

APPENDIX 10
STANDARDS FOR OPEN SPACE



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This information is derived from Aberdeenshire Councils Open Spaces Strategy. It represents a loosely grouped typology providing a flexible indication of the broad functions of different open space types, size ranges, and guidance on catchments, households and distances that are expected to be delivered as part of the design of a development to achieve successful placemaking.

Table 1 Hierarchy of Open Space

Type of Facility	Main Function	Size Range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Catchment Population ■ Households ■ Distance guide (range to allow for site characteristics) 	Notes
NATURAL AND SEMI-NATURAL GREEN SPACE (including SUDS and linkages)				
Green-Blue Networks	Buffer strips ¹ alongside water bodies to improve water quality, reduce run-off, and to increase biodiversity and visual amenity.	a) All watercourses: Min 6m each bank b) Larger watercourses: 12-20m each bank c) Still water: 12-24m	Population: n/a Housing: n/a Distance: n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Buffer strips should be a minimum of six metres wide, but may need to be wider in response to local factors including hydro-geomorphology, pollution control, nature conservation and active travel considerations. ■ Still water buffer zones will depend on size of water body. ■ May be incorporated as access routes (surfacing requirements tbc) and green corridors. ■ Play an important role in mitigating flood risk and permitting access for long term maintenance and river restoration.
Neighbour-hood Green Space	Informal amenity: for 'structure planting', green corridors, access routes (recreational and functional). Visual impact: may include community nature areas.	500-2500 square metres	Population: 10-500 Households: Over 5 Distance: n/a	Location chosen for the function it is to fulfil. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ to the windward side of housing to provide shelter. ■ to take advantage of wildlife potential. ■ in a focal point to provide amenity. ■ based around the position of SUDS. ■ to provide green arteries linking larger spaces. Likely to have potential for community involvement.

¹ Guidance for Developers: Buffer Strips Adjacent to Water Courses and Water Bodies (Aberdeenshire Council).

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NATURAL AND SEMI-NATURAL GREEN SPACE (including SUDS and linkages)				
Community Woodlands	To provide woodland access for all, and enhance biodiversity	>2ha	Population: n/a Households: 1,000 Distance: 500m	May include those formally identified under the Woodlands in and Around Towns (WIAT) Scheme. To be linked where possible and desirable, by smaller areas of woodland or access routes to enhance forest habitat networks (FHNs). May have informal 'forest' play areas incorporated. Although 2ha advised as minimum, it is generally preferable to merge 'allocations' where possible, in terms of habitat creation. Distance reflects aspirational target of Woodland Trust's Woodland Access Standard.
NEIGHBOURHOOD STREETS				
On Street Open Space	To provide community space for all ages, especially younger children and the elderly. To enhance visual and biodiversity value of the street.		Population: n/a Households: n/a Distance: n/a	Designed for pedestrian use, with minimum on-street parking. Particular benefits of this type of 'home-zone' will be for the less mobile in the community and the elderly; on-street play areas overlooked by houses is of importance for young children wanting to engage in 'social play', but needing supervision; other informal play; and seating. Street trees to be included to enhance visual and biodiversity value.

Type of Facility	Main Function	Size Range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Catchment Population ■ Households ■ Distance guide (range to allow for site characteristics) 	Notes
OTHER FUNCTIONAL GREENSPACE				
Community Food Growing Areas	Community food growing, such as individual allotments or orchards.	200 square metres per plot	Population: approx. 1 plot to 50 people Households: 1 plot per 20 or 30 plots per 600 Distance: 800m (any direction)	Based on Scottish Allotments and Gardens Society advice, combined with local evidence that food growing is more likely to be taken up where suitable land is made available. Developer to provide access to site and water supply. Needs to be sited adjacent to other greenspace to allow for flexibility.
Burial Grounds			As indicated by the current Development Plan	Only required where identified in Development Plan. Site must be flat, and acceptable to Local Authority following ground-testing ² . To be considered during development framework process.
EQUIPPED PLAY AREAS				
Community Play Areas/ Recreation Areas	Formal playing space, with equipment and some informal areas: for children and teenagers.	2,500-4,000 square metres	Population: 250-1,000 Households: 100-400 Distance: 400m (any direction)	For younger children, they should be reasonably close to catchments and preferably not across any busy road. Areas of play should be fenced against dogs and have consideration of potential noise and visibility issues. Appropriate provision to be made for teenagers , with a range of facilities and equipment for all abilities , to respond to the need for exercise and recreation by different groups. To include sheltered seating/seating facilities.

² Ground testing shall be in accordance with SEPA's Guidance on assessing the impacts of cemeteries on groundwater (LUPS GU32).

Type of Facility	Main Function	Size Range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Catchment Population ■ Households ■ Distance guide (range to allow for site characteristics) 	Notes
SPORTS				
Organised Sports Facilities	Formal recreation grass pitches, synthetic pitches, changing facilities, multi-use games areas and tennis courts for organised sporting activities.	7,500-15,000 square metres approximately one adult football and rugby pitch, or 1,000 square metres for multi-use area (not including parking/facilities)	Population: 1,000-5,000 Households: 400-2,000 Distance: 1,500-2,000m	Often usefully associated with a 'premier park', they can also be relatively distant and involve road crossing, but (except for a dry ski slope) need flat, well drained ground. Areas with a multiple number of recreation facilities will require changing facilities. Provision to be guided by findings of Aberdeenshire Council Pitches Study.
PARKS				
Local Park	Strategic 'green lungs' of a town, with semi-formal and informal open space for walking, wildlife, picnics and enjoyment of the scenery for all the family.	1-4 ha	Population: 2,500+ Households: 1,000 Distance: 600-1,000m (any direction)	A sense of the country in the town, often also an expression of civic pride. People will take a considered decision to visit, so distance and road-crossing are less important. The site's intrinsic character, e.g. a riverside, hill or wood is often the most critical factor. Although proximity to population is clearly also significant.
Premier Park	To provide high quality informal and formal facilities.	>4ha	Population: 4,000+ Households: 1,500 Distance: 1,000-1,500m (any direction)	In order to qualify as a 'premier park', needs to provide at least 12 out of a range of facilities, as defined by APSE (Association of Public Service Excellence). Determined by range of facilities rather than size, so a local park (above) could also be a 'premier park' – though likely to be over 4ha.
Country Park	Access to countryside managed for recreation for all age groups.	N/A	Population: Over 60,000 Households: n/a Distance: n/a	May be adjacent to a town, or in between settlements; often centred on an additional facility, such as a historic building. May provide a variety of way marked walks, and range of play options. Location within region is key consideration.

Table 2 sets out the obligations on developers for different types of open space.

Table 2: Standards for Public Open Space

Number of Houses Proposed	Development Design Process	Mix of Open Space (to meet total requirement) ■ Type of Space	Minimum Number of sites	Distance of Each Type of Space from Houses in Catchment ■ Guide	Total Space Required
600-1,000	Development Framework Masterplan Detailed Application	■ Premier Park (1,500-2,000 houses)	Up to 1	1,000-1,500m	40% of site
		■ Local Park	1	600-1,000m	
		■ Organised Sports	1 or off-site contribution	1,500-2,000m	
		■ Community Play Areas	2-4	400m	
		■ Community Food Growing Areas	30-50 /0.6-0.9ha	800m	
		■ Burial Grounds	Where required in LDP	n/a	
		■ Neighbourhood Greenspace*	As Appropriate	n/a	
		■ Community Woodlands*	As Appropriate	(500m)	
		■ Green-blue Corridors*	As Appropriate	n/a	
250-599	Masterplan Detailed Application	■ Organised Sports	Up to 1	1,500-2,000m	40% of site
		■ Community Play Areas	1-2	400m	
		■ Community Food Growing	12-30/0.25-0.5ha	800m	
		■ Burial Grounds			
		■ Neighbourhood Greenspace*	As Appropriate	n/a	
		■ Community Woodlands*	As Appropriate	(500m)	
		■ Green-blue Corridors*	As Appropriate	n/a	
		■ Neighbourhood Streets*	As Appropriate	n/a	

*Is an element that will always be required in a development proposal.

Number of Houses Proposed	Development Design Process	Mix of Open Space (to meet total requirement) • Type of Space	Minimum Number of sites	Distance of Each Type of Space from Houses in Catchment • Guide	Total Space Required
50-249	Masterplan Detailed Application	■ Community Play Areas	0-1	500m	40% of site
		■ Community Food Growing	Up to 0.25 ha	800m	
		■ Neighbourhood Greenspace*	As Appropriate	n/a	
		■ Community Woodlands*	As Appropriate	(500m)	
		■ Green-blue Corridors*	As Appropriate	n/a	
		■ Neighbourhood Streets*	As Appropriate	n/a	
5-49	Development brief Detailed Application	■ Contribution to existing parks, sports, play areas and food growing areas	As Appropriate	n/a	120m ² per house With/or Contribution to existing where need identified In audit
		■ Natural and Semi-natural Greenspace*	As Appropriate	n/a	
		■ Community Woodlands*	As Appropriate	(500m)	
		■ Green-blue Corridors*	As Appropriate	n/a	
		■ Neighbourhood Streets*	As Appropriate	n/a	

*Is an element that will always be required in a development proposal.