

APPENDIX 2: OPEN SPACE TYPOLOGY DEFINITIONS

This appendix provides further detail regarding the open space typology definitions within Section 5.3 of the main report.

Allotments

Allotments provide areas for people to grow their own produce and plants. It is important to be clear about what is meant by the term 'Allotment'. The Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908 obliged local authorities to provide sufficient allotments and to let them to persons living in their areas where they considered there was a demand.

The Allotment Act of 1922 defines the term 'allotment garden' as:

“an allotment not exceeding 40 poles in extent which is wholly or mainly cultivated by the occupier for the production of vegetable or fruit crops for consumption by himself or his family”

The Allotments Act of 1925 gives protection to land acquired specifically for use as allotments, so called Statutory Allotment Sites, by the requirement for the need for the approval of Secretary of State in event of sale or disposal. Some allotment sites may not specifically have been acquired for this purpose. Such allotment sites are known as “temporary” (even if they have been in use for decades) and are not protected by the 1925 legislation.

Allotments have not been quality assessed as part of this Study, however access standards have been set.

Amenity Green Space (>0.15ha)

The category is considered to include those spaces open to free and spontaneous use by the public, but neither laid out nor managed for a specific function such as a park, public playing field or recreation ground; nor managed as a natural or semi-natural habitat. These areas of open space will be of varied size, but are likely to share the following characteristics:

- Unlikely to be physically demarcated by walls or fences.
- Predominantly lain down to (mown) grass.
- Unlikely to have identifiable entrance points (unlike parks).
- They may have shrub and tree planting, and occasionally formal planted flower beds.
- They may occasionally have other recreational facilities and fixtures (such as play equipment, informal football or ball courts).

Examples might include both small and larger informal grassed areas in housing estates and general recreation spaces. They can serve a variety of functions dependent on their size, shape, location and topography. Some may be used for informal recreation activities, whilst others by themselves, or else collectively, contribute to the overall visual amenity of an area.

Amenity green spaces smaller than 0.15ha have been mapped but not included within the analysis for this typology, as it is considered that these sites will have limited recreation function and therefore should not count towards public open space provision, however they

will potentially provide visual amenity and biodiversity value and contribute to the overall GI network.

Parks and Recreation Grounds

This typology brings together the function of Parks and Recreation Grounds and Outdoor Sports Space as identified in the former PPG17 typology. The distinction between the two typologies in the Study Area is blurred, with few formal gardens and many parks and/or outdoor sports space having multi-functions used for both informal and formal recreation. Local people can refer to their local park or ‘rec’, and they do not necessarily make a distinction between outdoor sports space and parks and recreation grounds. Therefore, for the study an overarching typology for Park and Recreation Grounds is recommended.

For the purpose of this study, a Park and Recreation Ground is defined as an open space that:

- Has at least two facilities e.g. a children’s play area and tennis courts, or;
- Is formally laid out with areas of formal planting/bedding; or
- Has provision of formal sports pitches e.g. football or cricket pitch (informal football would be excluded); and
- Is owned/managed by the Council (or Town/Parish Council or University), for general public access.

The Parks and Recreation Ground typology comprises those areas laid out as pitches or fixed facilities such as tennis which are accessible i.e. they can be walked over/used informally (the pitches and fixed facilities will not be mapped).

Pitches or facilities which have limited access e.g. they are fenced off and/or only open to members or clubs are mapped as Outdoor Sport (Private).

The quantity figure for Parks and Recreation Grounds excludes the provision of children and youth play spaces which have been mapped separately/have a separate typology.

Whether a site contains informal pitches (full sized pitches that do not require booking) has been identified through the use of OSM and cross checking with the PPS and included as a sub typology.

Parks and Recreation Grounds take on many forms, and may embrace a wide range of functions including:

- Play space of many kinds;
- Provision for a range of formal pitch and fixed sports;
- Provision of outdoor gyms and fitness trails;
- Informal recreation and sport;
- Providing attractive walks and cycle routes to work;
- Offering landscape and amenity features;
- Areas of formal planting;
- Providing areas for ‘events’;

- Providing habitats for wildlife and connection with nature;
- Providing space for food growing;
- Dog walking.

Parks and Recreation Grounds Hierarchies

In line with the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy 2013, Parks and Recreation Grounds have been assigned the following sub typologies.

- **Destination parks** - these are of a significant size (varying from 7ha to 122ha), with secure boundaries and prominent entrances.
- **Local and Neighbourhood Parks** - smaller parks that provide more localized access.

Play Space (children and youth)

It is important to establish the scope of the Study in terms of this type of open space. Children and young people will play/'hang out' in almost all publicly accessible "space" ranging from the street, town centres and squares, parks, playing fields, "amenity" grassed areas etc. as well as the more recognisable play and youth facility areas such as equipped playgrounds, youth shelters, BMX and skateboard parks and Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs) etc. Clearly many of the other types of open space covered by this Study will therefore provide informal play opportunities.

To a child, the whole world is a potential playground: where an adult sees a low wall, a railing, kerb or street bench, a child might see a mini adventure playground or a challenging skateboard obstacle. Play should not be restricted to designated 'reservations' and planning and urban design principles should reflect these considerations.

Historically, much planned play provision across the country has been in accordance with guidance provided by the then National Playing Fields Association (now known as Fields in Trust or FIT). Categorisation of play space based on this guidance included the designations: Local Areas for Play (LAPs); Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAPs); and, Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAPs). Best practice in terms of play provision has evolved greatly in recent years resulting in part from issues arising out of long-term sustainability of facilities provided through applying the above guidance; recognition of the value of more natural environments for play; principles of inclusivity and overall 'play value'; recognition of 'acceptable risk', and more.

As a consequence of the above, it is not considered appropriate to classify existing play provision in accordance with the hierarchical categorisation of LAPs, LEAPs and NEAPs, but instead using a classification that provides more flexibility. We therefore recommend that the Study has therefore recorded the following:

- **Play Space (Children)** – equipped areas of play that cater for the needs of children up to and around 12 years of age.

- Play Space (Youth) i.e. Teenage Facilities – informal recreation opportunities for, broadly, the 13 to 17 age group, including skateboard parks, basketball courts, BMX ramps and ‘free access’ Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs).

In practice, there will always be some blurring around the edges in terms of younger children using equipment aimed for youths and vice versa.

Accessible Natural Green Space (>0.15ha)

For the purpose of this study, accessible natural green space covers a variety of spaces including meadows, woodland, copses, river valleys and lakes all of which share a trait of having natural characteristics and biodiversity value and are also partly or wholly accessible for informal recreation.

The focus for this study is those sites where there are definitive boundaries or areas of natural green space which have some form of public access. In some cases, access may not be fully clear, however, there is evidence of some level of informal use and access.

Some sites may provide access in different ways, for example, rivers or lakes are often used for water recreation (e.g. canoeing, fishing, sailing). Whilst access may not be available fully across all areas of these sites (e.g. the middle of a lake or dense scrub in a woodland), the whole site has been included within the assessment.

Some of these spaces will benefit from wildlife designations (e.g. national or local) but there may be other areas that have not been designated officially for ecological value.

A minimum size threshold of 0.15ha is used for this typology.

Churchyards and Cemeteries

The Study Area has numerous churches and cemeteries, and these provide significant aesthetic value and space for informal recreation such as walking and relaxing. Many are also important in terms of biodiversity. Their importance for informal recreation, aesthetic value and contribution towards biodiversity must be acknowledged, and as such, investment in their upkeep, maintenance and quality is an important factor. Churchyards and Cemeteries will be identified and mapped where known, however, no access or quality standard has been set, as it is outside the scope of this study to make recommendations related to requirements for new provision.

Outdoor Sport (Private)

Outdoor sports spaces which are privately managed and which are only available for private use/sports clubs are mapped as Outdoor Sport (Private). This includes school/college/university sports grounds and other private sports grounds which do not provide community use.

This typology includes golf courses, where more often than not, public access is restricted. Nevertheless, these facilities are used by local people and they form part of the Green

Infrastructure network. This typology also includes fixed outdoor sports space (including tennis courts and bowling greens) which are privately managed, and not freely accessible.

Quality and access standards are not being proposed for private outdoor sports space - these spaces are covered within a separate PPS which is currently being finalised.

Outdoor Sport (Restricted Use)

This typology includes outdoor sports spaces (on education and other private land) which are privately managed but do provide some form of community use/access on an informal or formal basis. They also contribute to the GI of an area.

These sites have been identified through cross checking with the Playing Pitch Strategy (2022).

As per Outdoor Sport Private, quality and access standards are not being proposed for restricted use outdoor sports space.

Open Space (Private)

Those open spaces which are not accessible to the general public, or are paid access only. Although these do not provide a recreation function for the wider community they form an important part of the overall GI network. These sites include education land which does not provide formal sports e.g. such as university quads.

Quality and access standards have not been set for private open space. This is because they are not openly accessible to the public and whilst they may be important to the local community, biodiversity, or visual amenity of an area, there is less opportunity for the Council to influence their provision and management.

A minimum size threshold of 0.15ha is used for this typology.

Civic Squares

Civic and market squares and other hard surfaced areas designed for pedestrians have been identified and mapped, as it is recognised that these provide important space for community events and areas for 'hanging out'. Quality and access standards have not been set for this typology, as it is outside of the scope of the Study.