

Providing for Children and Young People's Play and Informal Recreation

Supplementary Planning Guidance for the
London Plan

The policy

‘The Mayor will, and boroughs and other partners should, ensure that all children have safe access to good quality, well-designed, secure and stimulating play and informal recreation provision.’

London Plan policy 3D.13

The existing state of play

- Poor quality & access
- Increase in child population in London
- Increased demand for play provision
- Growing policy focus on play

What makes a good place for play?

- **Space**
 - Sufficient outdoor space with free access
- **Location**
 - Spaces should be accessible & in the right place
- **Quality & design**
 - Spaces should engage & stimulate
- **Safety**
 - Balanced approach to risks and challenge
- **Management & maintenance**
 - Essential to sustaining successful play spaces

Recommended Steps

- Establish *quantitative* requirement
- Establish *accessibility*
- Establish *quality* of play provision

cf 6 Acre Standard

A new approach: from play areas to playable spaces

- Flexible use of spaces
- Inclusive provision and access
- Greater diversity of facilities
- Provision for different user groups

Playable spaces

- Active play a legitimate use
- Features that invite active play
- Not limited to fixed equipment play areas

Identifying, mapping, auditing & planning

- Child population & yields
- Accessibility of existing play space
- Quality of existing play provision
- Space required
- Areas of deficiency
- Location of new provision
- Types of play space to be provided and/or improved

Analysis

Existing Play Space Provision



1. Equipped play area, public open space with potential for informal play.
2. Public open space with potential for informal play and open access ball court.
3. Ball court.
4. Equipped play area, areas for informal play and kick about area.
5. Public open space with potential for informal play.
6. Equipped play area. Potential for informal play and a kickabout area.
7. Small equipped play area (good) and ball court (average).
8. Multi-use games area.
9. Small equipped play area.
10. Multi-use games area, equipped area for play and potential for informal play/kickabout area.
11. Small equipped play area.
12. Multi-use games area with space for informal play.
13. Equipped play area, with space for informal play.
14. Small equipped play area.
15. Equipped play area. Public grass recreation space.
16. Informal playable space

- 400m radius
- 800m radius
- Site boundary

- Play Quality**
- Good
 - Average
 - Poor
 - Derelict

Quantity

- Consider both existing deficiencies & needs arising from new development
- Apply benchmark standard of 10 sq m per child
- All developments with child occupancy of 10+ children to include play provision
- Developments of less than 10 children expected to make financial contribution

Accessibility

		Under 5s	5-11	12+
Existing Provision	Within 100m	On-site or off-site contribution	Off-site contribution	Off-site contribution
	Within 100-400m	On-site	On-site or off-site contribution	Off-site contribution
	With 400-800m	On-site	On-site	On-site or off-site contribution
No Existing Provision	Within 100m	On-site	Off-site provision	Off-site provision
	Within 100-400m	On-site	On-site	Off-site provision
	With 400-800m	On-site	On-site	On-site

Quality: a typology of play provision

- Doorstep playable space (under 5s)
- Local playable space (up to 11)
- Neighbourhood playable space (up to 11 with some facilities for 12+)
- Youth space (12+)
- Incidental play & child-friendly public realm

General comments on typology

- ‘Playable space’ – but nb. youth space
- A framework, not a template (cf 6 Acre Standard)
- Spaces can be combined
- Age limits specify ‘core’ ages
- Potential for multi-functional spaces for different age groups & user groups
- Should be used intelligently and creatively

Play provision in new developments

- Dependent on size of development and play space
- If provision cannot be made on site, an equivalent contribution to be made to off-site provision
- Potential to consider variations in relation to local circumstances

A More Child-friendly Public Realm

- Playful design elements in public realm
- Home zones
- Walking and cycling routes linking spaces
- Integration of public art
- Commissioning artists and designers to develop schemes

Making it happen

- Vision & leadership
- Officer support – planning & play expertise
- Make guidance straightforward
- Encourage judgement & intelligent use
- Training & dissemination
- Involvement



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