

Camden Planning Guidance

Public open space

January 2021



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Introduction

KEY MESSAGES

- If a scheme is over a certain size it is expected to make a contribution towards the provision of public open space in the borough.
- The Council's priority is for the provision of public open space on-site, therefore it is important this is taken into account at the design stage of a scheme.
- Other forms of public open space contributions could include provision off-site or as a payment in lieu in appropriate circumstances.
- Open space contributions may be used to fund improvements to green infrastructure and the public realm where this can assist in meeting the needs arising from the development.
- We expect new open space, including play facilities, to provide for equality of access.

What is Camden Planning Guidance?

- 1.1 The Council has prepared this Camden Planning Guidance (CPG) on Public Open Space to support the policies in the [Camden Local Plan 2017](#). This guidance is therefore consistent with the Local Plan and forms a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which is an additional "material consideration" in planning decisions.
- 1.2 This document should be read in conjunction with and within the context of the relevant policies in the Camden Local Plan 2017, other Local Plan documents and other Camden Planning Guidance documents.
- 1.3 This document was first adopted in March 2018 and replaced the "Open space, outdoor sport and recreation facilities" section of "CPG6 Amenity" (September 2011) and "Provision of public open space" section of "CPG8 Planning obligations" (July 2015). A correction was made in January 2021 to Example 4 in Appendix F.

Public open space in Camden

- 1.4 Public open space is open space that can be used and enjoyed by all the community. It is distinct from privately accessible open space such as private or communal gardens or balconies that do not ordinarily provide access for everyone.
- 1.5 This guidance primarily relates to adopted Camden Local Plan (2017) policies A2 Open Space and A3 Biodiversity. It sets out:

- Which developments are expected to make provision for open space and play facilities;
- The amount of open space we expect;
- The type of open space we expect;
- How we will calculate the open space expected for a specific development;
- The Council's expectations relating to design, quality and play facilities; and
- How contributions may be used to enhance 'green infrastructure' networks in Camden to provide environmental and quality of life benefits.

Which developments are expected to contribute towards open space and play facilities?

- 1.6 Applicants will need to make a contribution to the provision of these facilities in the borough when the development falls within the following categories:
- 11 or more additional dwellings or exceeds 1,000 sqm (gross internal area)
 - Student housing schemes creating an additional 11 or more units/rooms or occupiers
 - Developments of over 1,000sqm of floorspace / or on a site with an area greater than 1 hectare that are likely to increase the working population of the borough. This will be applied to commercial floorspace within the 'B' Use Class.
 - Developments of over 1,000sqm of floorspace / or on a site with an area greater than 1 hectare of floorspace for Higher Education institutions will be treated on a case-by-case basis having regard to the range of employment densities for 'B' Use Class space. There will be a presumption that these developments make a contribution towards the needs they generate.

How will the Council secure public open space?

- 1.7 Policy A2 of the Local Plan outlines the need to ensure that growth in the numbers of residents and workers in Camden will be supported by increases in public open space provision. It states that public open space within a development site is the Council's priority, with off-site provision when this is not feasible. Where applicants can demonstrate to the Council's satisfaction that it is not possible to provide public open space on or off site, the Council will accept a financial contribution towards other public open space in the area.
- 1.8 The increase in population from new development will place additional pressure on existing facilities, which without mitigation will be detrimental to the quality and standard of the borough's open spaces.
- 1.9 The Council will give particular priority to creating new public open space where a development is proposed within the deficiency areas, or their catchment areas, as shown on [Map 2 of the Local Plan](#).

- 1.10 A Public Open Space Plan is a useful tool for showing how the options for the direct provision of public open space have been assessed. More detail on the scope of these plans is set out in **Appendix A**. The Council will accept the provision of public access to an existing open space that currently has restricted access as a contribution to the provision of public open space.
- 1.11 Where the Council agrees that the full amount of new public open space cannot feasibly be delivered, e.g. because of site constraints, it will seek a pro-rata financial contribution towards improving the quality and capacity of existing public open space as a payment-in-lieu of provision. Financial contributions may also be used to fund public realm and green infrastructure projects where this is the most effective way of meeting the needs arising from the proposed scheme. Any off-site contribution should accord with the catchment distances set out in **Appendix B**.
- 1.12 There is a particular need to take a creative approach to delivering open space south of the Euston Road. This may include the greening of the public realm, for example through the provision of pocket parks or reclamation of road space.

Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 agreements

- 1.13 The Council will use [Section 106 planning obligations](#) to secure new areas of public open space and off-site financial contributions. This recognises that the size and nature of major schemes, their associated demands on public open space and the needs of occupants can vary substantially. The legal agreement will set out where the new public open space is to be provided and the amount of any financial contribution to be paid. It will also name any existing open spaces that the development will help to enhance.
- 1.14 Money collected via the [Community Infrastructure Levy](#) (or CIL) on certain developments is being spent on infrastructure needed to support Camden's future growth. Different CIL rates apply to different types of development and these vary according to where a development is located.
- 1.15 75% of CIL income is used to fund 'strategic' projects of borough-wide significance. The Council does not currently intend to use the strategic element of CIL income to fund improvements to public open space.
- 1.16 25% of CIL receipts will fund 'local' projects to meet the needs of the community where the CIL is collected. This can be used to support, among other things, small-scale, parks and green space projects. Projects are identified by ward councillors following consultation with the local community. The point at which these projects are delivered will depend on the total amount of available CIL funds and competition for funding from other infrastructure needs in a locality. The Council will not secure contributions for public open space using Section 106 planning obligations to fund items included on its CIL funding list.

- 1.17 More detail about the operation of CIL, including funding lists, is set out on the Council's [website](#).

How much public open space should be provided?

- 1.18 Policy A2 of the Local Plan states that the Council will apply the following standards per occupant for residential, commercial and higher education developments. Commercial development means any employment use which falls within Use Classes B1, B2 and B8 which are likely to increase the demand for public open space.
- 1.19 The commercial development standard will be applied when calculating the amount of public open space for developments proposing additional floorspace for the use of Higher Education institutions.

FIGURE 1: Amount of open space to be provided by land use

Development type	Open space provision
Residential (all types)	9 sqm per occupier
Commercial development	0.74 sq m per worker

- 1.20 For student accommodation, the Council will seek 9sqm per single room and 18sqm per double room. However, this will be multiplied by a factor of 0.75 recognising that student accommodation is often not used for part of the year.

What type and quality of public open space should be provided?

- 1.21 High quality public open space is vital for health and well-being. It provides a space for people to meet and socialise, helping communities to develop and strengthen. It helps give neighbourhoods their sense of place, provides historic interest and can help provide a sense of stability in a rapidly changing city. It helps to deal with environmental challenges in the urban environment, mitigating extremes of temperature, contributing to higher air quality and reducing flood risk. It provides a place where children and young people can play, learn and grow. Many open spaces provide access to nature.
- 1.22 The importance of public open space cannot be exaggerated in an inner London location, where space is limited and open space has to meet a wide range of often competing demands. However, it is recognised that the configuration of the site, occupancy levels and the need to meet other Local Plan objectives such as the delivery of housing may mean that the full on-site requirement for open space and facilities is not always achievable.
- 1.23 The Open space standards set out in the Local Plan relate specifically to **public open space**. Public open space means open space which is fully accessible to members of the public and provides an inclusive environment in which all communities feel welcome. Free public access will normally be available throughout the year, although the sensitivity of some nature conservation sites may justify restrictions to access.

- 1.24 Given the amount of hard surfaces in Camden, our priority will generally be for green spaces. The Council will generally not support public open space dominated by hard landscaping unless the need for this can be strongly justified.
- 1.25 It will usually be possible for spaces to be designed to be multi-functional and address a variety of different needs. The mix of different types of open space will vary according to the needs, opportunities and characteristics of the site, its occupants and the surrounding area. We expect areas of **natural greenspace** to be provided wherever possible. Provision of biodiverse green and brown roofs should be provided in all major schemes, however they will only be counted towards the open space standards where public access is secured. Examples of key types of public open space provision are set out in **Appendix C**. Public open space that is provided as part of a development should be designed in consultation with the Council's Sustainability and Green Space team.
- 1.26 Developments will also be expected to include **private amenity space** for use by residents and workers, unless applicants can demonstrate that it is not practicable to do so. Further detail about the quality and amount of private amenity space that should be provided is set out in the Mayor of London's Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- 1.27 Private amenity space, such as gardens and balconies, do not provide a substitute for the particular experience and opportunities for interaction provided by public open space and therefore, should not be counted towards meeting a scheme's open space contribution. We will also seek provision of allotments wherever an opportunity arises but they cannot be counted towards the open space standards. As a benchmark, we will seek approximately 0.9sqm per person.
- 1.28 N.B.: provision for **outdoor sports facilities** will be sought within the overall requirement of 9sqm per residential occupier where an opportunity for provision arises. Where a development provides public facilities for outdoor sports this can contribute to the 9sqm standard, subject to a balanced mix of public open space being provided.
- 1.29 A checklist providing further advice about the design and layout of public open space is set out in **Appendix D**.

Assessing play provision

- 1.30 The open space standards in Figure 1 include an allowance for formal and informal areas of play. Formal spaces are designated areas for children and young people containing a range of facilities and an environment that has been designed to provide focused opportunities for outdoor play. Informal spaces are less explicitly defined areas offering play value and may incorporate features such as fountains or climbable objects or areas of grass suitable for games.
- 1.31 The Council will give priority to delivering new areas of formal, equipped play facilities. Other types of open space, e.g. green amenity areas will already often provide opportunities for informal recreation, however this is not likely to offer the sense of challenge and experience of the types of play provision set out in Figure 2 below.

1.32 Generally, we will only expect informal play provision where it has been demonstrated that equipped provision would not be appropriate. This will also apply when we seek the Mayor's playspace standard (as set out in paragraphs 1.34 – 1.36 below).

1.33 Contributions to children's play space should address the needs of different age groups, taking into account the characteristics of the development. The Council's detailed expectations for play provision are set out in **Appendix D**. In line with our overall aims for public open space provision, we will expect new play facilities to be inclusive for all children and allow children from different areas or parts of a development to meet and socialise. Where residential schemes are a mix of tenures, only facilities accessible to all children living within the development should be counted towards the public open space contribution.

Examples of suitable play provision for different age ranges are as follows:

FIGURE 2: Types of open space expected, by age band

Age	Play provision
Children Under 5	Small landscaped play area with age-appropriate play features and furniture for parents and carers 

Children 5 - 11	Play area with age-appropriate play features within a landscaped space and furniture for parents and carers Kickabout areas Bike track, scooter park or other age-appropriate wheeled facility 
Young people 12+	Social space appealing to young people, with one or more of the following recreational opportunities, as determined by local demand; Adventure playgrounds Sport or recreation space that is open access (e.g. ball court, basketball court, multi-use games area) Skatepark, bike park or other wheeled facility Fitness trails or other age-appropriate fitness equipment/ areas Outdoor stage Youth shelters or other sociable seating spaces meeting the needs of this age group. 

- 1.34 The London Plan (2016) requires residential and mixed use developments to make provision for children's play space and informal recreation space. The Mayor of London recommends a minimum of 10sqm of dedicated play space per child is used to guide the level of play space provision. This standard is set out in the [Shaping Neighbourhoods: Play and Informal Recreation SPG 2012](#) and has become an established benchmark for calculating play space provision. Some of the largest schemes in Camden have delivered the standard.
- 1.35 While this benchmark is supported, it will be difficult to meet this level of provision when it is higher than the 9 sqm of open space sought per resident under Policy A2 for all types of public open space. Therefore, we will only seek to apply the Mayor's standard in major schemes proposing an increase of 100 dwellings or more. As the 9sqm already includes an allowance for any play provision, we will expect an additional 6.5sqm of play provision, rather than the 10sqm standard. This recognises that these larger schemes are likely to require a full range of play equipment. The GLA's has prepared a [play space calculator](#) to establish how much play space is needed.
- 1.36 The Council will also seek to address the lack of play provision in the Borough for young people of 12 years of age and over. The needs of this user group can sometimes be overlooked and there is an unmet demand for both formal provision (e.g. sports facilities) and also less formal facilities such as safe and secure meeting spaces. Therefore we will generally expect play provision to meet the needs of a cross-section of ages. Multi-Use Games Areas in the Borough tend to be used heavily by young males deterring use by girls which, as a consequence, can benefit less from public open space provision.

Proposals involving housing estate land

- 1.37 There is a significant amount of land in the borough which provides amenity space for residents' living within housing estates. Some of these estates are being redeveloped as part of comprehensive schemes delivering new or refurbished homes and better access to facilities such as community halls and leisure provision. As a starting point, we will expect the applicant to confirm how much usable open space currently exists within the housing estate and set out the function and value of the individual parcels of open space. Open space is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) as *"all open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity"*.
- 1.38 We will seek the retention of all open space of amenity value, unless it is proposed to reprovide the open space elsewhere in a location where it can meet the needs of the residents it was originally intended to serve. Quality and accessibility of open space are also relevant issues that can be addressed by development proposals. There can be opportunities to enhance the function and benefits provided by housing estate land.
- 1.39 Proposals for developing housing estate land should demonstrate how options for the provision of public open space have been tested in

developing the design and layout of major schemes. This should provide justification for how any change in the quantum of open space within the estate has been established.

The management arrangements for public open space

- 1.40 Where developments provide a contribution towards public open space (either on-site or off-site), the Council will need to be satisfied that it will be properly laid out and completed and that suitable contractual arrangements for its long-term management and maintenance have been put in place. Therefore, the Council will expect applicants to submit a draft management plan that can be secured through the S106 agreement.
- 1.41 Due to increased spending constraints on local government, it has become increasingly common for public open space to be managed by private management companies on behalf of residents and commercial tenants. The Council wants to ensure that the management arrangements for these spaces accord with the principles for managing public open spaces and use of management plans set out in **Appendix D**. This appendix is intended to ensure that the character and function of open spaces responds to the Council's objectives in paragraphs 1.21 to 1.25 of this CPG. Applicants should also be aware of policy in the Draft London Plan (Policy D7) which refers to the use of "appropriate management and maintenance arrangements". Paragraph 3.7.9 refers to the public realm, whether publicly or privately owned offering "the highest level of public access". The Council considers that the Mayor's proposals are consistent with the Council's own objectives for the management of public open space. The Mayor is planning to develop a 'Public London Charter' setting out rights, responsibilities and use of any restrictions for new and redeveloped public space.
- 1.42 The Council will secure the draft management plan through a planning obligation that forms part of the Section 106 legal agreement for the proposed scheme. A development could only be occupied once the Council is satisfied that satisfactory arrangements are in place for the management and maintenance of the public open space. These should be sustainable for the life of the development.
- 1.43 A particularly important issue is that members of the public are aware of who is responsible for managing the open space and are able to access the management arrangements pertaining to this land. As a minimum standard, we would expect owners/management companies to display a notice identifying a named manager and their contact details together with information signposting where the detailed management arrangements can be accessed.
- 1.44 The Council will expect the owner/management company (and their successors) to abide by the provisions of the management plan for the life of the development. If there are any changes, then the Council will need to be notified in writing. If there are any significant changes to the management plan, these may need to be referred to the Council's Planning Committee for consideration.

- 1.45 When considering a draft management plan, the Council will take into account measures considered necessary to ensure the security of open spaces and their long-term viability. For example, it may be appropriate to restrict access during the night to ensure that the open space is secure or for refurbishment works. The holding of occasional events may also be appropriate where this helps to enliven an open space and provides funding to support its maintenance. Any restrictions (which should be minimal) on public access and the permitted duration of closures will be set out in the legal agreement. The level of event activity deemed appropriate will vary depending on the type and open space and its context (different arrangements would clearly apply to a nature reserve compared to a civic plaza).
- 1.46 To ensure the best use of public resources, the Council will not normally adopt new public open space. The Council will ensure that new open spaces have the attributes of public open space and managed and maintained in accordance with agreed management plans. We will apply the principle of minimal restrictions on public access where there are proposals to vary an agreed management plan. Where this would compromise the overall function and purpose of public open space, as set out in this Guidance, the Council will refuse to vary the Plan. Management plans will also set out the relevant arrangements for securing the maintenance, security, lighting and cleaning of the open space. This will ensure that public open spaces continue to provide safe and attractive environments that can be enjoyed by their users.
- 1.47 Where the development is a major or phased scheme, the Council is likely to negotiate 'trigger points' at which occupants will be able to start enjoying use of the public open space. This will generally be before substantial occupancy of the development. Where development is phased, play space should be provided at an early stage of implementation.

How the Council will calculate the open space expected for a specific development

- 1.48 As set out in paragraph 1.19, we expect 9 sqm per additional resident and 0.74sqm per worker in commercial and higher education developments. Where we agree that it is not feasible to deliver the full amount of open space required, the Council will accept a financial payment in lieu of provision. These payments will be used by the Council to fund enhancements to existing open spaces. A public open space contribution will not be requested for other land uses.
- 1.49 Figure 3 below explains how the calculation of a payment in lieu of provision should be calculated.

FIGURE 3: Calculation of payments-in-lieu

Development type	Formula
Residential	(9 sq m per resident x number of additional dwellings x average residential occupancy for the ward where the development is located) MULTIPLIED by the total cost of providing public open space per sq m
Commercial development	(0.74 sq m per worker x employment density of development) MULTIPLIED by the total cost of providing public open space per sq m
Where public open space is provided on-site or nearby	(i) Calculate the total additional amount of public open space required using the standards above. (ii) Calculate the total additional amount of public open space that will actually be delivered. (iii) Adjust the residential or commercial requirement, e.g. if 50% of the open space is to be provided on site, the payment in lieu should be multiplied by 0.5.

- 1.50 As the open space standards are based on an amount of open space per person, it is necessary to calculate the amount of open space that is required for the scheme as a whole, adding together the amount of open space required for the residential and commercial elements of mixed use schemes. The formula in Figure 3 above uses a multiplier of average household size by ward to determine either a residential yield or an employment density for commercial schemes. The related data for individual wards and employment use classes is set out in **Appendix E**.
- 1.51 **Appendix F** sets worked examples showing the open space and contributions required for a number of different development types and sizes. In mixed use schemes the formula for residential development is to be applied to the residential floorspace and the commercial development formula to the element of commercial floorspace.
- 1.52 Where applicants make a financial contribution in lieu of direct provision, the Council will expect a commuted sum for the maintenance of these facilities for a period of ten years. The contribution will, therefore, be calculated by adding the capital cost (£200 per sq m) to the maintenance cost (£7 per sq m)¹. These costs are based on recent works undertaken by the Council to upgrade existing public open space in the Borough. Applicants should note that the Council will review the capital and maintenance costs annually to take inflation into account. The first review will occur one year following the date on which the Council adopted this guidance. We will usually rebase these costs using the All Items Index of Retail Prices (RPI) unless the applicant can demonstrate

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¹ These costs supercede "Figure 4: The Financial Contributions" in the adopted Camden Planning Guidance 8, Planning obligations (July 2015)

to the Council's satisfaction that an alternative method of indexation is more appropriate.

- 1.53 The contributions may be adjusted upwards or downwards according to the particular circumstances of the development. They provide a starting point for negotiations between the Council and developers. The scale of financial contributions will be reviewed and updated as appropriate. Where the full quantity of public open space required is not provided on-site or nearby, the Council will seek a pro-rata financial contribution.
- 1.54 In all cases a legal agreement will be used to secure the ongoing use of the open space provided as public open space, or to secure the financial contribution in lieu of direct provision.

Further information

Camden's [Open space, sport and recreation study](#) update 2014 provides an assessment of open space, sport and recreation provision and demand in the borough.

Camden's [Biodiversity Action Plan](#) provides Camden's priorities for improving our greenspaces and biodiversity.

The [Mayor of London's Supplementary Planning Guidance on Play and Informal Recreation](#) (2012) provides guidance and examples of how to incorporate space for children and young people.

A green infrastructure strategy for the whole of London called the '[All London Green Grid](#)' has been prepared. This includes sub-area frameworks setting out projects and priorities relevant to Camden.

Appendix A:

Provision of Public Open Space Plans

A public open space plan should accompany applications for development that are likely to result in an increased demand for public open space in accordance with the thresholds in paragraph 1.19 of this guidance document.

The Public Open Space Plan should include the following information:

- An evaluation of the impact that the proposed development will have in any existing open spaces (both on the proposed and adjoining sites). This should include any qualitative impact as well as changes in quantity.
- Details of how existing and new public open spaces will be incorporated into, or considered alongside, the proposed development (both on the proposed and adjoining sites)
- All proposals should be accompanied with plans clearly showing all existing and proposed public open spaces in the surrounding area. This should detail the intended functions, characters or typologies (as detailed in Appendix C and Figure 2).
- Where the full public open space standard cannot be achieved on-site, a clear justification for this, setting out any testing of options for the layout and design of the scheme
- Details about how Camden's [Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study](#) (2014) has been considered.

Appendix B:

Catchment distances and deficiency areas

The table below shows the maximum distance it is considered that people can reasonably be expected to travel on a regular basis to use different types of open space. Green amenity space and children's play space should be available within easy walking distance of the development to which they relate. People are generally willing to travel further to use recreation areas providing outdoor sport facilities or to larger parks.

The Council will apply the thresholds flexibly. Residents and workers are likely to access a range of informal amenity and more formal provision (including 'district', 'local' and 'pocket' parks and 'linear' open spaces identified in the GLA's public park hierarchy). Longer distances may be appropriate where there are local barriers to access, such as railway lines and roads with heavy traffic.

Section 106 agreements will specify a named site where the Council agrees that a payment in lieu is the most appropriate way of meeting the Local Plan policy requirements. We will consider departing from the distances below if there is a reasonable likelihood that improvements to the capacity and quality of existing open spaces at greater distances from the development will genuinely bring benefit for occupants of a proposed scheme.

Distance threshold for types of public open space

Type of public open space	Maximum distance from development to public open space
Public amenity open space	280m*
Formal recreation area	1.2 km
Natural greenspace	1km walking distance from a publicly accessible Borough or Metropolitan Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)
Play Space Provision	
Under 5s	100m
5 -11 year olds	400m
12 years and above	800m
Natural greenspace	500m
Allotments and community gardens	Any

[Camden Local Plan](#) Map 2 shows areas of the borough that are deficient in public open space.

AREAS DEFICIENT IN PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

*Areas more than 280m walking distance away from a public open space with a multi-functional role, that is a space over 0.25ha (2,500sq m). This is the typical distance threshold to small and local parks and areas of greenspace.

The [Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study](#) (2014) also maps deficiencies in the Borough for individual types of public open space:

- Figure 5.1 Accessibility to Pocket, Small Local and Local Parks
- Figure 5.2 Accessibility to District Parks
- Figure 5.3 Accessibility to Metropolitan Parks
- Figure 5.4 Areas Deficient in Access to Public Parks
- Figure 6.1 Accessibility to Children's Play Provision
- Figure 6.2 Areas Deficient in Access to Children's Play Provision
- Figure 8.1 Allotment Provision

Figures 11.1 – 11.6 map the outdoor sports provision in the Borough.

The [Open Space Study](#) also shows parts of the Borough where demand on existing open space is likely to be particularly high due to the housing types or demographics of the area.

The Council will expect new open spaces to be well-integrated with the surrounding area. The following maps may provide useful contextual information about the need and demand for open space within the vicinity of a proposed development:

- Figure 4.3: Dwelling Type – Percentage of Dwellings Terraced, Flats or Apartments
- Figure 4.4 Child Density – Percentage of Population Aged 0 – 15 Years Old

Camden's [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\)](#) provides detailed information and data about the health characteristics of the Borough's population.

Appendix C:

Key types of public open space

Green amenity spaces

Formal or informal parks and gardens or other landscaped areas, which provide areas of passive recreation for all age groups and attractive green areas within the urban environment. They are intended to be attractive spaces for people to enjoy using or viewing. This type of open space can include areas of natural or semi-natural green spaces, which support wildlife conservation and biodiversity and promote environmental education and awareness.



Active spaces

Active spaces are areas of grassed or artificial surfaces providing opportunities for sport and recreation which may include ancillary facilities such as changing rooms and flood lighting. These include playing pitches, courts, greens, athletic tracks and Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs). Formal recreation areas may be stand-alone facilities or may form part of a larger open space (e.g. the tennis courts and bowling greens at Hampstead Heath).

In Camden the potential to add to outdoor sports facilities is limited. The Council's [Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study](#) 2014 identifies existing levels of provision and where there are opportunities to improve the quality of these facilities.



Civic spaces

Civic spaces are hard surfaced areas designed for pedestrians, such as piazzas, which often provide a setting for civic buildings. They are often destinations and provide opportunities for communities to come together and interact.



Natural and semi-natural spaces

These include sites and areas formally recognised for their nature conservation value such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Sites of Nature Conservation Importance and Local Nature Reserves as well as other areas with biodiversity such as gardens, parks and open spaces.

For more information about areas of deficiency in natural greenspace, please see the Council's [Biodiversity Action Plan \(BAP\)](#).

The Council's detailed guidance about achieving gains in biodiversity is in [Camden Planning Guidance: Biodiversity](#).



Allotments and community gardens

Provide opportunities for people to grow food as part of the long term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion.

The Camden Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study Update 2014 indicates that additional space to grow food could only be provided by taking a flexible approach including community gardens, roof gardens, temporary use of vacant sites and converting parts of existing open spaces.



Provision will be sought wherever an opportunity arises, but will not be counted as part of the public open space standards above. The Council will look to extend existing allotments in the Borough as appropriate. In recent years, a number of new community food growing areas have also been secured, particularly within housing estates.

Appendix D:

Ensuring quality in the provision of new public open space

The quality and function of new public open space is as important as quantity. The following provides a guide to the Council's expectations when considering proposals for new public open space:

Well planned to consider the opportunities presented by the development and the role of the space(s) in the wider green infrastructure network

- Well located within the development site according to intended function
- Well located strategically to relate to surrounding green infrastructure networks.

Accessible and inclusive

- Free public access at all times
- Physical accessibility
- Designed to meet a range of needs
- Equal access for all members of the community
- Well connected to nearby desire lines, footpaths and cycle routes.
- Reasonable restrictions on extent of private hire or commercial use.

Welcoming

- Must be explicit that the space is public - rather than feeling exclusively associated with a specific development
- Good sightlines into the site to maximise natural surveillance
- Clear and up-to-date signage (indicating opening times, the management body, any rules or restrictions, and contact details for enquiries/reports)
- Clear demarcation between public and private space
- Convenient to use
- Free from unreasonable restrictions on use, so that public usage is comparable to that provided by council-managed public space
- Promotion and marketing appropriate to the space.

Comfortable

- Consideration of microclimate should encourage positive use, and not prevent enjoyment. This should include identification of sunny areas and prevention of excessive wind. Areas where a comfortable microclimate cannot be delivered will not be considered as suitable public open space provision.
- Open spaces should not be dominated by movement corridors, including access routes in and out of the associated development.

Safe and secure

- Well overlooked

- Assets well maintained and regularly inspected
- Suitable inspection regimes to ensure assets are safe to use, and where appropriate that facilities meet relevant standards (e.g. play)
- Considers Secured by Design principles.
- Staff presence as appropriate to the scale of site.

Well maintained

- Clear of litter and waste – provision for litter and recycling, accompanied by regular collection and cleansing regimes.
- Horticultural management appropriate to the design
- Staff presence as appropriate to the scale of site
- Clear procedures for dealing with damage/vandalism.
- A clear approach to the accommodation of dog exercise, encouragement of responsible dog use where appropriate and the avoidance of dog fouling.
- Good lighting to ensure spaces feel safe and welcoming during opening hours.
- Effective drainage which maximises seasonal use, prevents localised flooding and contributes to strategic sustainable drainage systems where possible.
- A clear and transparent process for reviewing the maintenance standards and updating the management plan where appropriate.

Sociable

- Spaces should offer opportunities for informal social interaction, including seating and activities
- Amenity space should be made available for community events and activities, unless the particular characteristics of the open space means this is not appropriate, with a clear procedure in place for facilitating and managing these.

Carefully designed

- Designed to be functional, attractive and appropriate to the context of the site
- Be practical to maintain
- Designed with a clear function, but capable of flexible uses and adaptable to changing future demands
- Large enough to cater effectively for its users and not be fragmented across the site where this limits its practical use
Consolidated spaces can have more impact
- Conservation/enhancement of conservation or heritage qualities where appropriate
- Contribute positively to the sense of place locally
- Responsive and well-connected to associated public realm and nearby green spaces, contributing to green infrastructure networks
- Creative and innovative designs to make the most of limited space and maximise the benefits achieved from public open spaces.

Multi-functional

- Offer a range of social, environmental and economic benefits, including where possible:
 - Contribute to health and wellbeing, both physical and mental. Play and recreation opportunities as appropriate to the development size (these should consider local need and offer imaginative and exciting opportunities for a range of ages).
 - Consideration of sustainable drainage techniques
 - Biodiversity value, including pollinator friendly planting and forage throughout the year
 - Features contributing to improved air quality (such as trees or green walls)
 - Opportunities to relax
 - Offer a positive addition to the public realm and contribute to economic vitality
 - Integrate opportunity for food growing where demand is evidenced or anticipated.

Sustainable

- Long-term arrangement for management in place with a robust financially sustainable proposal
- Use of materials and furniture which can be sourced in the future.
- Effective selection of species to support long term management and support resource conservation.
- Good sustainable management practices secured
- A clear policy on the use and minimisation of pesticides and peat products, pollution reduction and energy conservation.

Embedded in the local community

- Opportunities for community involvement
- Mechanisms for responding to community needs.
- Clear processes and policies for accommodating community uses and events where appropriate.

Where **play provision** is required as part of public open space provision, the Council will expect it to be well designed, inclusive, safe and offer a good range of play opportunities. We expect larger developments to show how the design caters for different ages, and imaginative provision for older children is encouraged.

Play provision should:

- Be accessible to those who are likely to want to use it
- Be well overlooked, to achieve natural surveillance
- Be relevant to a range of ages and backgrounds
- Be secured for younger ages where appropriate
- Be inclusive and accessible
- Offer opportunities for imaginative play
- Provide a range of physical play experiences (e.g. swinging, spinning, balancing etc.)
- Provide and encourage interaction and socialisation
- Integrate natural features and materials where possible

- Be free from dogs
- Be safe yet challenging, with an appropriate level of risk to sustain interest
- Be attractive and well integrated with the surrounding open space.
- Include sufficient free-space to enable active play
- Incorporate seating and shade
- Consider parents and carers supervising children

MANAGEMENT PLANS

As a minimum they should cover the following aspects of green space management and maintenance:

An **overall vision** for the management of the space, including its intended uses, function and character.

Maintenance regimes for all aspects of the open space, including:

- Soft landscaping (horticultural management appropriate to the design);
- Trees;
- Paths and hard surfacing;
- Walls, fences and retaining features;
- Nature conservation features or areas;
- Water features;
- Play spaces;
- Sports facilities;
- Furniture;
- Drainage systems.

This should identify the areas to which the regimes will apply, and the specification and frequency of tasks.

A **conservation management plan** where appropriate (specific to any areas of natural green space), outlining how this area will be managed over time to achieve conservation objectives, and how access will be balanced against conservation objectives.

A clear procedure for dealing with **litter, waste and dog fouling** (including frequencies of collection/cleansing).

Full details of the overall **responsibility** for the management of the green space, including named contacts and full contact details. Arrangements to be put in place for the Council to be notified of changes to the named contacts or their contact details. The Plan should also include:

- A clear explanation of where the responsibilities for management tasks will lie;
- A summary of the roles and responsibilities of any on-site staff.

- A clear strategy for addressing **anti-social behaviour** or conflicts of use, including mechanisms for reporting and the means of response.
- An outline of any rules or restrictions that will apply to the space, including (but not limited to):
 - Gate locking and opening times (if secured);
 - Restrictions on particular activities;
 - Policies for the accommodation and management of civic activity.
- A clear process for dealing with requests for **community use**, group activity and community events and details of any charges proposed for such use.
- A commitment to free, **unrestricted access** for a reasonable proportion of overall opening times (this will vary according to the type of space and context, and likely usage).
- A **dog management** policy, detailing how dog use will be managed, and how responsible dog use will be encouraged and facilitated.
- A clear strategy for **enabling community involvement** in the management of the space should there be a demand now, or in the future.
- A model for the management and support of any **community growing/ gardening areas** included in the space, including:
 - How growing space will be allocated;
 - Any charges for using growing space;
 - Any conditions of use;
 - Overall responsibility for the space.
- A **forward plan**, identifying future needs and investment and clear actions. This should be reviewed and updated regularly.
- A clear and transparent process for **monitoring and reviewing** management standards and the effectiveness of the management plan, and updating as and when appropriate. This should include explicit reference to how decisions will be made and by whom. It should also detail how members of the public and other stakeholders can engage with this process.

Appendix E:

Occupancy rate by development type

RESIDENTIAL

This table provides supporting information for calculating payments in lieu of provision of open space according to the number of net additional dwellings, including in mixed use schemes. This section should be read in conjunction with Figure 3 of this guidance which sets out the formula for calculating open space provision.

The residential occupancy (or 'yield') of a development is based on the average household size for the relevant ward in the 2011 Census. This should be applied in the formula for calculating the amount of public open space to be delivered in residential or mixed use schemes. Where a development is located within two wards, then the data should be used for the ward in which the scheme is predominantly located.

Ward	Population size ¹	Number of households ²	Average household size
Belsize	12,594	6,131	2.05
Bloomsbury	8,855	4,819	1.84
Camden Town with Primrose Hill	12,511	5,905	2.12
Cantelowes	11,385	5,094	2.23
Fortune Green	11,687	5,324	2.20
Frognal and Fitzjohns	11,263	4,940	2.28
Gospel Oak	11,200	4,912	2.28
Hampstead Town	11,152	5,200	2.14
Haverstock	12,102	5,254	2.30
Holborn and Covent Garden	10,937	4,788	2.28
Highgate	12,317	6,114	2.01
Kentish Town	13,268	5,793	2.29
Kilburn	11,940	5,758	2.07

King's Cross	9,725	4,594	2.12
Regent's Park	13,047	5,602	2.33
St Pancras and Somers Town	13,571	5,588	2.43
Swiss Cottage	12,837	5,860	2.19
West Hampstead	12,052	5,858	2.06

STUDENT ACCOMMODATION AND HOSTELS

Occupancy rates for student housing are assumed to be one person per single bedroom and two people per double bedroom. Therefore, a standard of 9sqm should be applied for a single room and 18sqm (2x 9sqm) for a double. Accommodation occupied by students at a registered Higher Education institution will be multiplied by a factor of 0.75 recognising that it is not occupied for part of the year.

COMMERCIAL AND HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

The employment density of new development, as shown in Figure 3, should be calculated according to industry norms for how space in different use classes is utilised. Employment density refers to the average amount of workspace (in sqm) per full-time equivalent member of staff. It draws on data captured by the "Employment Density Guide" (3rd edition, 2015) prepared by the Homes and Communities Agency.

The densities are intended to be indicative and in some cases expressed as a range where the activity within a specific use class varies significantly. The contribution should be based on the characteristics of a particular development. Where the end user is unknown or there is a range of potential occupiers which may affect the utilisation of the floorspace, the lowest potential density should be applied. Any alternative values to those set out in the table should be agreed with the Council.

Due to the varying characteristics of Higher Education Institutions, assumptions about density should be made on a case-by-case basis but it is anticipated this will fall within the range of densities for 'B' class uses set out in the table below.

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Use Class	Sub-Category	Sub-Sector	Density (sqm)	Notes
B1a Offices	General Office	Corporate	13	NIA
		Professional Services	12	NIA
		Public Sector	12	NIA
		TMT	11	NIA
		Finance & Insurance	10	NIA
	Call Centres		8	NIA
B1b	R&D Space		40-60	NIA lower densities will be achieved in units with higher provision of shared or communal spaces
B1c	Light Industrial		47	NIA
B2	Industrial & Manufacturing		36	GIA
B8	Storage & Distribution	National Distribution Centre	95	GEA
		Regional Distribution Centre	77	GEA
		'Final Mile' Distribution Centre	70	GEA
Mixed B Class	Small Business Workspace	Incubator	30-60	B1a, B1b – the density will relate to balance between spaces, as the share of B1a increases so too will employment densities.
		Maker Spaces	15-40	B1c, B2, B8 - Difference between 'planned space' density and utilisation due to membership model
		Studio	20-40	B1c, B8
		Co-Working	10-15	B1a - Difference between 'planned space' density and utilisation due to membership model
		Managed Workspace	12-47	B1a, b, c

Extract from “Employment Density Guide: 3rd Edition, November 2015, Homes & Communities Agency

Appendix F:

Worked Examples

Example 1: Public open space provision for self-contained homes (C3)

A residential development of 16 new homes which is located in Belsize ward. The open space requirement can be calculated as follows:

Number of additional dwellings	Ward	open space requirement (standard x average household size x no of dwellings)	= total requirement (sq m)
16	Belsize	9sqm x 2.05 x 16 no.	295.2

The total open space requirement for this 16 home scheme would be approximately 295 sq m. This is calculated by taking the standard for residential schemes set out in Figure 1 and multiplying this by the average household size in Belsize, as shown in Appendix E. This is then multiplied by the total number of dwellings to give the public open space requirement.

Example 2: Public open space provision for non-residential development

An office development provides 1,500sqm of additional floorspace. The office floorspace is intended for use by a professional services organisation.

The open space requirement can be calculated as follows:

Additional floorspace	Type of floorspace (Use Class/Sub-Category and Sub-Sector)	open space requirement (standard x (amount of floorspace per worker))	= total requirement (sq m)
1,500 sq m	B1a / General Office / Professional Services	0.74sqm x (1,500/12)	92.5

The total open space requirement for this quantity of additional non-commercial floorspace would be approximately 90 sq m. This is calculated by taking the standard for commercial and higher education schemes set out in Figure 1. This is then multiplied by the amount of floorspace used per worker, which in this case is 1,500sqm divided by 12: 12 is the number of employees per sqm for a professional services organisation, as shown in Appendix E.

Example 3: Payment in lieu of open space provision for non-residential development – capital costs

As per Example 2, an office development provides 1,500 sq m of additional floorspace. The office floorspace is intended for use by companies in the Financial and Insurance sector. The payment in lieu of public open space provision can be calculated as follows:

Additional floorspace	Type of floorspace (Use Class/Sub-Category and Sub-Sector)	capital cost (standard x amount of floorspace per worker x capital cost of greenspace works per sqm)	= total payment for capital costs
1,500 sq m	B1a / General / Office / Finance & Insurance	0.74 sqm x (1,500/12) x £200	£18,500

The payment in lieu of open space provision for this additional non-residential floorspace based on capital costs would be £18,500. This is calculated by multiplying the open space standard in Figure 1 by the amount of floorspace per worker – as calculated in Example 2 above. This provides an open space requirement which should then be multiplied by the capital cost of providing new public open space as set out in paragraph 1.52. However, we would also expect payments towards maintenance – see Example 5.

Example 4: Payment in lieu of open space provision for student housing – capital costs

A student housing scheme provides 30 single rooms and 10 double rooms. The payment in lieu of open space provision can be calculated as follows:

Bedroom type	No of bedrooms	open space requirement (standard x capital cost per bedroom x no of bedrooms)	= total payment for capital costs
Single	30	9sqm x £200 x 30 no.	£54,000
Double	10	18sqm x £200 x 10 no.	£36,000
Total for all bedrooms	40		£90,000

The payment in lieu of open space provision for this student housing based on capital costs would be £90,000. This is calculated by applying

the standards in paragraph 1.20. Double rooms are considered to generate a need of twice a single room.

As paragraph 1.20 states, the resulting figure should then be multiplied by 0.75 recognising that student accommodation is typically not in use for the entire year. The final capital cost, therefore, will be £67,500. However, we would also expect payments towards maintenance – see Example 5.

Example 5: Payment in lieu of open space provision for self-contained homes (C3) – all costs

A residential development of 15 new homes is located in Kentish Town ward. The total payment in lieu of open space provision can be calculated in 3 stages.

STAGE 1: Capital costs (inc. design and administration costs)

Number of additional dwellings	Ward	open space requirement (standard x average household size x no of dwellings) multiplied by capital cost	= total payment for capital costs
15	Kentish Town	(9sqm x 2.29 x 15 no.) x £200	£61,830

The payment in lieu of open space provision for this 15 home scheme located in Kentish Town ward would be £61,830. This is calculated by taking the residential open space standard set out in Figure 1 and multiplying this by the average household size in Kentish Town, as shown in Appendix E.

This is then multiplied by the total number of dwellings to give the public open space requirement. The resulting figure should then be multiplied by the capital cost of providing new public open space as set out in paragraph 1.52.

STAGE 2: Maintenance costs

Number of additional dwellings	Ward	maintenance requirement (standard x average household size x no of dwellings) x maintenance cost per sqm x no of years maintenance	= total payment for maintenance
15	Kentish Town	(9sqm x 2.29 x 15 no.) multiplied by £7, multiplied by 10 years	£21,640.50

The payment in lieu to cover maintenance of this 15 home scheme would be £21,640.50. This is calculated by taking the public open space requirement and multiplying this by the maintenance cost set out in paragraph 1.52. The Council will generally seek a commuted sum towards ten years of maintenance. Therefore, the resulting figure needs to be multiplied by 10 to calculate the total maintenance cost.

STAGE 3: Sum of all costs

Capital costs	£61,830.00
+ maintenance costs	£21,640.50
= Grand total	£83,470.50

In this example, the total cost to the developer would be: £83,470.50. The payment in lieu of public open space provision has considered both the capital cost of providing new public open space and the costs incurred of maintaining it for a period of ten years.