### 4. LOCAL RECREATIONAL NEEDS

The past Residents Surveys carried out by Council show that residents want more leisure and recreation facilities including multi-sports provision and children's play in local neighbourhoods around the city.

The Council, as part of the Local Plan Review 2001-2011, has produced a Public Open Space Strategy. The strategy has been prepared to guide the future enhancement and provision of sport and play equipment along with other facilities in the parks and other public open spaces in Gloucester. The strategy through a comprehensive survey of the city has revealed a number of deficiencies with regard to the quantity, quality and distribution for the provision of public open space in parts of the city.

The strategy will be used to assess the future needs for outdoor play and recreation space and identify new play areas and sites that are in need of enhancement within the locality of the proposal. These documents will be taken into account as a material consideration in determining planning applications for new residential development.

In summary, the Public Open Space Strategy has identified that:

**PUBLIC OPEN SPACE** – Public open space is a vital component of the city's green space consisting of approximately 239 hectares (590 acres) for an estimated population of 109,264 (1999 mid year estimate). This equates to a ratio of 2.19 hectares (5.4 acres) of public open space to every 1000 residents, which is substantially below our new standard of 2.8 hectares (7 acres) per 1000 population. This equates to a substantial shortfall of 66.5 hectares. More importantly it is not evenly distributed across the city. There are areas of deficiency in terms of quantity notably the Inner Area of Barton and Quedgeley. Even, in areas of the city where there are good levels of public open space, the quality and access to the space and facilities are not always to an acceptable standard. The quality of equipped children's play areas across the city is poor and in need of investment for upgrading and maintenance;

**FORMAL RECREATION** – playing fields in the city are an invaluable resource. The overall provision of playing fields has changed little over recent years and the existing supply is used well and in need of improvement. As demands for future development needs increases within existing urban areas, the pressures upon the pitch resource are set to increase. It is necessary to make better use of existing facilities through the introduction of changing facilities and floodlighting.

**CHILDREN'S PLAY** – provision in Gloucester is well below the Council and National Playing Fields Association's (NPFA) standards and does not always provide for safe, exciting, creative and independent play.

#### 5. TYPES OF NEW HOUSING COVERED BY THE POLICY

All housing developments involving the construction of 1 or more new dwellings should contribute to public open space provision because of the need identified in the Public Open Space Strategy. As a general rule, we will seek public open space on, or adjacent to, the development site when thirty or more dwellings are proposed and financial contributions on smaller sites, and part contributions where full on-site provision is not possible (Figure 1).

#### 6. EXCEPTIONS TO THE POLICY

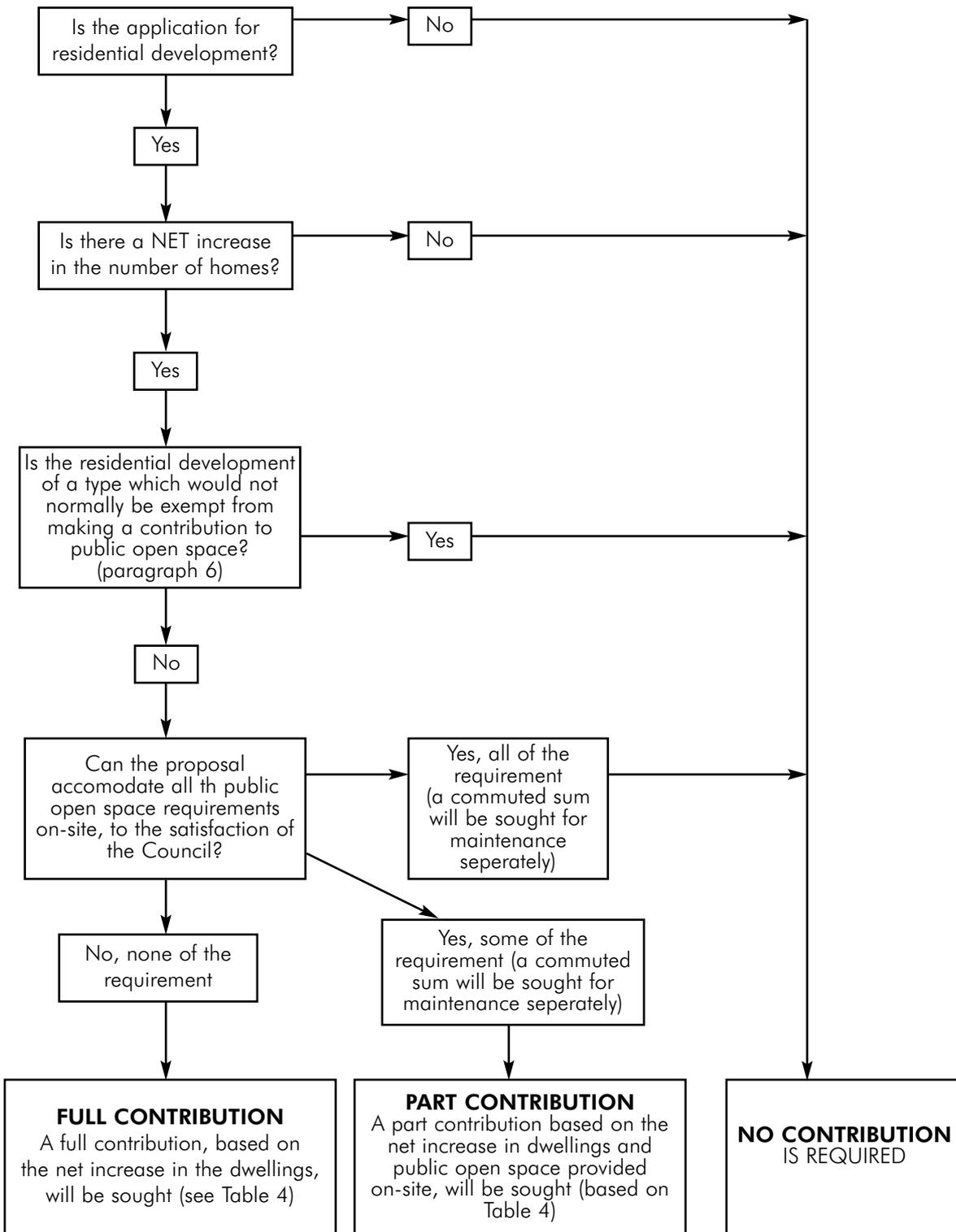
**Normally it does not apply to:**

Rest homes, nursing homes and most other institutional uses; and,  
Replacement dwellings where there is no net gain.

#### 7. COMMUTED SUMS FOR MAINTENANCE

A commuted sum for the future maintenance in perpetuity will be sought where the type of public open space and associated facilities i.e. equipped children's play areas on-site will principally serve the residents of the development.

**FIGURE 1: IS A CONTRIBUTION REQUIRED FOR PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND ITS FUTURE MAINTENANCE?**



## SECTION TWO: ON-SITE PROVISION

### 8. ON-SITE PROVISION

Developers will be expected to provide all the categories of public open space and associated facilities on, or adjacent to, the development site wherever possible. Where larger sites are proposed to be phased or sub-divided, we will use the whole site for the purpose of determining what the requirement for public open space will be.

Public open space will be sought on-site on all developments that create 30 or more new homes. These spaces should be provided in single areas of no smaller than 0.2 hectares and be of a useable shape and size for recreation to provide opportunities for informal games. Developers will be expected to show these areas clearly on the layout plans at a scale of 1:500 when they submit their planning application. This is in contrast to amenity space which comprises of land consequential to the layout of a particular development and land which is incidental to a highway, cycleway or footpath. Whilst unable to perform a recreational function i.e. informal games, amenity space may, however, serve to enhance the general appearance of a development.

If the proposed residential development is below the 30 dwelling threshold the appropriate financial contribution will be sought in lieu of public open space on-site. Please refer to the Section 3: Off-Site Financial Contribution.

All new residential development will be expected to provide the appropriate level of equipped children's play, sport and recreational facilities that are necessary and reasonable for the development to meet the needs of its residents. The willingness of a developer to include equipped children's play, sport and recreational facilities in new housing developments will be a material consideration in determining the planning application. Negotiations will be based on Figure 2.

**FIGURE 2: ON-SITE PROVISION**

| Threshold of Development | Formal Sport  | Children's Play  | General Public Open Space |
|--------------------------|---|--|---------------------------|
| 1 to 29 Dwellings        | Financial Contribution  | Financial Contribution   | Financial Contribution    |
| 30 Dwellings             | 2 tennis courts or equivalent   | A Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) or equivalent  | Provided on-site          |
| 50 Dwellings             | A multi-use games area (MUGA) or equivalent   | A Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) or equivalent  | Provided on-site          |
| 100 Dwellings            | A multi-use games area (MUGA) and 2 tennis courts or equivalent   | A Neighbourhood Area for Play (NEAP) or equivalent   | Provided on-site          |
| 150 Dwellings            | A full size winter playing pitch & changing rooms, a multi-use games area (MUGA) and a tennis court or equivalent | A Neighbourhood Area for Play (NEAP) and a Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) or equivalent | Provided on-site          |

#### FORMAL SPORT

Formal sport should be provided as tennis courts or a multi use games area (MUGA) on medium sized housing developments and full size winter playing pitches and changing facilities will be sought on larger housing schemes (Figure 2). Equivalent formal sport provision may be considered depending upon the nature and scale of the proposed development.

Formal sport provision must be designed, prepared and landscaped to the Council's satisfaction. The preparation of grass playing pitches will involve seeding, top soiling, grading and drainage. It will need to be fenced and provided with seating, bins and footpaths. The public open space must be laid out and equipped to a satisfactory standard and handed over for adoption within an agreed time, either from the date of receiving planning permission (usually 2 years) or after so many dwellings are completed. This will be a clause in the legal agreement.

**CHILDREN'S PLAY SPACE**

Equipped and informal children's play space should be overlooked by surrounding properties and properly landscaped to the satisfaction of the Council. There should be an adequate buffer zone between the children's play space and residential properties.

The type and size of equipped play areas will depend on the number of new dwellings that are proposed (Figure 2). Equipped play areas include Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAPs) and Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAPs). What these facilities are, how they should be designed and where they should be located are explained in Appendix K of this document. Informal children's play space includes kickabout areas.

**GENERAL PUBLIC OPEN SPACE**

Public open space of a size and location suitable for general recreational use such as passive recreation should have surfaced footpaths and seating and be well landscaped to the satisfaction of the Council.

**9. CALCULATION OF COMMUTED SUMS FOR MAINTENANCE**

Commuted sums for the maintenance of the following categories of public open space will be sought in perpetuity for:

- Formal Sport
- Children's Play
- General Public Open Space

*Please note that The Council will also seek commuted sums for the maintenance of amenity areas where appropriate.*

**10. USE OF LEGAL AGREEMENTS**

We will seek to enter into a legal agreement with the applicant to secure the provision, laying out, equipping and maintenance of on-site public open space and associated facilities.

**11. ADOPTION OF FACILITIES**

All facilities, including equipped play areas and playing pitches which are intended to be offered by the developer for adoption by the Council, must be constructed to the satisfaction of the Council, as outlined in the legal agreement, prior to adoption.

Once the Council is satisfied with that construction and maintenance of the public open space and associated facilities has been completed to a satisfactory standard, we will arrange a dedication agreement for its adoption.

**SECTION THREE: OFF- SITE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION****12. OFF-SITE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION**

Full or part financial contributions will be sought when the new housing development does not provide the minimum standard of public open space and associated facilities on-site, as set out earlier in this document.

**13. THE LEVEL OF FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION SOUGHT****Occupancy Levels**

As the standard for the provision of public open space is based on population, the first step is to produce a requirement related to the number of new dwellings, their size and their type. One problem with using one occupancy rate for all types of housing is that it fails to distinguish between the sizes of dwellings. For example, a 20 dwelling scheme of 1 bedroom flats would equal that of a 20 dwelling scheme of 5 bedroom houses.

It is therefore more appropriate to use a standard based on the number of people that could potentially occupy each dwelling. It is assumed that in most dwellings the main bedroom would be occupied by two people and as the dwellings increase in size, the occupancy rate of bedrooms would fall. For independent dwellings for the elderly it is assumed that the number of occupants will be lower in most cases than a one bedroom house. Table 1 identifies what the following population per dwelling is considered most appropriate.

The Council's minimum standard for public open space provision is 2.8 hectares per 1000 population. This equates to 28 square meters of public open space per person. Table 1 shows the amount in square metres that is required to be provided by each dwelling size.

**Table 1: Occupancy of Dwellings and Public Open Space Requirement**

| Size of Dwelling        | Number of Occupants | Minimum POS Requirement m <sup>2</sup> |
|-------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Elderly Person Dwelling | 1                   | 28                                     |
| 1 Bedroom               | 2                   | 56                                     |
| 2 Bedrooms              | 3                   | 84                                     |
| 3 Bedrooms              | 4                   | 112                                    |
| 4 Bedrooms              | 5                   | 140                                    |
| 5 Bedrooms              | 6                   | 168                                    |
| 6+ Bedrooms             | 7                   | 196                                    |

Whilst using the above table to calculate the level of the requirement of public open space for any size of development, it is recognised that some modern dwellings are designed to provide greater flexibility in their internal arrangement. The assessment of the occupancy rate of a dwelling should therefore include rooms shown for other purposes, but capable of being used as a bedroom, once an allowance has been made for the appropriate number of living rooms or living area.

#### **Establishing the Public Open Space Requirement**

The requirements for each category of public open space per person is 17 m<sup>2</sup> for formal sport, 7 m<sup>2</sup> for children's play and 4 m<sup>2</sup> for which is based on the Council public open space standard. For any given single dwelling the public open space requirements are very small, as demonstrated in Table 2. Clearly in many smaller developments the provision of some categories of public open space on-site would be worthless and therefore there is a need to group provision from a number of developments to provide a useable area in a convenient location as explained in Section 2: On-Site Provision.

**Table 2: Public Open Space Requirements per Dwelling**

| Size of Dwelling        | Formal Sport m <sup>2</sup> | Children's Play m <sup>2</sup> | General Public Open Space m <sup>2</sup> | Total m <sup>2</sup> |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|--|----------------------|
| Elderly Person Dwelling | 17                          | 0                              | 11                                       | 28                   |
| 1 Bedroom               | 34                          | 0                              | 22                                       | 56                   |
| 2 Bedrooms              | 51                          | 21                             | 12                                       | 84                   |
| 3 Bedrooms              | 68                          | 28                             | 16                                       | 112                  |
| 4 Bedrooms              | 85                          | 35                             | 20                                       | 140                  |
| 5 Bedrooms              | 102                         | 42                             | 24                                       | 168                  |
| 6+ Bedrooms             | 119                         | 49                             | 28                                       | 196                  |

Some more specialised types of housing may not create a demand for all elements of the public open space requirement. For example, the occupants of a sheltered housing scheme or a one bedroom home would not be expected to use or provide for children's play areas. In these situations it will be more appropriate to seek more than the minimum standard of informal open space on-site to meet the Council standard of 2.8 hectares per 1000 population. Such cases clearly need to be considered individually on their merits.

### The Cost of Public Open Space

The amount of each contribution sought will be based on an estimated standard cost for making the provision of the required categories. The estimated costs have included all the anticipated costs of laying out a facility of the required size, including levelling, drainage, equipment, changing facilities, special surfaces, landscaping, car parking and other identified costs associated with each type of public open space. Land acquisition costs and project management and maintenance costs **have not been included**. The figures are then broken down into the cost per square metre for each category as shown in Table 3. This table will be updated annually to take into account current prices.

**Table 3: Cost of Public Open Space per square metre (2001 Figures)**

| Formal Sport m <sup>2</sup> | Children's Play m <sup>2</sup> | General Public Open Space m <sup>2</sup> |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| £28                         | £25                            | £17                                      |

**Please note that this table will be updated annually.**

### How Much Will It Cost?

The cost per metre square of the three categories of public open space (Table 3) are simply multiplied against the amount of provision required (Table 2) to give a figure that we will seek off the various single dwellings for the current year as shown in Table 4 (see Appendix L for examples). This table will be updated annually to take into account current prices.

**Table 4: Financial Contribution Sought per Dwelling (2001 Figures)**

| Size of Dwelling        | Formal Sport £ | Children's Play £ | General Public Open Space £ | Total £ |
|-------------------------|----------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|---------|
| Elderly Person Dwelling | 476            | 0                 | 187                         | 663     |
| 1 Bedroom               | 952            | 0                 | 374                         | 1326    |
| 2 Bedrooms              | 1428           | 525               | 204                         | 2157    |
| 3 Bedrooms              | 1904           | 700               | 272                         | 2876    |
| 4 Bedrooms              | 2380           | 875               | 340                         | 3595    |
| 5 Bedrooms              | 2856           | 1050              | 408                         | 3214    |
| 6+ Bedrooms             | 3332           | 1225              | 476                         | 5033    |

**Please note that this table will be updated annually.**

## APPENDIX G: GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE

Planning Policy Guidance note 17 'Sport and Recreation' (DoE, 1991) emphasises that it is the responsibility of the planning system to ensure that adequate resources are allocated in development plans for both organised sport and informal recreation. It is the duty of local planning authorities to assess the community's needs for public open space having regard to existing levels of provision.

The DETR's revised housing guidance emphasises that new housing should be well designed and should contribute to improving the quality of urban life. A Government initiative is to create sustainable residential environments with a key objective of the revised Planning Policy Guidance note 3 'Housing' (DETR, 2000) emphasising the need for 'greening' residential environments. It encourages local planning authorities to "have clear policies for the protection and creation of open space and playing fields, and new housing developments should incorporate sufficient provision where such spaces are not already adequately provided within easy access of new housing."

There are no prescribed national standards for the provision of public open space. Planning Policy Guidance note 17 (DoE, 1991) states that:

*"It is for local planning authorities to identify deficiencies in public open space and recreation provision ...It will therefore be helpful if local planning authorities draw up their own standards of provision for formal and informal sport and recreation, based on the own assessment of need".*

PPG 17 (DoE, 1991) promotes the use of planning obligations with regard to the provision of on-site recreational and informal open spaces as well the legitimacy of contributions for off-site provision by developers, as long as the need arises from them. Paragraph 20 states that:

*"It may be appropriate for local authorities to enter into planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 or other powers to secure the provision of public open space and sporting, recreational, social, educational or other community facilities as part of larger mixed use developments. Such agreements might cover:*

- *the provision of on-site and off-site recreational facilities related to the development;*
- *in the case of small developments, a contribution to nearby sport and recreation or open space provision; and*
- *alternative provision when recreational land or open space is lost."*

Circular 1/97 on Planning Obligations gives detailed policy guidance to Local Planning Authorities on the use of planning obligations. The Circular implies that it is reasonable to expect developers to meet or contribute towards the cost of providing these facilities where the development itself has created a need for extra facilities. The definition of what is appropriate and reasonable depends upon local circumstances and a degree of planning judgement in respect of the individual development proposal.

In Circular 1/97 it states in paragraph A.4 that Planning Obligations may

*"provide for payments of money to be made, either a specific amount or by reference to a formula and require periodical payments to be paid indefinitely or for a specific period". The Circular in paragraph B.14 also endorses maintenance payments to the Council for open space if "in the case of small open areas of open space, recreational facilities, children's play space, woodland or landscaping principally of benefit to the development itself rather than the wider public".*

The revised draft of PPG 17 'Sport, Open Space and Recreation' (DETR, 2001) for consultation, advises planning authorities to:

- adopt a strategic approach and plan positively for the provision and enhancement of well designed recreational and sporting facilities and open spaces;
- provide the strongest protection for open space that is, or has the potential to be, of value to the community;
- resist development pressures which could diminish recreational provision;
- ensure that sport and recreational facilities are easily accessible by a choice of modes of transport, and where appropriate, are centrally located; and
- provide good quality open space and built recreational facilities as an integral part of new communities in order to make them attractive places to live.

## APPENDIX H: STRUCTURE PLAN POLICY

The adopted Second Review of the Gloucestershire Structure Plan (1999) recognises that recreation is important to the health and well-being of the community and that countryside recreation can provide a vital complement to urban living for both local residents and people visiting the area. The policies therefore aim to reinforce the need to resist development pressures on recreation space and are as follows:

### ***Policy RE.2***

**A high standard of open space provision in new residential development will be required. Existing playing fields and recreational areas will be retained.**

## APPENDIX I – LOCAL PLAN POLICY

### ***Policy OS.2 Public Open Space Standard for New Residential Development***

**Public open space in new residential developments will be provided at a minimum of 2.8 hectares per 1000 population.**

### ***Policy OS.3 New Housing and Public Open Space***

**Planning permission will only be granted for new housing developments that provide for the laying out and equipping of public open space and associated facilities for children's play, formal sport and passive recreation to the Council standard. Housing schemes catering for special groups such as Elderly Persons Homes and other residential institutions will be considered more flexibly and assessed for the needs of the residents.**

**Where the full provision of public open space and associated facilities on-site in accordance with the Council Standard is not feasible, a financial payment will be sought to improve existing or create new public open space and associated facilities within the appropriate catchment area as identified in the Public Open Space Strategy.**

### ***Policy OS.4 Design of Public Open Space***

**Proposals for new housing development should incorporate high quality public open space in accordance with the following criteria:**

- 1) it should be in an accessible location to serve the residents and users of the development (policy BE.6); and,**
- 2) it should be provided in areas of at least 0.2 ha (½ acre), and be of a useable shape and size for recreation; and,**
- 3) it should be overlooked by surrounding properties; and,**
- 4) it should be properly landscaped (policy BE.12); and,**
- 5) it should be designed to take account of community safety considerations (policy BE.5).**

### ***Policy OS.5 Maintenance Payments for Public Open Space***

**The City Council will seek an appropriate commuted sum from developers for the maintenance of public open space in new developments in perpetuity from the date of adoption.**

## APPENDIX J – THE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE FUND

### THE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE FUND

All money collected under policy will be paid into the Council's 'Public Open Space Fund'. Money from the fund will only be used for the purchase of, creation of and improvements to public open space as identified in the Public Open Space Strategy. This does not include commuted sums for maintenance of on-site public open space.

### WHERE WILL THE FUNDS BE SPENT?

Money collected for children's play and general open space will be spent in either the division it was collected in (as set out in the Public Open Space Strategy), or the closest neighbourhood park, or alternatively the closest equipped children's play area to the application site.

Money collected for formal sport provision will be used on projects city-wide as it is recognised that they are generally a city-wide resource. It is an aspiration of the Council to provide, where possible, junior playing pitches in all neighbourhoods.

### ANNUAL REPORT

An annual report will be made to the Council by the Parks Development Officer outlining what money has been collected, what projects have been carried out, what money remains and what projects have been identified for the next 12 months (based on the recommendations of the Public Open Space Strategy). It should be noted that funds will remain unspent until they reach a level which is sufficient to implement one of the proposals as identified in the Public Open Space Strategy.

### HOW SHOULD I MAKE MY FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION?

Payment should be made in the form of a cheque made payable to 'Gloucester City Council' for the correct amount. **Cash payments will not be accepted.**

## APPENDIX K – OPEN SPACE DESIGN GUIDE

### LEAP Local Equipped Area for Play

These are equipped, unsupervised areas of play to cater mainly for 4-8 year olds, although consideration should also be given to the needs of supervised children under 4 and unaccompanied children slightly older than 8. They should also be suitable for children with special needs (see note 1).

They should be located within 5 minutes walking distance from home (240m as the crow flies), with safe road crossing points provided where necessary.

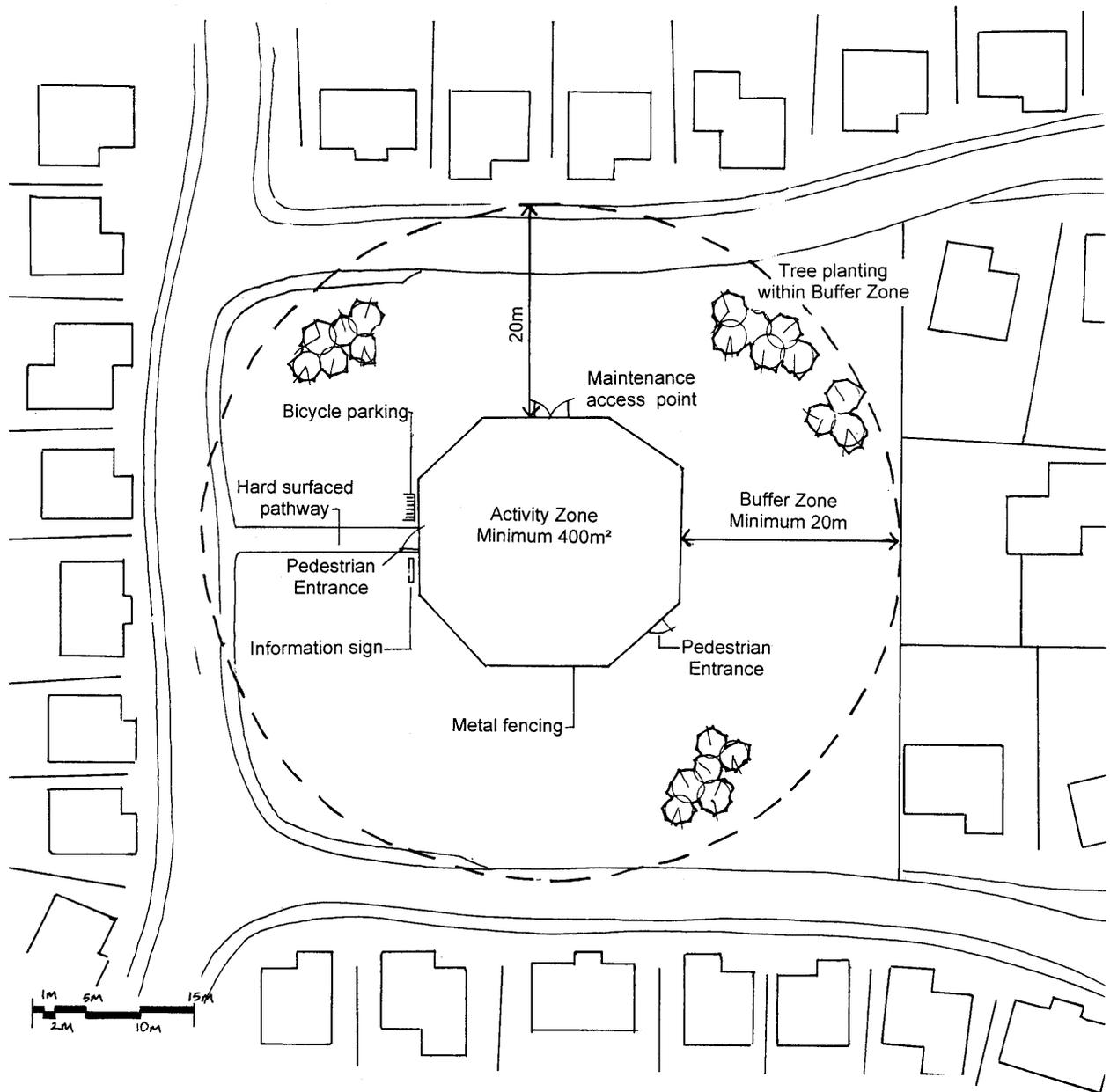
#### They should consist of:

- at least five types of play activity (see note 2).
- an Activity Zone of at least 400m<sup>2</sup> in area (see Figure 1).
- a buffer zone of at least 20m between the edge of the Activity Zone and the boundary of adjacent development (see note 3).
- impact absorbing safety surfacing preferably consisting of in-situ wet-pour material or rubber tiles, with a hard surfaced route between all equipment. Loose fill bark surfaces will not be acceptable (due to high future maintenance costs).
- metal fencing to exclude dogs with at least two self-closing pedestrian access points, plus a lockable maintenance access gate (see note 2).
- a minimum of 2 metal seats for adults and 2 metal litter bins (preferably with at least 1 dog bin sited nearby), plus seating for children or a picnic table.
- bicycle parking facilities at each entrance (outside fencing).
- a level, well drained area with grass and/or hard surfaced playing space, with a hard surfaced path leading from the nearest public footway.
- an entrance/information sign (see note 4) at each gate, including dog exclusion signs.
- lighting (see note 6)

All equipment and surfacing should comply with the relevant British or European Standards. Adequate safety measures should be provided to minimise the risk of road-related accidents and potential dangers from nearby watercourses, electricity cables and railway lines. They should be located to allow informal supervision, for example by being overlooked by nearby houses or from well used pedestrian routes.

Note: The City Council will require a copy of an approved post installation inspection and any other relevant safety audit prior to adoption of all new play and sport areas, as well as written evidence that any measure undertaken as a result of such an inspection/audit has been carried out.

**Figure 1: LEAP - Local Equipped Area for Play - illustration shows general layout principles in context of surrounding development.**



**Note: A minimum size of 2000m<sup>2</sup> (0.2 hectares) will be required for Public Open Space.**

## NEAP - Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play

These are equipped, unsupervised areas of play to cater mainly for older children aged 8 and above, but should also contain opportunities for play for younger children too. They should be suitable for children with special needs (see note 1).

They should be located within 15 minutes walking distance from home (600m as the crow flies), with safe road crossing points provided where necessary.

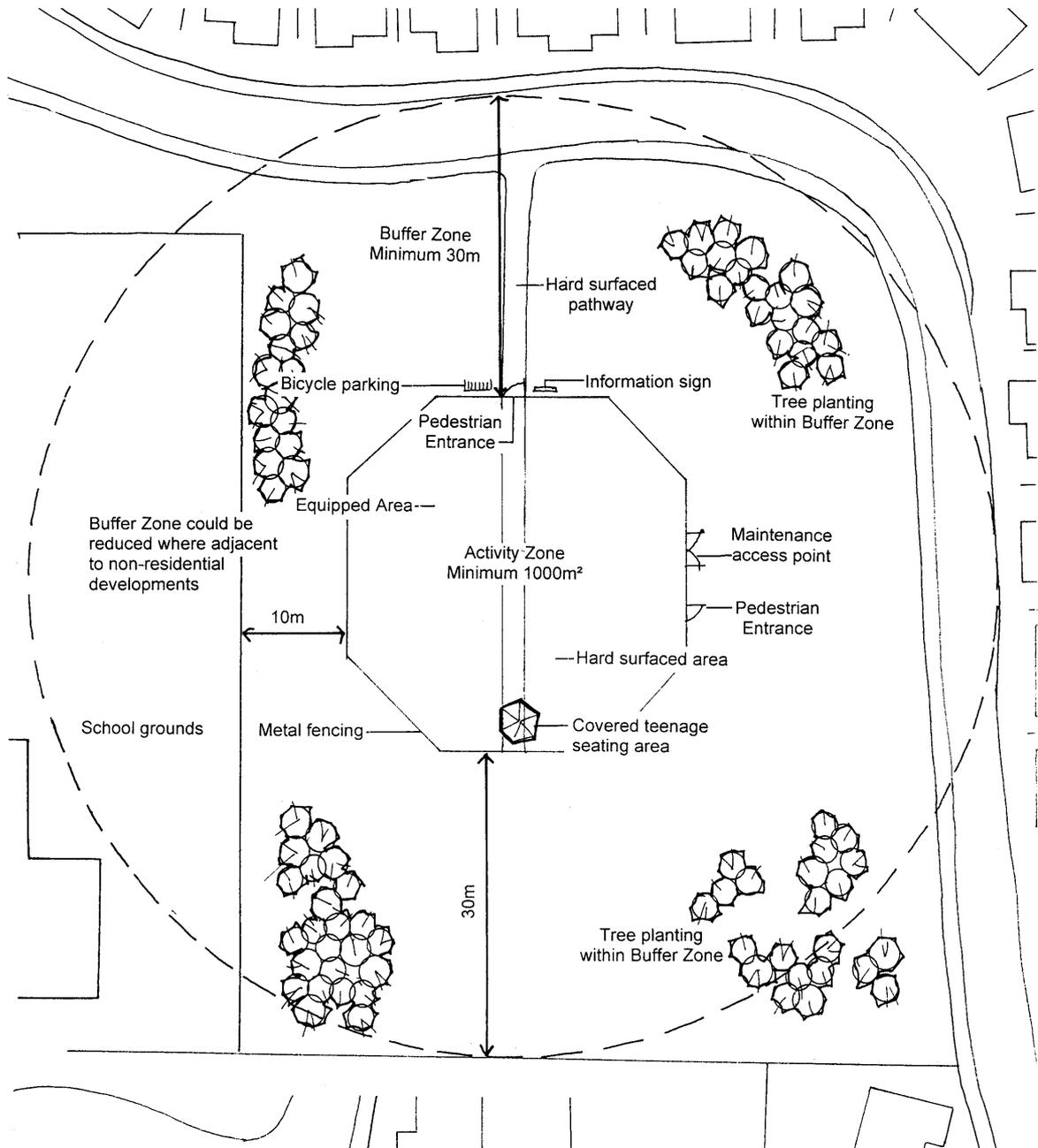
### They should consist of:

- at least eight types of play activity (see note 2).
- an Activity Zone of at least 1000m<sup>2</sup> in area (see Figure 2).
- a buffer zone of at least 30m between the edge of the Activity Zone and the boundary of adjacent development (see note 3).
- impact absorbing safety surfacing preferably consisting of in-situ wet-pour material or rubber tiles, with a hard surfaced route between all equipment. Loose fill bark surfaces will not be acceptable (due to high future maintenance costs).
- at least half of the Activity Zone should be hard surfaced for wheeled sport (such as skateboards/rollerblades and bikes) and ball games area (e.g. 5-a-side football) and should include at least three items of equipment to cater for these, one of which should be a Mini-MUGA.
- metal fencing to exclude dogs with at least two self-closing pedestrian access points, plus a lockable maintenance access gate (see note 2).
- a minimum of 3 metal seats for adults and 3 metal litter bins (preferably with at least 1 dog bin sited nearby), plus seating for younger children or a picnic table.
- a separate covered seating area for teenagers to use as a meeting place (see note 2).
- bicycle parking facilities at each entrance (outside fencing).
- a level, well drained area with grass and/or hard surfaced playing space, with a hard surfaced path leading from the nearest public footway.
- an entrance/information sign (see note 4) at each gate, including dog exclusion signs.
- lighting (see note 6).

All equipment and surfacing should comply with the relevant British or European Standards. Adequate safety measures should be provided to minimise the risk of road-related accidents and potential dangers from nearby watercourses, electricity cables and railway lines. They should be located to allow informal supervision, for example by being overlooked by nearby houses or from well used pedestrian routes.

Note: The City Council will require a copy of an approved post installation inspection and any other relevant safety audit prior to adoption of all new play and sport areas, as well as written evidence that any measure undertaken as a result of such an inspection/audit has been carried out.

**Figure 2: NEAP - Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play - illustration shows general layout principles in context of surrounding development.**



**Note: A minimum size of 2000m<sup>2</sup> (0.2 hectares) will be required for Public Open Space.**

**PSP - Private Space for Play** (also known as Doorstep Equipped Area for Play or DEAP)

Within the grounds of new higher density developments of flats (or housing) with no private garden provision, separate areas designated for play for very young children will be required.

The spaces would remain in private ownership (perhaps as part of the management agreement) for the use of residents of the development only and would not be adopted or maintained by the City Council.

PSPs **will not** contribute to the Public Open Space requirement for the development.

**They should consist of:**

A flat, well drained area, part grassed and part hard surfaced with an activity zone of at least 50m<sup>2</sup>, well overlooked by dwellings within the development (see Figure 3).

At least one feature (e.g. stepping stones, a mushroom style seat or model animal) to enable young children to identify the space as their own

Seating for parents/carers

Secure fencing at least 600mm high, with gated access.

A buffer zone of at least 5 metres to the nearest dwelling.

Where appropriate, a 1 metre deep strip of dense planting where gable ends of dwellings adjoin the space to prevent ball games by older children.

A notice indicating the private ownership of the PSP and contact details for maintenance purposes.

At least one tree for shade, with an area of attractive shrub or herbaceous planting (see note 7)

All equipment and surfacing should comply with the relevant British Standards. Adequate safety measures should be provided to minimise the risk of road-related accidents and potential dangers from nearby watercourses, electricity cables and railway lines. They should be located to allow informal supervision, for example by being overlooked by nearby houses or from well used pedestrian routes.

**Figure 3: Private Space for Play - illustration shows general layout principles.**



## MUGA - Multi-Use Games Area

These are equipped, unsupervised areas for formal sport to cater mainly for children and adults over 8 years old. They should also be accessible for people with special needs (see note 1).

They should consist of:

- an Activity Zone of at least 450m<sup>2</sup> (30x15m) in area.
- a buffer zone of 30m between the edge of the Activity Zone and adjacent development (see note 3).
- a minimum of 2 basketball hoops and 2 football goals or equivalent (see note 5).
- a level, fully draining hard surface or equivalent, with a hard surfaced path leading from the nearest public footway (see note 5).
- metal perimeter fencing at least 1 metre high on side boundaries and 3 metres high at goal ends with at least two access points, plus a lockable maintenance access gate (see note 2).
- all fixings and fittings to be rounded or recessed.
- a minimum of 4 metal seats and 2 metal litter bins (outside fence) set on a hard surfaced area. At least 2 of the seats should be fully covered for use as a meeting place.
- one entrance/information sign (see note 4) at each gate, including dog exclusion signs.
- bicycle parking facilities at each entrance (outside fencing).
- lighting (see note 6).

All equipment and surfacing should comply with the relevant British or European Standards, DIN (German) or specialist guidelines relating to the type of equipment. Adequate safety measures should be provided to minimise the risk of road-related accidents and potential dangers from nearby watercourses, electricity cables and railway lines. They should be located to allow informal supervision, for example by being overlooked by nearby houses or from well used pedestrian routes.

Detailed guidance on MUGA design and layout is available from the Sport England Guidance Note 'Multi-Use Games Areas' November 1994 ISBN 1 872 158 897.

## **MINI-MUGA – Mini Multi-Use Games Area**

These are equipped, unsupervised areas for informal sport or play to cater mainly for over 8 year olds and teenagers. They should also be accessible for people with special needs (see note 1).

They should consist of:

- an Activity Zone of at least 225m<sup>2</sup> (15x15m) in area.
- a buffer zone of 30m between the edge of the Activity Zone and adjacent development (see note 3).
- a minimum of 1 basketball hoop and 1 football goal or equivalent (see note 5).
- a level, fully draining hard surface or equivalent, with surfaced path leading from the nearest public footway see note 5).
- metal perimeter fencing at least 1 metre high on two side boundaries and 3 metres high at the goal end with at least two access points.
- all fixings and fittings to be rounded or recessed.
- a minimum of 2 metal seats and 1 metal litter bin (outside fence) set on a hard surfaced area. At least 1 of the seats should be fully covered for use as a meeting place.
- at least one entrance/information sign (see note 4).
- bicycle parking facilities (outside fencing).
- lighting (see note 6).

All equipment and surfacing should comply with the relevant British or European Standards, DIN (German) or specialist guidelines relating to the type of equipment. Adequate safety measures should be provided to minimise the risk of road-related accidents and potential dangers from nearby watercourses, electricity cables and railway lines. They should be located to allow informal supervision, for example by being overlooked by nearby houses or from well used pedestrian routes.

## Playing Pitches

These are laid out, grass, unsupervised areas marked out for formal sport.

All pitches should be installed in accordance with the following :-

- a firm, level grassed surface, consisting of an appropriate grass mix sward
- an appropriate sports field drainage system
- permanent goal posts (where applicable)
- appropriately constructed cricket tables (where applicable) with pitches that run north/south

The following are the minimum size requirements for each sport :-

|          | <b>Pitch size</b>  | <b>Goal sizes</b> |  |
|----------|--|-------------------|--|
| Football | Adult - 96m by 60m   | 7.32m by 2.44m    | note; pitch orientation and runoffs are important and will require careful consideration and early discussion with the City Council. |
|          | Junior - 90m by 55m  | 6.4m by 2m        |  |
|          | Mini - 55m by 36m  | 3.6m by 1.8m      |  |
| Rugby    | Adult - 110m by 65m  |                   |  |
| Cricket  | table/pitch - 22m by 19m<br>outfield - 46m from each corner of table |                   |  |

For all other formal sports the pitch dimensions will be based on Sport England Guidance notes and key dimensions from each sports governing body.

## Tennis courts

These are equipped, generally unsupervised areas for formal sport to cater for all ages. They should also be accessible for people with special needs (see note 1).

They should consist of:

- an Activity Zone of at least 40m by 20m for one court and 40m by 36m for two courts
- a buffer zone of 20m between the edge of the Activity Zone and boundary of adjacent development (see note 3).
- a minimum of 1 tennis net and marked out court
- a level, fully draining hard surface or equivalent, with a hard surfaced path leading to each entrance from the nearest public footway (see note 5).
- metal perimeter fencing at least 3 metres high with at least two gated (and lockable) access points (outward opening gates), plus a lockable maintenance access gate (see note 2).
- all fixings and fittings to be rounded or recessed.
- a minimum of 1 metal seat and 1 metal litter bin (outside fence) set on a hard surfaced area.
- one entrance/information sign (see note 4) including dog exclusion signs.
- bicycle parking facilities at each entrance (outside fencing).
- lighting (see note 6)

All equipment and surfacing should comply with the relevant British or European Standards, or specialist guidelines relating to the type of equipment. Adequate safety measures should be provided to minimise the risk of road-related accidents and potential dangers from nearby watercourses, electricity cables and railway lines. They should be located to allow informal supervision, for example by being overlooked by nearby houses or from well used pedestrian routes.

Detailed guidance on tennis court design and layout is available from the Sport England Guidance Note 'Multi-Use Games Areas' November 1994 ISBN 1 872 158 897.

## Changing Facilities

The exact requirement for changing facilities will vary according to the number and type of sporting facility on each site. However, each formal sporting facility will be required to include adequate equipped changing facilities in accordance with those specified in the Sport England Guidance Note 'Pavilions and Clubhouses', June 1999, ISBN 1 86078 090 7.

Detailed planning consent will be required for changing facilities and proposals should include:

- Hard surfaced car/disabled/ bicycle (covered) and overflow parking provision (in accordance with current or future City Council policy). Detailed guidance is available from the Sport England Guidance Note 'Car Park and Landscape Design', July 1999, ISBN 1 86078 101 2.
- Hard surfaced turning areas for servicing emergency vehicles/coach drop off.
- Surfaced access road/cycle & pedestrian footpaths and links.
- Lighting (see note 6)
- Community Safety considerations
- Robust, vandal resistant materials and construction, designed with space to allow for future expansion.
- Consideration of existing trees, other natural features and ecology as well as neighbouring development, plus appropriate new planting (see note 7).
- Signage.

## Teenage Seating and Youth Sport

After 8 years old, children use traditional play equipment less and instead require wider stimuli, as they start to become more socially aware, preferring to interact with their peers in spaces away from home. As a result, this age group of children and young people have tended to be left out of formal play provision, resulting in frustration at nowhere to go and often vandalism of equipment provided for younger ages.

National and local studies and surveys have shown that young people simply want a place to hang out with their friends and that wheeled sports and ball games are also top priority, so a hard surfaced area which can be used for both (preferably equipped with a steel sports wall and/or all steel skate equipment), is ideal. Many play equipment manufacturers now offer covered teenage seating areas, however, some designs are either not adequate to provide shelter from wet weather and do not provide enough space for a group of five or six young people to sit together.

The provision of teenage seating areas are therefore considered an essential part of any open space layout, as they can dramatically reduce the high costs of vandalism, nuisance and anti-social behaviour to other facilities both within the open space and to neighbouring properties.

Ideally teenage seating should be sited on a level, well drained area adjacent to a MUGA or MINI-MUGA, or skate/bike area rather than near to younger children's play equipment.

The location and design of teenage areas should consider the following:

- Good buffer zones - at least in accordance with the NEAP standard for play (30 metres from nearest property boundary).
- Accessible with good road crossing points
- Good lighting, both to access paths and within the seating area (this is vital), well overlooked, openly accessible, preferably with unlimited access/exit points for community safety.
- Surfaced access paths and bicycle parking
- Some covered seating (rain proof), to accommodate at least 6 people comfortably under shelter, additional outdoor metal seating for at least 6 people and at least two litter bins (see note 2).
- Vandal proof/graffiti resistant design and materials.

An illustrated example of a suitable youth shelter is shown in Figure 4.

Further details can be found in the Thames Valley Police document 'Youth Shelters and Sport Systems - A good practice guide' 1999.



## Home Zones

In established housing areas as well as new, higher density housing, play space close to home can be difficult to provide. Traffic related deaths involving children are commonly associated with children playing near their home, but without protection from traffic.

There is, therefore, a need to provide safe play spaces close to home, often in highly built-up areas, to make the environment safe for children, pedestrians and cyclists.

Homes Zones represent a way of achieving this (based on the Dutch Woonerf concept), by controlling car access and speeds on minor, high-density streets, to allow extra play provision for children and the local community.

Further detailed guidance can be found in the NPFA Six Acre Standard and current City Council policy/guidance.

Note: As vehicular traffic can use Homes Zones, they **do not** contribute to play or public open space provision.

## Notes

### Note 1 - Special needs provision

The majority of people with special needs (physical disabilities and/or learning difficulties) should be able to use outdoor play areas and open spaces. However, outdoor facilities should take the following into consideration:

- They should comply with current City Council access policies.
- The design should allow for the many forms of disability (e.g. wheelchair users form only a small proportion of all children with disabilities).
- Entrance thresholds should be flush or ramped for easy wheelchair access.
- A hard surfaced access into play and sport areas and to each item is required.
- Within play areas opportunities for other disabilities (visual/hearing) should be provided.

### Note 2 - Items of Play Activity

Play activity is the activity each item of play equipment provides such as swinging, jumping, climbing, sliding, etc. Each LEAP should provide at least 5 different types of play activities and each NEAP should provide at least 8 different types of play activity.

### Street furniture and fencing

All street furniture such as litter bins, seats, bike racks, etc. should be of an all metal construction. Seating should include seat backs and litter bins should include fire dampening mechanisms. All street furniture should be securely installed into the ground. All seats should be installed onto hard surfaced pads and all bins should be installed into underground concrete foundations or hook type secure metal ground fixings.

Fencing around play areas should be metal bow top fencing (or equivalent) at least 1m high with a coloured polyester powder coated finish. All pedestrian access gates into play areas should be finished to match the fencing, should have speed controlled, self closing mechanisms fitted to them and should be outward opening to exclude dogs.

The fencing around each play area, multisport areas or tennis court should include a lockable, maintenance access gate (as well as pedestrian accesses) at least 3m wide with a grass, ground reinforced access path into the area.

### Note 3 - Activity Zones and Buffer Zones

An Activity Zone is an area of land specifically dedicated for children to use for play or for people to use for sport.

A Buffer Zone is the space surrounding an activity zone. The purpose of a buffer zone is to provide a reasonable degree of separation between play or sport activity and nearby residential properties. Buffer zones can be reduced if adjacent uses are non-residential and can be partly made up of highway, cycleways, footways or planting. However, it should be noted that in such cases, parts of the Buffer Zone would not count towards the calculation for Public Open Space provision.

| Facility        | Minimum Activity Zone | Minimum Buffer Zone |
|-----------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| LEAP            | 400m <sup>2</sup>     | 20m                 |
| NEAP            | 1000m <sup>2</sup>    | 30m                 |
| PSP             | 50m <sup>2</sup>      | 5m                  |
| MUGA            | 450m <sup>2</sup>     | 30m                 |
| Mini MUGA       | 225m <sup>2</sup>     | 30m                 |
| Tennis Court    | 800m <sup>2</sup>     | 20m                 |
| Teenage Seating | -                     | 30m                 |

**Note 4 - Signage requirements**

The City Council will require post mounted or fence mounted steel signs at the entrance to play areas, multisport areas, teenage areas and tennis courts. These should indicate the site name, ownership, opening times, map (where required), contact details, emergency contact numbers, location of nearest phone box, dog exclusion or dog control measures and any other information appropriate to that site or equipment. Exact details of lettering, graphics and wording will be given by the Parks Development Officer on request.

These signs would be in addition to entrance signs required by the City Council at main entrance points to new parks and open spaces.

**Note 5 - MUGA equipment and fencing**

MUGA systems are now produced by a wide range of manufacturers. Systems should comply with the standard set out by the British Standard Product Assessment Specification PAS 30 1998. All equipment and fencing should be of an all metal construction with a coloured polyester powder coated finish.

Where necessary, the City Council will require that MUGA equipment includes noise reduction fixings to all fencing and goal panels.

Hard surfacing requirements will generally be for porous tarmacadam (to prevent puddling). Non-porous tarmacadam laid to a suitable crossfall will be acceptable for footpath links.

**Note 6 - Lighting, floodlighting and community safety**

As part of The Crime and Disorder Act 1998, local authorities now have a duty to consider crime prevention and community safety. For play areas and sports fields, this would include the design, provision and maintenance of safe, accessible, well observed and well lit spaces for the general public to use.

Street lighting to adjacent roads and pavements will be provided as part of the development, but not all open spaces will require additional lighting. However, early discussion with the City Council should be carried out to establish the required level of lighting for each play area, teenage seating area or open space site. Similarly, lighting around changing rooms will be required.

Where formal sport or MUGAs are provided, floodlighting will generally be required in some form, for evening use and training. Planning permission will be required for floodlighting. Care should be taken as to the design and siting of floodlighting, to avoid inconvenience to neighbouring properties.

Further detailed advice on floodlighting is contained in the Sport England guidance note 'Floodlighting', November 1994, ISBN 1 872158 93 5.

**Note 7 - Landscape Design****Tree Planting in Play Areas and Buffer Zones**

In play areas, tree planting offers a multitude of environmental benefits - especially shade - and will be encouraged. Existing mature trees should be retained and utilised. Tree species chosen should be non-poisonous and non-thorny, robust and planted at a reasonable size to withstand vandalism until well established. Extra Heavy Standard trees (14-16 cm girth) would be considered a minimum specification. The use of a small number of very large, semi-mature specimen trees to create an immediate impact play area feature would be favoured.

Trees should be generally native species to enable children to experience the natural environment, but care should be taken with all new planting to ensure large trees are not placed too close to existing or new properties. If in doubt, professional advice should be sought prior to planting.

Trees should have clear stems to allow unobstructed views and reduce potential hiding places.

Tree planting in buffer zones is desirable as these areas may be the only place young children can go to experience large scale trees in their environment. Trees should be planted in irregularly shaped groups to deter use as football goals.

Shrub and hedge planting is not generally encouraged within play areas, although some species could be used as a natural play feature (e.g. willow or bamboo), or fence. Shrub, hedging and herbaceous planting is acceptable within buffer zones. Again, these should be carefully chosen to avoid poisonous and thorny species and should be designed to enable children to experience a natural environment.

**Note 7 (continued)****Tree Planting in MUGAs, Mini-MUGAs, Tennis Courts, Playing Pitches and Teenage Areas.**

Again large scale tree planting in buffer zones around these facilities will be encouraged, especially to provide shade and reduce windspeeds. Shelter belts can greatly benefit exposed sites and professional advice should be sought for appropriate designs and species.

Consideration should be given to tree planting at an early stage in the design, to avoid conflict with plans for street lighting, CCTV, public utilities and adjacent properties.

**Landscape Design - general principles.**

As part of any development with open space provision, a comprehensive scaled masterplan for the landscape design should be drawn up at an early stage. This should indicate the following:

- Existing vegetation, roads, paths, landscape features and development.
- Areas of existing ecological interest (including protected species of flora or fauna).
- Proposed areas of grass, hard surface (including materials), water features etc.
- Pedestrian and vehicular paths, steps, ramps, access points, fencing, gates, barriers and bollards (materials and heights)
- Utilities, existing and proposed (underground and overhead)
- Drainage, existing and proposed
- Car parking materials and planting, bicycle parking areas.
- Seating bins/dog bins and signage locations, existing and proposed
- Levels, existing and proposed
- Lighting, existing and proposed (where appropriate)
- CCTV locations, existing and proposed (where appropriate)
- Other relevant features (e.g. bin stores, retaining walls) etc.

N.B. It should be noted that the information contained within this Open Space Design Guide is limited only to the equipped areas and their setting as listed above. There are many additional factors that require careful and detailed consideration when designing large parks and open spaces, which can not be fully covered in this short guide. Professional design advice should be sought at an early stage.

## APPENDIX L - EXAMPLES OF OFF-SITE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

To help you in understanding how we will calculate your financial contribution for off-site public open space we have created some examples which are set out below:

### **Example 1:**

A Single 3 Bedroom Dwelling is proposed

- Formal Sport  
1 x £1,904
- Children's Play  
1 x £700
- General Public Open Space  
1 x £272
- **TOTAL FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION £2,876**

### **Example 2:**

A single 3 bedroom dwelling is to be demolished and three 3 bedroom dwellings and a single 4 bedroom dwelling is proposed. **Note: replacement dwellings do not have to contribute.**

- Formal Sport  
 $2 \times 1,904 + 1 \times 2,380 = \text{£}3,808 + \text{£}2,380 = \text{£}6,188$
- Children's Play  
 $2 \times \text{£}700 + 1 \times \text{£}875 = \text{£}1,400 + \text{£}875 = \text{£}2,275$
- General Public Open Space  
 $2 \times \text{£}272 + 1 \times \text{£}340 = \text{£}544 + \text{£}340 = \text{£}884$
- **TOTAL FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION £6,188 + £2,275 + £884 = £9,347**

### **Example 3:**

15 x 3 bedroom dwellings, five x 4 bedroom dwellings and a single 5 bedroom dwelling are proposed.

- Formal Sport  
 $15 \times \text{£}1,904 + 5 \times \text{£}2,380 + 1 \times \text{£}2,856 = 15 \times \text{£}1,904 + 5 \times \text{£}2,380 + 1 \times \text{£}2,856 = \text{£}43,316$
- Children's Play  
 $\text{£}700 + 5 \times \text{£}875 + 1 \times \text{£}1,050 = 15 \times \text{£}700 + 5 \times \text{£}875 + 1 \times \text{£}1,050 = \text{£}15,925$
- General Public Open Space should be provided on-site

**TOTAL FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION £43,316 + £15,925 = £59,241 + a commuted sum for maintenance of the on-site public open space**

## Gloucester City Council

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