
8 Healthy Places

8.0.1 Healthy neighbourhoods are places where people live, work, play and have a sense of belonging. The design of a neighbourhood can contribute to the health and wellbeing of the people living there. Several aspects of neighbourhood design (including walkability and mixed land use) can also maximise opportunities for social engagement and active travel. The design of neighbourhoods impacts on our day-to-day decisions and therefore has a significant role in shaping our health behaviours.

8.0.2 Access to, and engagement with, the natural environment is associated with positive health outcomes, including improved physical and mental health, and reduced risk of cardiovascular disease and other chronic conditions.

8.0.3 Public Health England's report *Spatial Planning for Health* (June 2017) provides evidence that:

- having access to recreational infrastructure, such as parks and playgrounds, is associated with reduced levels of obesity and an increase in physical activity;
- living close to green space, such as parks and other open spaces, can improve health;
- aesthetic park improvements can increase the number of visits and improve physical activity; and
- participation in physical activity in a natural setting is associated with more improved mental health outcomes than participation in physical activity in an indoor setting.

8.0.4 Open spaces therefore play a key role in achieving healthier and more active communities whilst aiding mental wellbeing and are therefore promoted and protected by this Plan.

8.1 Healthy – Appropriate Development in Local Green Spaces

8.1.1 Local Green Spaces can be designated by local or neighbourhood plans. The level of protection afforded to Local Green Spaces is consistent with the level of protection afforded to the Green Belt.

8.1.2 Local Green Spaces can be identified for their local significance, such as historic importance, recreational value or biodiversity value. The policy below defines what type of development would constitute appropriate development for outdoor recreation in Local Green Spaces.

Policy DM HP1

Healthy – Appropriate Development in Local Green Spaces

Planning permission will be granted for recreation and leisure development in Local Green Spaces provided that it would:

- 1 enhance the use of the space;
- 2 be appropriate for the size and type of space; and
- 3 have no detrimental impact on biodiversity.

Local Green Spaces are defined on the Policies Map or on neighbourhood plan policy maps.

8.2 Healthy - Appropriate Development in Public Open Spaces

8.2.1 Public Open Spaces provide important amenity, recreational, biodiversity and townscape / landscape benefits. There are many types of open space, including:

- Accessible countryside on the urban fringe
- Allotments
- Amenity greenspace
- Cemeteries and churchyards
- Civic spaces
- Facilities for children and young people
- Natural and semi-natural greenspace
- Public parks and gardens
- Recreation grounds

8.2.2 The Council has carried out an audit of open space provision, the Open Space and Recreation Study. This assessed open space provision based on quantity, quality and accessibility and by type of open space. This has shown that there are some deficiencies for certain types of open space and that these deficiencies will get worse, without additional provision as the population rises over the Plan period. As such, public open space is protected from development other than that set out in DM HP2.

8.2.3 Much of the Plan area is characterised by the openness of the rural areas and the open spaces within the settlements. The policy below sets out the criteria for development within public open spaces.

8.2.4 More details are available in the open space report annexes. Applicants are expected to consider the most up-to-date assessment when proposing new open space or improvements/alterations to existing provision.

Policy DM HP2

Healthy – Appropriate Development in Public Open Spaces

Planning permission will be granted for development which enhances the quality or use of public open space provided that it can be demonstrated that it:

- 1 will be appropriate to the type of space, by way of the intended use;
- 2 will improve biodiversity or amenity value of the space;
- 3 will improve rural or townscape character;
- 4 will not result in a net loss of open space provision unless it can be demonstrated that the benefits outweigh the loss; or
- 5 is a proposal in a neighbourhood plan.

When determining whether development is appropriate under criterion (a) the Council will consider the function of the open space, the intended use of the development and whether it is compatible.

Public Open Spaces are otherwise protected from development and these are shown on the Policies Map.

8.3 Healthy – Equipped Play Areas

8.3.1 Site allocations and other development that includes the provision of homes will provide equipped play areas according to the amount of new homes and the distances children will need to walk as follows:

- Local Areas for Play (LAPs) – aimed at very young children, within 100 metres of new homes;
- Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAPs) – aimed at children who can go out to play independently, within 400 metres of new homes; and
- Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAPs) – aimed at older children, within 1,000 metres of new homes.

Policy DM HP3

Healthy – Equipped Play Areas

Planning permission will be granted for the development of homes which provides equipped play areas and secures their management in perpetuity as follows:

Scale of Development	Local Area for Play – each within 100 metres	Locally Equipped Area for Play – each within 400 metres	Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play – each within 1,000 metres
5–9 Homes	✓		
10–199 Homes	✓	✓	
200–499 Homes	✓	✓	✓
500+ Homes	✓	✓	✓

8.4 Healthy – Sports, Recreation and Leisure Facilities

8.4.1 The Plan area contains a range of local sporting and recreational facilities which are enjoyed by a wide variety of users. Ensuring that these facilities remain a key part of community life is essential to delivering healthier, more active communities.

8.4.2 Facilities within schools and colleges can provide a useful contribution to the leisure requirements of the communities in which they are located. Where new facilities are provided as part of school improvements or expansion the council will encourage their use by the wider community.

8.4.3 In addition to local facilities, the Plan area is home to the world-class Eton Dorney facility which served as the rowing venue during the 2012 London Olympics. The main feature of the complex is a 2,200 metre flat water rowing lake. In addition to its use as a rowing and canoeing facility the complex also hosts other events and competitions such as triathlons and open water swimming.

8.4.4 The Hillingdon Outdoor Activity Centre (HOAC) is expected to be relocated once development associated with HS2 necessitates the closure of its existing Colne Valley site. The site is anticipated to be relocated to New Denham Quarry in 2020 and will provide facilities for outdoor and water-based sports, activities and events.

Policy DM HP4

Healthy – Sports, Recreation and Leisure Facilities

Planning permission will be granted for the redevelopment of land or buildings in use or last used for sport, recreation or leisure provided that they are no longer required* or if the development involves a new facility which would be at least equal in quality and quantity to the existing or former use.

The Council encourages the provision of new leisure facilities where these can help to meet an identified deficiency in the local area.

Land for sports, recreation and leisure uses is shown on the Policies Map.

* (See Appendix EP1 within the Enterprising Places section for details of marketing evidence required.)