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Supplementary Guidance: Green Network
EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

Strategic Services

East Renfrewshire COUNCIL

EAST RENFREWSHIRE Local Development Plan 2

Content

INTRODUCTION

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The Council's Supplementary Guidance on Green Network (2015) was prepared under Section 22 of the Planning. (Scotland) Act 2006 and formed part of the Local Development Plan (LDP1 2015). This part of the Act has now been repealed and the status of Supplementary Guidance changed under the Planning Scotland Act (2019). However, transitional arrangements set out in the Chief Planners Letter published on 8th February 2023 state that the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 (Commencement No.11 and Saving and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2023 provide for local authorities to continue to prepare and adopt supplementary guidance associated with LDPs. Supplementary guidance adopted under those provisions is to be treated as forming part of the development plan for the area to which the LDP relates. This SG has been prepared under these regulations and will form a statutory part of LDP2.

This SG describes the policies and measures that development proposals must consider with regards to protecting and enhancing the green network. This guidance should be used to inform the design process for proposals integrating the green network with built environment. The guidance should be read in conjunction with the East Renfrewshire Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2).

East Renfrewshire Council places the highest value on its environment. The green network is considered an essential component of a successful, healthy and sustainable neighbourhood. All development proposals will be required to protect and enhance the green network's wildlife, biodiversity, recreational use and landscape value.

A green network must form a core component of any master plan or development brief. As well as providing high quality places for people to live, a well-designed green network addresses head-on the dual threats of the nature crisis and climate change. The role of planning in tackling these two threats is a central policy theme in the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4).

Functions of the Green Network

The principal functions of the green network are to provide:

- **An Access Network** – facilitating the movement of people between communities through greenspace and active travel networks; and

- **A Habitat Network** – facilitating the movement of wildlife and habitats.

Green Infrastructure is a component of the green network, elements such as sustainable urban drainage (SUDS) have specific roles to play.

What is the Green Network?

The Planning Act Scotland 2019 provides the following definitions.

- Green infrastructure means features of natural and built environments and the connections between them that provide a range of ecosystem and social benefits.
- Green networks are connected areas of green infrastructure and open space.

The East Renfrewshire green network is made up of natural, semi natural and manmade greenspace including parks and gardens, active travel and recreational routes, playing fields, watercourse and reservoirs, and woodlands and trees. It is centred in and around the urban area and provides connectivity to the surrounding green belt and countryside.

A good example of a green network is the Capelrig Way in Newton Mearns. This green corridor running between Barrhead Road and Leslie Avenue is a mile long corridor of woodland, the Capelrig Burn, floodplain wetlands, foot paths and amenity grass open space. The network is well used by pupils from three different schools and provides recreational greenspace for the residents of Crookfur and Westacres. The flood plain of the Capelrig Burn holds large volumes of flood water helping to prevent flooding of properties downstream.

POLICY GUIDANCE

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Planning Act Scotland 2019 New Requirements

The 2019 Act places a number of new requirements on planning authorities which will have some bearing on the Council's position on the green network during the lifespan of LDP2 and this special guidance.

The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 requires planning authorities to prepare and publish an Open Space Strategy (OSS). The OSS is to set out a strategic framework of the planning authority's policies and proposals as to the development, maintenance and use of green infrastructure in their district, including open spaces and green networks. An open space strategy must contain an audit of existing open space provision and an assessment of current and future requirements. The Act also introduces a requirement for planning authorities to prepare a Forestry and Woodland Strategy and to carry out a Play Sufficiency Assessment.

The 2019 Act defines open space as:

Open space is the space within and on the edge of settlements comprising green infrastructure or civic areas such as squares, market places and other paved or hard landscaped areas with a civic function.

The Open Space Strategy will be adopted within the lifecycle of the current LDP2. Once adopted it will provide detailed direction on the future requirements for open space provision including proposals for the green network. Further details on requirements and proposals for children's outdoor play will be provided in the Play Sufficiency Statement which will also adopted in the cycle of this LDP2.

The 2019 Act also introduces Local Place Plans. These are community-led plans setting out proposals for the development and use of land, these plans will set out a community's aspirations for its future development. Once completed and then registered by the planning authority, they are to be taken into account in the preparation of the relevant local development plan. There is the possibility that local place plans will identify protection and enhancement of the green network as local priorities, in which case these aspirations will feed into LDP3.

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)

The NPF4 puts the nature crisis and climate change at the heart of national planning policy. In particular NPF4 Policy 3 the Nature Crisis has a focus on delivering:

- **Enhanced connectivity** – green networks at all scales
- **Nature based solutions**
- **Onsite enhancement** where development takes place

Policy 3: Biodiversity

a) Development proposals will contribute to the enhancement of biodiversity, including where relevant, restoring degraded habitats and building and strengthening nature networks and the connections between them. Proposals should also integrate nature-based solutions, where possible.

b) Development proposals for national or major development, or for development that requires an Environmental Impact Assessment will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that the proposal will conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity, including nature networks so they are in a demonstrably better state than without intervention. This will include future management. To inform this, best practice assessment methods should be used. Proposals within these categories will demonstrate how they have met all of the following criteria:
  i.   the proposal is based on an understanding of the existing characteristics of the site and its local, regional and national ecological context prior to development, including the presence of any irreplaceable habitats;
  ii.   wherever feasible, nature-based solutions have been integrated and made best   use of;
  iii. an assessment of potential negative effects which should be fully mitigated in line with the mitigation hierarchy prior to identifying enhancements;
  iv.   significant biodiversity enhancements are provided, in addition to any proposed mitigation. This should include nature networks, linking to and strengthening habitat connectivity within and beyond the development, secured within a reasonable timescale and with reasonable certainty. Management arrangements for their long-term retention and monitoring should be included, wherever appropriate; and
  v.   local community benefits of the biodiversity and/or nature networks have been considered.

c) Proposals for local development will include appropriate measures to conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity, in accordance with national and local guidance. Measures should be proportionate to the nature and scale of development. Applications for individual householder development, or which fall within scope of (b) above, are excluded from this requirement.

d) Any potential adverse impacts, including cumulative impacts, of development proposals on biodiversity, nature networks and the natural environment will be minimised through careful planning and design. This will take into account the need to reverse biodiversity loss, safeguard the ecosystem services that the natural environment provides, and build resilience by enhancing nature networks and maximising the potential for restoration.

Policy 20 of NPF 4 relates to the green network.

Policy 20: Blue and Green Infrastructure

a) Development proposals that result in fragmentation or net loss of existing blue and green infrastructure will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that the proposal would not result in or exacerbate a deficit in blue or green infrastructure provision, and the overall integrity of the network will be maintained. The planning authority's Open Space Strategy should inform this.

b) Development proposals for or incorporating new or enhanced blue and/or green infrastructure will be supported. Where appropriate, this will be an integral element of the design that responds to local circumstances.

c) Design will take account of existing provision, new requirements and network connections (identified in relevant strategies such as the Open Space Strategies) to ensure the proposed blue and/or green infrastructure is of an appropriate type(s), quantity, quality and accessibility and is designed to be multi-functional and well-integrated into the overall proposals.

d) Development proposals in regional and country parks will only be supported where they are compatible with the uses, natural habitats, and character of the park. Development proposals for temporary open space or green space on unused or under-used land will be supported.

e) Development proposals that include new or enhanced blue and/or green infrastructure will provide effective management and maintenance plans covering the funding arrangements for their long-term delivery and upkeep, and the party or parties responsible for these.

The NPF4 identifies the well-established Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN) as a National Development. The CSGN was also a policy priority in NPF3.

This national development is one of Europe's largest and most ambitious green infrastructure projects. It will play a key role in tackling the challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss including by building and strengthening nature networks.

A greener approach to development will improve place-making, can contribute to the roll-out of 20-minute neighbourhoods and will benefit biodiversity connectivity. This has particular relevance in the more urban parts of Scotland where there is pressure for development as well as significant areas requiring regeneration to address past decline and disadvantage. Regeneration, repurposing and reuse of vacant and derelict land should be a priority.

Regional Spatial Strategy

With NPF4 now in place Clyde Plan the Strategic Development Plan ceases to exist. The Strategic Development Plan will be replaced with the duty to prepare a Regional Spatial Strategy. Unlike the Strategic Development Plan, the Regional Spatial Strategy will not form part of the statutory development plan system. The regulations detailing the role and functions of the Regional Spatial Strategy have not yet been issued. Supporting and coordinating action between the eight authorities covered by the region will remain a key role.

The Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network is a large scale and ambitious initiative that will transform Glasgow and the Clyde Valley by improving local communities, promoting healthier lifestyles, connecting and enhancing natural habitats, transforming perceptions and by attracting and retaining investment in the area.

The Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership (GCVGN) co-ordinates the work of Clyde Plan translating regional green network priorities into local action by supporting work across the eight constituent local authorities. The GCVGN have produced the regional Blueprint which identifies the green network across the entire city region.

The GCVN Blueprint incorporates the fundamental functions of a Green Network:

- **A Strategic Access Network** – facilitating the off-road movement of people around and between communities through Green Active Travel routes and greenspace.
- **A Strategic Habitat Network** – facilitating the movement of wildlife through the landscape

The Blueprint identifies for both Networks:

- existing Green Network assets that should be protected and managed
- where there are gaps in the networks
- opportunities to address those gaps

New development should be seen as an opportunity to address the infill of gaps identified by the Blueprint through the careful integration of development proposals with their surroundings and well-planned onsite enhancement.

Local Development Plan Policies

The Local Development Plan 2 will ensure that national and regional policies are delivered through local policies that protect and secure enhancement of East Renfrewshire's green network, open spaces, protected sites, trees and woodlands and the paths and networks which connect them.

The LDP2 promotes development on brownfield or vacant sites within the urban area with a strategy of regeneration and consolidation of existing communities. National policy stresses that such sites are the most sustainable locations for new housing. Notwithstanding a key element of LDP2 continues to promote major areas of change on greenbelt land due to limited land availability in the urban area. Given the sensitivity of greenbelt locations it is all the more essential that proposals include well designed green network.

LDP2 Strategic Policy 1: The Development Strategy states in criterion 7:

7. Protection, creation and enhancement of an integrated multi-functional green network and connected green spaces within and around the urban areas which actively contribute to local amenity, recreation, active travel and biodiversity objectives in accordance with Policies D4 and D6.

Green Networks and Green Infrastructure

Plan 1 shows the land covered by Policy D4. All proposals in the area identified will be assessed against Policy D4.

Plan 1: The Green Network

Settlements
Green Network
Protection of Greenbelt
Protection of Countryside Around Towns

The green network shown in Plan 1 follows the typology of greenspace set out in the Scottish Government's Planning Advice Note 65: Planning and Open Space which includes the following habitat types:

- Urban greenspace including parks (Policy D5)
- Natural Environment Features (Policy D7)
- Tree Preservation Orders (Policy D7.2)
- River catchments at all scales in urban areas
- Core woodland, wetlands and grassland
- Golf courses in urban areas
- Railway lines in urban areas
- Land identified as the greenbelt (Policy D3)

Whilst access is a significant element of the green network, core paths were not specifically included when identifying the designated green network because with the green network's focus on the urban and urban fringe areas a strong correlation already exists between access routes and areas designated under Policy D4.

Policy D5: Protection of Urban Greenspace

The East Renfrewshire urban greenspace as shown on the LDP2 proposals identifies land in excess of 1500m2. These areas were identified during the most recent greenspace audit in 2016. These include areas of public parks and gardens, amenity greenspace, play spaces, sports areas, green corridors, natural/semi natural greenspaces, allotments and community growing spaces, civic spaces, burial grounds, other functional greenspace. Sites too small to map are also recognised and are of importance providing a localised resource offering opportunities for informal activity and the setting for residential streets and cul de sacs.

Policy D4 Green Networks and Green Infrastructure

The Council will protect, promote and enhance a multi-functional and accessible green network across the Council area, as shown on the Proposals Map, which contributes to healthy lifestyles and wellbeing and links to the wider green network across the Glasgow City region.

Proposals will be required to protect and enhance the green and blue network, its value and multiple functions including wildlife, biodiversity, recreational, landscape and access. Proposals should also meet the requirement of Policy D7.

The provision of a green network will be required to form a core component of any master plan or development brief.

Where a proposal impacts adversely on the character or function of the green network, proposals may be required to contribute to enhancing any remaining, or create new green infrastructure and green network, in accordance with Strategic Policy 2 and D6.

The Council will support the implementation of the proposals listed in Schedule 3.

Further detailed guidance and information will be set out in the Green Network Supplementary.

Policy D5: Protection of Urban Greenspace

The Council will protect and support a diverse and multi-functional network of urban greenspace, including outdoor sports facilities, shown on the Proposals Map.

Proposals for the loss of outdoor sports will be assessed against Policy D13. Proposals which would result in the loss of urban greenspace will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that:

- There is no significant adverse impact on nature conservation/biodiversity or the function of the wider green network, landscape character and amenity of the site and surrounding area;
- The loss of a part of the land would not affect its recreational, amenity or landscape function; and
- Appropriate mitigation is provided as part of the development for alternative provision of at least equal biodiversity, community benefit and accessibility.

Proposals for development on other areas of greenspace not shown on the Proposals Map under Policy D5, will be considered against its biodiversity and recreational value and its contribution to the character and amenity of the area in accordance with Policy D1.

Further detailed guidance and information will be set out in the Green Network Supplementary.

Policy D6 Open Space Requirements in New Development

Proposals will be required to incorporate multi-functional, integrated and accessible on-site green networks and green infrastructure, including open space provision, wildlife habitats and landscaping.

Proposals will be required to meet the following criteria:

1. Demonstrate that the provision and distribution of open space and green infrastructure has been integrated into the design approach from the outset and has been informed by the context and characteristics of the site using key natural and physical features. Proposals should be designed to accommodate users of all age groups, and levels of agility and mobility;
2. Provide a network and hierarchy of open space to create a structured and legible framework for development, which clearly distinguishes public space, semi-public space and private space using appropriate boundary treatments. Design and layout of proposals should encourage species dispersal through improving connectivity and the availability of habitats. New planting must promote and enhance the biodiversity of the area and incorporate native trees where appropriate;
3. Complement, extend and connect existing open spaces and provide links to the wider green network;
4. Make provision for the long-term management and maintenance of open space. Details of maintenance requirements and arrangements must be set out, including who is responsible for these requirements;
5. Integrate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs) features with open space and active travel networks as part of a multifunctional approach to landscape design. SUDs may form part of open spaces subject to their design, provided they are accessible and contribute to the amenity value of the wider open space; and
6. Meet the minimum open space requirements set out in Schedule 4.

Schedule 4: Open Space Requirements

Development Type	Open Space Requirements
Residential Proposals	10 sq. m of open space per habitable room
All other proposals (commercial, industrial, transport, educational)	Provision of open space and contribution to the enhancement of green networks will be assessed on a site-by-site basis

Schedule 5: Natural Environment Features

Site Ref	Location	Description
D7.1	Council area wide	Sites of Special Scientific Interest
D7.2	Council area wide	Tree Preservation Orders
D7.3	Council area wide	Local Biodiversity Sites
D7.4	Waulkmill Glen	Local Nature Reserve

Policy D7: Natural Features

The Council will protect and enhance the natural environment features set out in Schedule 5, and shown on the Proposals Map, and seek to increase the quantity and quality of the area's biodiversity.

1. There will be a strong presumption against development on or adjacent to Natural Features where it would compromise their overall integrity, including Local Biodiversity Sites, Local Nature Reserves, Tree Preservation Orders and ancient and long-established woodland sites. Adverse effects on species and habitats should be avoided with mitigation measures provided wherever this is not possible.
2. Development that affects a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) will only be permitted where:
   a. The objectives of designation and the overall integrity of the area will not be compromised; or
   b. Any significant adverse effects on the qualities for which the area has been designated are clearly outweighed by social, environmental, community or economic benefits of national importance to the satisfaction of Scottish Ministers and measures are provided to mitigate harmful impacts.
3. Development affecting trees, groups of trees or areas of woodland will only be permitted where:
   a. Any tree, group of trees or woodland that makes a significant positive contribution to the setting, amenity and character of the area has been incorporated into the development through design and layout; or
   b. In the case of woodland:
      i. its loss is essential to facilitate development that would achieve significant and clearly defined additional public benefits, in line with the Scottish Government's Policy on Control of Woodland Removal; or
      ii. in the case of individual trees or groups of trees, their loss is essential to facilitate development and is clearly outweighed by social, environmental, community or economic benefits.

   Where woodland is removed in association with development, developers will be required to provide compensatory planting which enhances the biodiversity of the area and demonstrates a net gain.

   The loss of ancient or semi-natural woodland, or trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders will not be supported. Ancient woodland is an irreplaceable resource and should be protected from adverse impacts arising from development.
4. Where there is likely to be an adverse impact on natural features or biodiversity an ecological appraisal will be required. This appraisal should identify measures adequate to mitigate any impacts that are identified.

Further detailed guidance and information will be set out in the Green Network Supplementary

Biodiversity

The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 places a statutory duty on all public bodies to further the conservation of biodiversity. Biodiversity is simply the variety of life - all living things around us; the plants, animals, insects in our forests, mountains, rivers, seas, gardens and parks, right down to the things living in our soils.

Geodiversity

Geodiversity is also recognised as forming an important part of the natural environment. Geodiversity is the variety of rocks, minerals, fossils, landforms, sediments and soils, together with the natural processes which form and alter them. The diversity of Scotland's rocks and landforms is the basis for most of our landscapes and scenery that are highly valued by visitors and the tourism industry.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Local Biodiversity Sites provide protection to a range of habitats and species and geology within East Renfrewshire.

A Site of Special Scientific Interest is a statutory designation made by NatureScot under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are those areas of land and water that NatureScot considers to best represent our natural heritage - its diversity of plants, animals and habitats, rocks and landforms, or a combination of such natural features.

Local Biodiversity Sites (LBS)

Development proposals should not damage Local Biodiversity Sites. Development proposals should contribute to the restoration of local biodiversity sites and improving connections between sites. While most Local biodiversity sites are privately owned there may be opportunities to create environmental buffer zones where local biodiversity sites adjoin new development.

Protected Species

Although protected areas can safeguard species within their boundaries, some animals and plants are so threatened or vulnerable that they need legal protection wherever they occur. There are several pieces of legislation giving protection to species found in Scotland. Following the introduction of the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011, NatureScot is now responsible for the majority of wildlife licensing in Scotland.

In many cases it is an offence to kill or capture animals including birds, or to uproot plants. The law also protects some wild creatures from disturbance or harassment, or disturbance of their nests or resting places. It also means that it is against the law to pick some plants. Further practical guidance on Natural Features is given within Appendix B.

Woodland Trees and Forestry

The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 places an obligation on local authorities to adopt a Forestry and Woodland Strategy. Work to produce the woodland strategy will be ongoing as part of the development of LDP3.

The Scottish Government's control of woodland policy states that "there is a strong presumption in favour of protecting Scotland's woodland resources." and "woodland removal should be allowed only where it would achieve significant and clearly defined additional public benefit".

The Council will seek to support forestry and woodland throughout its area, in particular it affords protection to those areas of ancient and long-established woodland and Tree Preservation Orders. Within East Renfrewshire there are 264 hectares of ancient and long-established woodland and 765 hectares of land covered by Tree Preservation Orders.

Dams to Darnley Local Nature Reserve

Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are places to enjoy and learn more about local wildlife or geology. They are found in a range of locations and associated with a variety of habitats. LNRs provide wild spaces where plans and animals, both common and rare, can thrive. They offer a more natural environment than parks and gardens, but are still readily accessible for a wide range of people. LNRs are of local natural heritage importance, designated and managed by local authorities to give people better opportunities to learn about and enjoy nature close to home. For this reason, LNRs are generally found close to towns and cities.

Access

A key element of green networks is the provision of easy and safe routes for walking and cycling. The Council places great importance on the health and well-being of its residents and acknowledges the important role outdoor access and recreational opportunities can play in encouraging exercise and activity.

Policy 9: Access

The Council will continue to protect, enhance and extend existing and proposed active travel and outdoor access networks including core paths, rights of way, strategic cycle corridors and green networks, shown on the Proposals Map and Schedule 6, and ensure that new development does not adversely impact upon them. The solums of any former railway lines will be safeguarded as future access routes.

The council will support proposals which enhance, extend and create new integrated walking and cycling routes. New and improved routes should be planned at the outset of the design process; should accommodate users for all age groups, and levels of agility and mobility; should link with existing and proposed active travel routes; and contribute to the wider active travel and green networks across the area.

Any future access proposals will be required to satisfy core active travel design principles of safety, coherence, directness, comfort and attractiveness.

There will be a strong presumption against proposals which have an adverse impact upon outdoor access unless a satisfactory alternative route is provided.

The Council will continue to support Dams to Darnley Country Park (D9.1) and Whitelee Access Project (D9.2), shown on the Proposals Map, and the implementation of the relevant management/ access plans for each project.

Core Paths Plan

The core paths together with rights of way (as shown on the Proposals Map) provide a robust network of routes across the area. Projects are ongoing to improve facilities including the construction of new paths, signposting and promotional material.

Development proposals should consider access at the outset of the design process, how to protect existing access provision and seek to enhance access where there are opportunities to make links with the core path network. Where appropriate these new links will be considered for inclusion in future Core Paths Plans. New paths should integrate seamlessly with the green network and road and footway layouts. It is expected that the master planned areas will include an access network as part of the green network.

Green Network Development Contributions

The Supplementary Guidance: Development Contributions for Local Development Plan 2 states that where a proposal impacts adversely on the character or function of the green network, proposals may be required to contribute to enhancing any remaining, or create new green infrastructure and green network, in accordance with LDP2 Strategic Policy 1 and LDP2 policies D4 and D6.
Wherever possible, the effects will be mitigated through planning conditions ensuring on site provision. Where this is not possible, an assessment for a development contribution will be made based on the environmental quality of the open space. Contributions will be based on the cost of replacing lost landscape features, habitats or amenity elsewhere in the locality.

Where established green space is lost, a contribution will be sought to enhance other informal green spaces in the area. **The specific costs associated with a development will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.**

Opportunities to enhance and strengthen the network can be achieved in a number of ways, including the protection and enhancement of existing greenspace and through the introduction of green infrastructure within new development e.g., access, greenspace, SUDs. Contributions will be used on a **best value basis** in order to mitigate the effects of the development on the area.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

3

DESIGN GUIDANCE

Advice to applicants seeking planning consent for development with green space and green infrastructure.

This section provides examples of both successful and less successful greenspaces. It also provides guidance on how to create high quality green network and successful green infrastructure.

Urban planners and architects developing planning applications for residential developments should read Appendix A: Open Space within New Development which provides guidance on the expected ratios of open space to development size. Appendix A is not intended to produce formulaic layouts but should be used with the guidance below to determine the best layout for greenspace. The guidance endorses quality over quantity.

It is important that planning applications demonstrate that an analysis of the site and its surroundings has been undertaken. It is anticipated that applicants will submit a design statement which explains their decision-making process and the rationale for the chosen design.

The integration of multifunctional greenspaces is intrinsically linked to the creation of a successful place. Green networks support a sustainable approach to development, creating places that are attractive to residents and businesses, provide opportunities for healthier lifestyles and contribute to the recovery of biodiversity and carbon reduction.

It is expected that proposals will ensure that greenspaces are multifunctional and connected to the wider green network. In the past green space provision, play areas, sustainable urban drainage and landscaping were often considered as separate components within new developments. Contemporary best practice now combines these features to create multifunctional spaces. The ability to provide multiple or 'cross-cutting' functions on individual sites and across a whole green infrastructure network is key to successfully designing new greenspaces.

A design that considers life time maintenance costs, long term sustainability and seeks to reduce the resources required for upkeep, is essential. Establishing and maintaining woodland is generally cheaper per hectare than mowing amenity grassland at approximately 50% of costs over a 50-year period. As part of the planning consent process the Council will require details of the maintenance regime. Provision of a simple, robust long-term maintenance management regime is a crucial factor in establishing a successful scheme.

Pocket park at Polnoon combining play area, SUDS and gateway landscaping. The entire space is under 250 sq. m

Making Greenspace Multifunctional

This space is less successful. The dramatic landraising renders the SUDs area inaccessible and there is no landscape planting. The steep banking will make future maintenance difficult.

The SUDS basin contributes very little to the sense of place. Scottish Water provide guidance of the design of SUDS.

Successful multifunctional greenspace at Cala Homes Newton Mearns.

The site is compact, is overlooked and contains SUDS, play area, biodiversity woodland and path links to the wider network. The SUDS area was included in the greenspace requirement calculation because it forms a prominent landscape feature and has a perimeter path network.

Creating connections to the wider green network

Connections from a new greenspace to the wider green network are important and must always be considered during the design process. Site appraisals for new developments should identify where links to the wider path network can be made. Connections can be made in a number of ways; two examples are given below. One demonstrates how a new development linked to a Right of Way; the other example demonstrates the role East Renfrewshire Council can play to ensure green network connections are completed.

Cala homes constructed a new path that connected their development in Newton Mearns to a historic Right of Way. The right of way continues to connect to another Cala development at Maidenhill creating a green network that utilises existing paths infrastructure to create new safe and attractive network.

Following investment by Cala homes the right of way was upgraded by East Renfrewshire Council. The historic right of way has been repurposed to connect different neighbourhoods across the wider area. The image shows the junction of the two paths.

New path constructed by Cala Homes

Neilston

In Neilston, Dawn Home's collaborated with East Renfrewshire Council to construct a new path into a neighbouring greenspace which had a long history of informal use. There was no right of way to make a connection with but the council was able to sign a path agreement with the greenspace land owner to construct a new path linking into the new Dawn Homes facility. Dawn Homes created a high-quality path to their boundary, which will connect with the East Renfrewshire Council path.

Dawn Home's new path is overlooked and easy to locate. East Renfrewshire will construct a new path to connect to this route.

Land Raising

Land raising or cutting to create development platforms needs careful consideration. There are particular challenges in East Renfrewshire where much of the topography is steep and uneven. Where levels change dramatically, they can have a detrimental impact both on the existing landscape and biodiversity and can prevent the creation of a successful green network.

LDP2 policy has a presumption against land raising Policy D1 (Criterion 12) states that:

There will be a general presumption against all proposals that involve landraising. Where there are justifiable reasons for landraising, proposals must have regard to the scale and visual impact of the resultant changes to the local landscape and amenity. Proposals that adversely impact upon the visual and physical connections through the site and to the surrounding areas will be resisted.

High platforms with sudden and steep gradients create barriers for movement. Sudden level changes may require the construction of steps which is strongly discouraged and will not be adopted by the Council's Road's service. Ongoing maintenance for steps will typically become the liability of residents in the development.

The substantial earth moving required to create platforms erases many if not all existing natural features and biodiversity. In extreme cases entire sites are scraped bare. Where natural features survive earth works these features such as small watercourses or hedgerows may find themselves in the shadow of platforms and their natural functions are much reduced.

Revetments and retaining walls are not conducive to multifunctional greenspace. The four images on the opposite page show the same stretch burn before and after development. The top left image shows the hedge in orignial condition. the top right image shows the gabion wall dominating the hedge creating a dead-space which

would not contribute to the open space requirement required in schedule 4 of the LDP2.

The two bottom images shows where the green network alongside the water course has been used to locate play equipment and seating. This makes some positive use of the space. The site is overlooked by houses and relatively accessible. A more formal play space is located above the gabions to compliment the informal play area. The space is partially successful, but some extra small details such as biodiversity enhancements by planting wetland plants or riparian trees along the burn edge would have added even greater value.

Where land raising is a necessity careful consideration and design is required to ensure platforms do not work against a successful green network or the creation of a successful place. This might require a move towards smaller platforms with less steep or dramatic changes in level. Or orientating platforms so the largest change in gradients are situated at the least sensitive locations in terms of connection, landscape and biodiversity.

In this case largescale land cutting created a steep slope between communities necessitating the construction of steps.

Sustainable Urban Drainage and Successful Greenspaces.

Policy D4 allows multifunctional and accessible SUDS schemes to be counted as part of the required openspace provision in new development. Standalone single use SUDs systems are not encouraged and can be wasteful of the valuable land resource.

This simple scheme forms the centre point of an accessible area of greenspace.

Flood Attenuation basin at Barrhead High School.

The attenuation basin was sown with a meadow mix and provides a number of functions. It creates a large shallow basin for flood storage protecting the school buildings from high flow flood events. It is used by the school for outdoor education and field studies. The wild flower component provides a large nectar source for pollinators. The grass is cut just once a year compared to fourteen cuts per year in the neighbouring park. The semi-parasitic yellow rattle plants visible in the image help keep a balance between grass and wild flowers by reducing the vigour of the grass.

New swale constructed at Barrhead south. This simple piece of green infrastructure was cheaper to install than conventional underground piping. The grassy vegetation filters out silt and pollutants before water trickles into a nearby water course. The swale takes water from the near-by road and is maintained by the Road Service.

Natural Features

Water Features

Taylor Wimpy at Barrhead are constructing a housing development which features a strong green network centred on the two small watercourses which run through the site. These small burns are being both protected and enhanced be the design in figure 2. The wider area will be sown with meadow mixes and planted with riparian trees. The SUDS basins integrate with the watercourses expanding and enhancing the area for biodiversity. A network of paths built into the green network provide attractive and safe shortcuts.

Where development incorporates water courses the East Renfrewshire Whitecart Catchment Opportunities (2017) Report can be requested. The report identifies actions for improvement on every water course in East Renfrewshire. Many of these actions are simple measures such as riparian tree planting and improvements to bank side habitat or placing large boulders strategically within the channel. More elaborate opportunities include, removal of culverting and restoration of watercourses to natural channel. Small measures can result in a better ecological status for the watercourse. Developers should take account of the requirements of the Flood Risk Management Act (2009) and recognise that the use of open space can help manage flood risk sustainably.

Landscaping Plan at Barrhead South showing green network containing play area, path network, SUDS, biodiversity enhancements and landscaping. The small burn in the image becomes the central feature of the development with houses fronting onto the greenspace created around the water feature.

Woodland Trees and Forestry

Mature trees and woodland can bring a strong sense of place to new development. The site appraisal should identify important trees in the landscape and these should be considered for inclusion into the design. Where there are trees on site or adjacent to the site a tree survey should be undertaken. Retention of healthy trees is strongly supported. A tree survey can determine if a tree is in healthy condition. Trees should be well protected during construction works using BS5837 the British Standard for Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. Where there are trees on site or adjacent to the site a tree survey should be undertaken. The latest version of BS5837 was published in 2012 and applies to all trees that could be affected during the design, demolition or construction phase of a development.

Where there are large areas of left-over incidental greenspace this can be efficiently used for woodland planting. Native woodlands have wildlife value and will enhance biodiversity as required by Policy D6.

Mature beech tree at Maidenhill

New woodland planted in undeveloped corner at Maidenhill.

All Underused land at Maidenhill has now has all been planted with new woodland. Almost 4 hectares of woodland has been planted, creating a biodiversity net gain for the development.
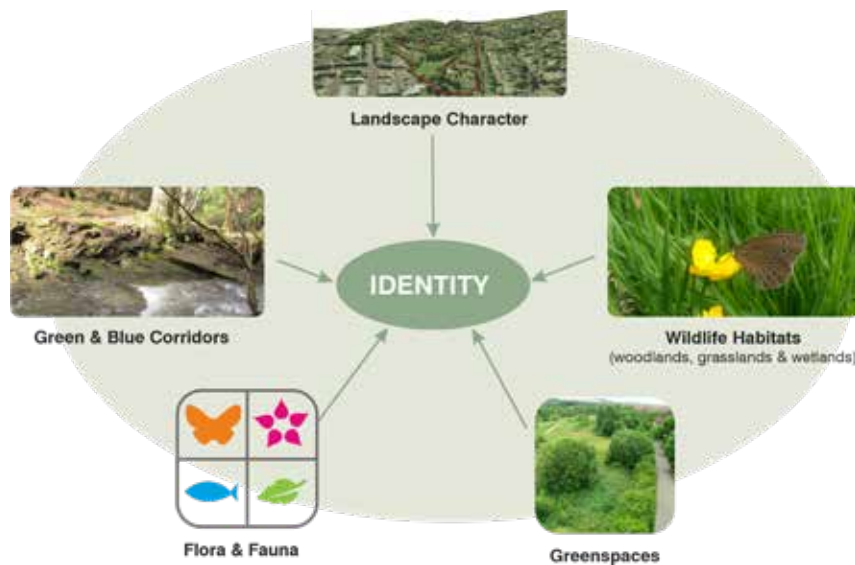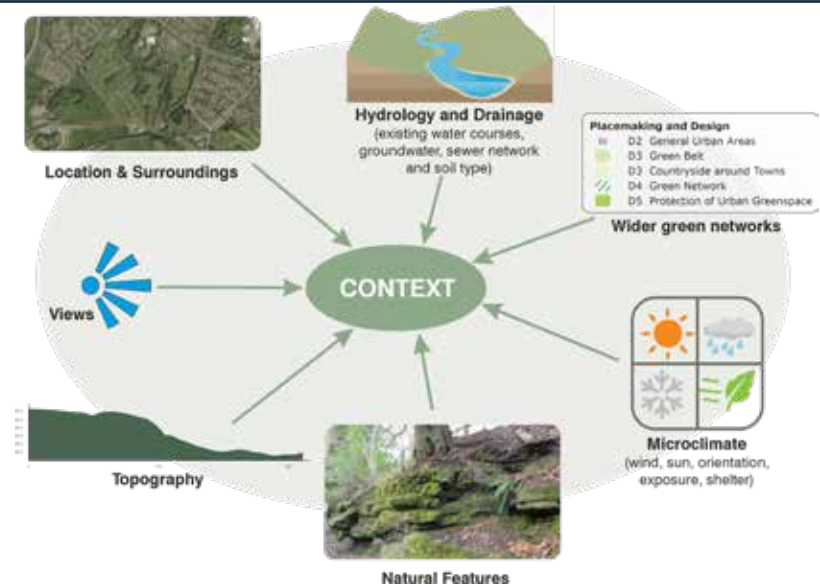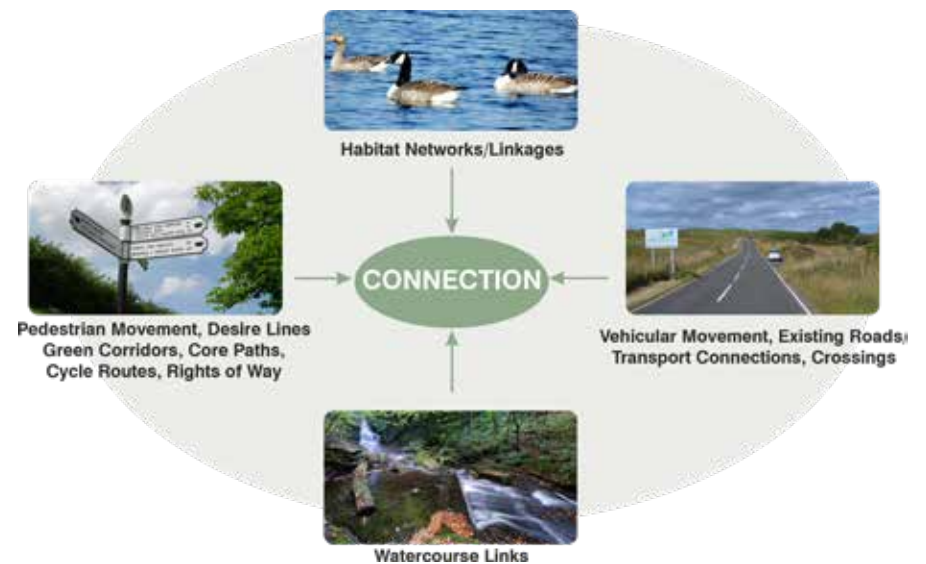
SITE APPRAISAL

4

Site Appraisal

Before designing their green network, applicants should undertake a site appraisal which considers 3 main elements -Context, Identity and Connection:

Site appraisal should take account of the **context** of the site.

Site appraisal should take account the **identity** of the site.

Site appraisal should take account of the **connection** to and from the site both in relation to people and nature.

Applicants should consider the 6 qualities which are a prerequisite to the creation of a place of high quality.   These are set out under NPF4 'Policy 14: Design, Quality and Place'.

The six qualities are:

- **Healthy**: Supporting the prioritisation of women's safety and improving physical and mental health.
- **Pleasant**: Supporting attractive natural and built spaces.
- **Connected**: Supporting well connected networks that make moving around easy and reduce car dependency
- **Distinctive**: Supporting attention to detail of local architectural styles and natural landscapes to be interpreted, literally or creatively, into designs to reinforce identity.
- **Sustainable**: Supporting the efficient use of resources that will allow people to live, play, work and stay in their area, ensuring climate resilience, and integrating nature positive, biodiversity solutions.
- **Adaptable**: Supporting commitment to investing in the long-term value of buildings, streets and spaces by allowing for flexibility so that they can be changed quickly to accommodate different uses as well as maintained over time.

Table 1: Six Qualities for Successful Green Networks

Healthy
Supporting the Prioritisation of women's safety and improving physical and mental health Designed for: • lifelong wellbeing through ensuring green spaces feel safe and welcoming e.g., through passive surveillance and good design • healthy and active lifestyles, through the creation of walkable neighbourhoods, food growing opportunities and access to nature and greenspace • accessibility and inclusion for everyone regardless of gender, sexual orientation, age, ability and culture • social connectivity and creating a sense of belonging and identity within the community • environmentally positive places with improved air quality, reactivating derelict and brownfield land, removing known hazards and good use of green and blue infrastructure

Distinctive
Supporting attention to detail of local architectural styles and natural landscapes to be interpreted into landscape designs that reinforce identity Designed for • sense of place including design influences, architectural styles, choice of materials and finishes, detailing, landscape design, vibrancy and cultural context • it is important to capitalise on key natural features and characteristics of the existing landscape and built heritage aspects. Water and burns are strong features and can add value to development • Mature existing trees can be worked into the design. • Hedgerows and walls provide continuity

Pleasant

Supporting attractive natural spaces

Green spaces designed for:
- positive social interactions including quality of public realm and green spaces ensuring a lively and inclusive experience
- protection from the elements to create attractive and welcoming surroundings, including provision for shade and shelter, mitigating against noise, air, light pollution and undesirable features, as well as ensuring climate resilience, including flood prevention and mitigation against rising sea levels
- connecting with nature including natural landscape, existing landforms and features, biodiversity and eco-systems, integrating blue and green infrastructure and visual connection
- variety and quality of play and recreation spaces for people of all ages and abilities
- enjoyment, enabling people to feel at ease, spend more time outdoors and take inspiration from their surroundings

Connected

Green Networks designed for:
- active travel by encouraging more walking, wheeling and cycling that allow for simple modal shifts
- connectivity including strategic cycle routes, local cycle routes, footpaths, pavements, active travel networks, desire lines, destinations, permeability, accessibility and catering for different needs and abilities

Sustainable

Designing for:
- climate resilience and nature recovery including incorporating blue and green infrastructure, integrating nature positive biodiversity solutions
- community and local living including access to local services and facilities, education, community growing and healthy food options, play and recreation

Adaptable

Supporting commitment to investing in the long-term value of green spaces by allowing for flexibility so that they can meet the changing needs over time

Designing for:
- quality and function, ensuring fitness for purpose, design for high quality and durability
- longevity and resilience including recognising the role of user centred design to cater for changing needs over time and to respond to social, economic and environmental priorities
- long-term maintenance including effective engagement, clarity of rights and responsibilities, community ownership/stewardship, continuous upkeep and improvement

The design of greenspace should be addressed at the start of the development process. Green infrastructure as it relates to surface water management, the road network, open space and landscaping should inform the design, capacity and form of development.

Green infrastructure can be implemented well ahead of development commencing. Advance greening which requires modest investment is an opportunity to give a head start to slow to establish green infrastructure such as woodland.

If long-term programming issues arise and development is stalled, advance greening combined with temporary greening can be helpful. This can ensure sites do not become derelict and a strain both on owners and on the community within which they are located. The legal complexities and financial models to enable progress on these techniques are still at an early stage. However, there are merits in exploring the possibilities.

Temporary greening can provide a wide range of benefits. It can improve the attractiveness of a site and as a consequence encourage development and investment. The temporary greening can also form part of the final development.

There are various temporary greening options available to landowners:

- Creating temporary growing spaces i.e., allotments;
- Interim sustainable urban drainage sites;
- Tree planting/ short rotation energy crops as part of carbon sink creation, biodiversity; site decontamination or other initiatives;
- Public art space;
- Installing approved landscape design prior to development;
- Wildflower meadows;
- Grassing and maintenance.

CONCLUSION

5

Conclusion

Applications for planning permission will require to demonstrate how this Guidance has been applied to their proposals. This Supplementary Guidance provides advice on ways to achieve well planned and designed, multi functioning green spaces that contain green infrastructure and are contribute to the wider green network.

CONTACT DETAILS

For further advice on this Supplementary Planning Guidance and its application, please contact:

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APPENDIX A

A

Appendix A

Open Space Requirements within New Development

Open space within new development should comprise 2 elements:

- Private open space and gardens (where applicable- limited to residential development); and
- Amenity open space (including active open space - limited to residential development)

General Guidance

1. All development should as a starting point encapsulate the design principles laid out within this Supplementary Guidance. Proposals should make provision where appropriate for open space within developments for private and amenity open space.

2. These guidelines aim to ensure that a reasonable provision of amenity space, which can serve a multiple purpose, is provided whilst enabling adequate privacy. The core emphasis is on layouts which are well designed and deliver a successful sense of place.

3. The specific requirements expected for open space provision are detailed below. Innovative design is encouraged.

Private Open Space and Gardens Requirement for Residential Proposals

Detached, semi-detached and terraced properties will require to have gardens in proportion to their size. Private gardens will be expected to be 1½ times the ground floor area of the house or 100m2 for detached and semi-detached houses and 50m2 in the case of terraces, whichever is the greater.

Standard garden sizes should not be a constraint to imaginative design.
The design principles laid out within this guidance are considered the fundamental determinants in achieving a successful layout.

Further guidelines for private gardens are provided below:

1. Rear gardens should have a depth of at least 10m from rear elevation of house to plot boundary in order to maintain adequate privacy.
2. Front garden provision should complement the design of the house.
3. There should be a minimum of 2m from any house to the side plot boundary. A 3m house to side plot boundary will be expected where properties are 3 full storeys.

Amenity Open Space Requirement for Residential Proposals

10 Sq. M of open space per habitable room.

The 10 sq. m must include sufficient active space and cannot be comprised of piecemeal incidental landscaped areas or inaccessible SUDS features. SUDS areas and structural landscaping that are designed to be publicly accessible can contribute towards the required area of open space. Justification for the type and quantity of provision should be given and included within the design statement where appropriate. For smaller scale developments it is expected that applicants will demonstrate how appropriate elements of this Supplementary Guidance have been applied.

If there is an existing play facility within safe walking distance of 250m from a new development. The Council may where appropriately allow a developer to invest in the upgrading of an existing play facility or the creation of a new facility out with the site. Financial contributions would be based on the guidance provided within the Development Contributions Supplementary Guidance (2022)

Cumulative requirements

The cumulative effect of under provision will be scrutinised.

Where small scale isolated developments, lying in close proximity are proposed, developers will be expected to contribute towards the achievement of these standards.

In circumstances where larger scale developments are compartmentalised /phased by either a consortium or single developer, applicants will be required to apply these standards within the context of a comprehensive masterplan for the development. This will be considered as part of the planning process.
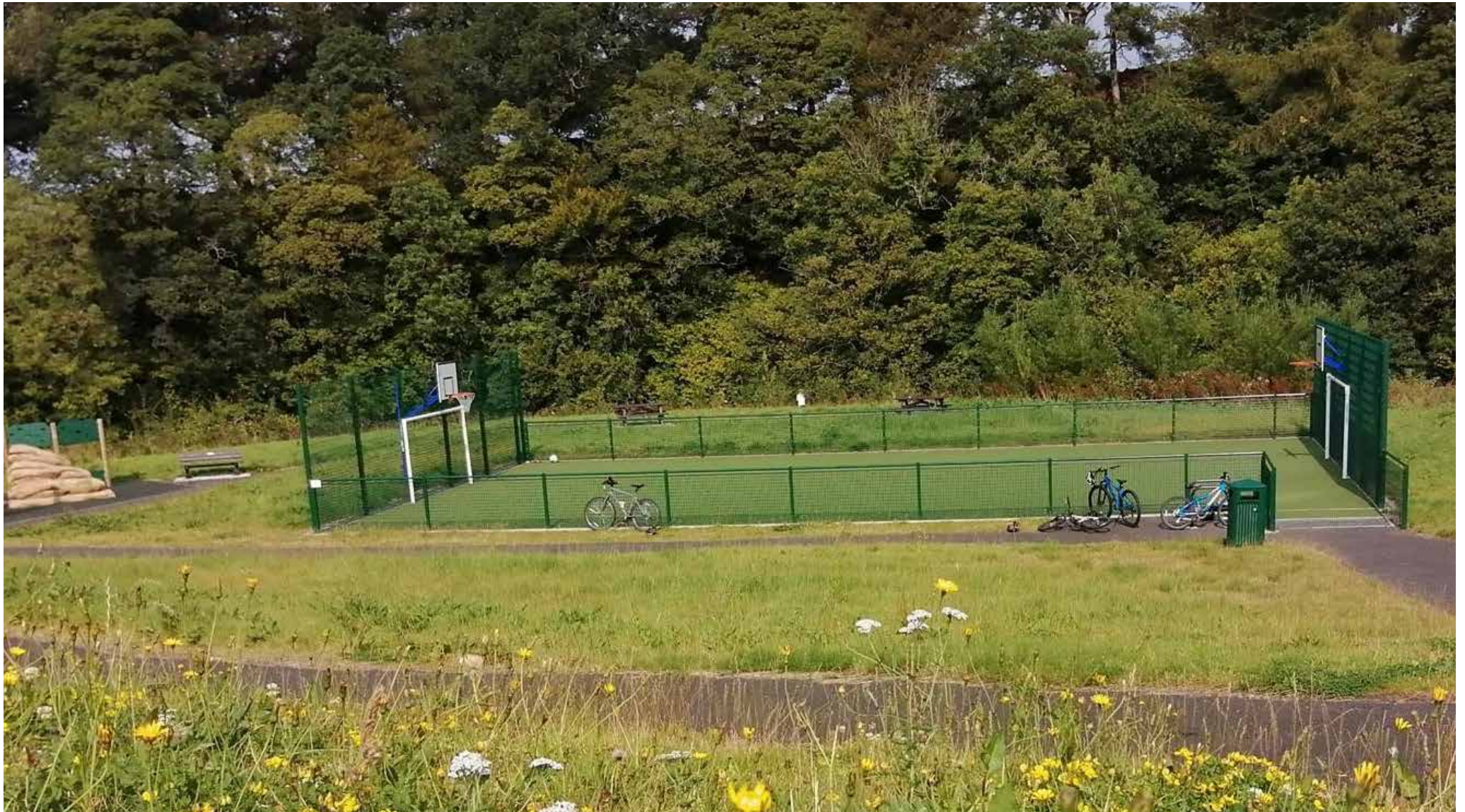
Micro MUGA at Waterfoot, total area 300 sq. m with play area to side and wildflower meadow in foreground.

Amenity Open Space (including Active Open Space)

1. Developers will generally be expected to make provision for amenity open (including active open) space in accordance with the standards set out above.
2. Details of the proposed play equipment must conform to the appropriate European Standard (BSEN 1176 & 1177) and should be agreed with the Council at an early stage.
3. Peripheral landscaping of planting and mounding will be required for multi-use games areas. For security reasons, tree and shrub planting should not substantially visually screen the activity zone. The whole site, comprising the activity area and the landscaped buffer zone, should be suitably enclosed e.g., by railings or hedgerow.
4. Multi-use games areas can be located beside local areas for play, other areas of open space or structural landscaping to form a small park, although there should be physical separation between the different play areas.

Ongoing Management and Maintenance of open space areas

Where provision of play areas are proposed (either local areas for play & multi-use games areas), these areas should be clearly defined within a plan. In all cases, the management & maintenance regime will require to be confirmed as part of the planning application process. The location and type of provision should clearly be shown on any marketing material.

High standards of maintenance should be applied to all open space provision whether on-site, off-site adopted by Council or the responsibility of a private maintenance agency. In the event that the Council adopts the open space, the following guidelines will apply:

- The areas will require to be constructed in accordance with the approved plans and to the satisfaction of the Council.
- Legal conveyance of such areas to the Council will be free of charge and free of all burdens and restrictions.
- A payment, in advance, of a sum equivalent to 20 times the estimated annual maintenance costs, as set by the Council will be made.
- Adoption by the Council will take place after fulfilment of a 24-month maintenance / defects liability by the developer, subject to the Council's satisfaction with its condition. Any defects will require remedial action by the developers.
- The Council for its part will undertake to provide adequate maintenance for as long as is required.

Where a private maintenance scheme is agreed the following guideline will apply:

- Details of management and maintenance arrangements will be submitted as part of the planning application process. The developer must demonstrate to the Council that satisfactory arrangements have been put in place for the long-term maintenance of all open space. E.g., through a private maintenance agency by means of a legal agreement with house purchasers.

Non- residential amenity Open-space provision

It is expected that all development proposals (for example residential, commercial, industrial) will incorporate a high quality and well-integrated environment and landscape setting.

While there are no open space standards for commercial, industrial, transport or educational proposals, greenspace provision will still be assessed on a site-by-site basis against the six qualities of successful place criteria.

APPENDIX B

B

Appendix B

Practical Guide – Natural Features

A Strong legislative basis exists for the protection of protected species and sites. Development likely to impact upon these require to be considered, mitigated and in certain instances consented.

Protected Areas and Protected Species
For protected sites within East Renfrewshire the applicant needs to establish whether their development site impinges on any

- National designations (i.e., Sites of Special Scientific Interest)

  Development that affects a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) will only be permitted where it will not adversely affect the qualities for which it has been designated, or any such adverse effects are clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits of national importance

  Sites of Special Scientific Interest are designated to reflect both habitat and geological interest.

  If development could affect a SSSI, the applicant will require to identify the notified features of the SSSI and set out a method by which the development can be achieved without a net adverse impact to the condition of these features.

  Information on the notified features located within East Renfrewshire can be found on the NatureScot website at

  https://www.nature.scot/doc/application-consent-form-sssis

  A license/permission should be obtained from NatureScot in advance of any works to a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Local natural heritage designations (i.e., Local Biodiversity Sites)

- East Renfrewshire Council holds Phase 1 habitat information for Local Biodiversity Sites within its area.

Where there is likely to be an adverse impact on natural features or biodiversity an ecological appraisal will be required. This appraisal should identify measures adequate to mitigate any impacts that are identified.

This SG encourages enhancement of the LBS where practical.

Species Guidance

Protected Animal & Plant Species
Developers will require to establish whether their site supports any protected animal breeding or resting places. In doing so consideration requires to be given to:

- Internationally protected species – i.e., European Protected Species (EPS). In East Renfrewshire, the only two likely to have protected breeding/resting sites present are **bats** and **otters**.
- Nationally protected species. In East Renfrewshire species that might have protected breeding/resting sites affected by development are **badgers**, **water voles** and **breeding birds**.

In East Renfrewshire any site with mature trees or buildings could support bats, while any site with a water course could support otters. Best practise advises that it is prudent to establish the presence of Protected Species prior to submission of a planning application.

Otters can be surveyed for at any time of the year; however, bats require to be surveyed at particular times within the year.

A Survey Calendar for natural heritage likely within East Renfrewshire is provided below. This is a general guide only and the timing of surveys can be affected by weather and may be specific to location (particularly vegetation surveys). Surveys should be conducted during suitable conditions, i.e., otter surveys undertaken during normal or low flow and not when water is high.

SURVEY CALENDAR

Species	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Bat	Hibernation roost survey			*(unsuitable)*	2/3 Emergence/re-entry surveys Summer and maternity roost surveys				*(sub-optimal)*	*(unsuitable)*	Hibernation roost survey	
Bat	Habitat Suitability Assessments undertaken throughout the year											
Otter	Surveys can be conducted throughout the year											
Badger	Activity surveys				*(sub-optimal)*	*(sub-optimal)*	Activity surveys	*(sub-optimal)*	Activity surveys			*(sub-optimal)*
Water vole	*(unsuitable)*	*(unsuitable)*	*(unsuitable)*	*(sub-optimal)*	Activity surveys			*(sub-optimal)*	*(sub-optimal)*		Unsuitable survey period	
Water vole	Habitat Suitability Assessments undertaken throughout the year											
Birds	Wintering bird species surveys		Breeding bird + migrant bird survey		Breeding bird survey		*(unsuitable)*	*(unsuitable)*	Migrant bird survey		Wintering bird survey	
Birds	Phase 1 habitat survey only	*(sub-optimal)*	Phase 1 and NVC survey							Phase 1 habitat survey only		

Legend:
- Optimal survey period
- Sub-optimal survey period
- Unsuitable survey period

Surveys should be carried out according to best practise for the habitat or species being surveyed. An Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (IEEM) accredited surveyor will be able to give advice and more information can be obtained from NatureScot https://www.nature.scot/