

WORTHING LOCAL PLAN 2020- 2036

GUIDANCE NOTE OPEN SPACE, RECREATION & LEISURE

SUBMISSION



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Worthing Local Plan

Policy DM7: Open Space, Recreation & Leisure

GUIDANCE NOTE

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide background justification to the inclusion of the policy on open space, recreation & leisure within the Worthing Local Plan.
- 1.2 The borough's parks, open spaces, sports / recreation facilities and green infrastructure help local communities to lead lifestyles with greater levels of physical activity, resulting in better physical and mental health, reduced stress levels and increased social interaction as well as reducing exposure to noise and air pollution.
- 1.3 Easy, safe and improved equitable access for all to high quality open and natural space is therefore important especially within the context of climate justice. Research has shown that those people that frequently access nature and open spaces are more likely to develop a connection thus resulting in 'nature appreciation'. This then facilitates 'pro-environmental' behaviours whereby people are more likely to behave in an environmentally friendly way.

2 Policy Context

National Guidance

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) recognises the importance of supporting healthy communities as part of the social dimension of sustainable development (see paragraph 8b). Section 8 of the NPPF gives more detailed consideration to the role of open space, sport and recreation provision.
- 2.2 Paragraph 92 a) sets out the need to plan positively for provision and use of community facilities (including sports venues and open space) and to guard against their unnecessary loss. Paragraph 96 highlights the importance that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Paragraph 97 of the NPPF gives more specific consideration to access to and retention of open space, recreation and sports facilities as well as setting out the framework for the exceptional circumstances when such provisions may be lost.
- 2.3 Paragraph 98 of the NPPF acknowledges that planning policies and decisions should

protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks

2.4 The National Planning Practice Guidance includes a section on open space, sports and recreation facilities. This recognises the variety of forms of open space, from formal sports pitches to country parks. The multiple benefits of open spaces are recognised, including in terms of health, ecology, landscape character and the setting of built development. It is set out that it is for local planning authorities to assess the need for open space and regard should be had to the duty to cooperate where open spaces serve a wider area. In addition, local planning authorities may refer to Sport England guidance on how to assess the need for sports and recreation facilities.

3 Local Evidence & Strategies

Joint Sport, Leisure and Open Space Study

- 3.1 Adur & Worthing Councils commissioned a Joint Sport, Leisure and Open Space Study which comprise of three components:
 - Open Space Study (2019)
 - Playing Pitch Strategy (2019)
 - Indoor / Built Sports Facility Needs Assessment Report (2019)

drawing upon an evidence base comprised of:

- Consultation and engagement with all relevant key stakeholders, agencies and organisations as well as the wider community and general public;
- A detailed audit of all facilities within the scope of the study; and
- Analysis and assessment of the adequacy of current provision as well as identifying specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses in provision in order to accommodate the demands arising from future growth. The Open Space Study also provides a quantitative assessment of the quality of publicly accessible open spaces in the borough.
- 3.2 In summary, the studies concluded that the extent of the urban area and pressures for development mean that the protection of valued high quality open spaces and sport and recreation facilities is a key priority in Worthing and they should only be developed for alternative uses in exceptional circumstances. Additional key findings for additional need over the Plan period include:
 - Indoor swimming pools 81.64 sqm extra waterspace by 2036 (68.98 sqm by 2028)
 - Sport Halls 2+ courts by 2036 (1+ courts by 2028);
 - Adult football 4 pitches;
 - Youth football 11v11 4 pitches;
 - Youth football 9v9 2 pitches;
 - Mini football 3 pitches;

- Cricket 2 pitches in Adur & Worthing;
- Rugby 3 pitches in Adur & Worthing;
- 3G FTPs 2.5 pitches;

There is a deficiency in at least one type of open space in every ward in the borough.

- 3.3 The Built Facilities Study concluded that the need for indoor bowls is largely being met currently, and this is supported by the view of the sport's national governing body. The three existing venues in the study area appear well-placed to meet current needs. If possible, any required additional provision should be made through enlarging investing in the quality of an existing facility.
- 3.4 The evidence of the assessment is that whilst the local authority area does not need additional provision for indoor tennis however, additional demand may be generated from planned development. The LTA representative states that, overall for indoor tennis facilities, the area is fairly-well covered and thus should be kept under review.
- 3.5 As part of the Sport, Leisure and Open Space Study, a consultation survey (See Community & Stakeholder Consultation Report 2019) exercise was conducted. The results of this consultation and other analyses have helped (amongst other things) to inform the content of the recommended local standards. It has also helped the study to understand local people's appreciation of open space and outdoor recreation facilities, and the wider green infrastructure and the values attached by the community to the various forms of open spaces and facilities. This appreciation will have clear implications for the way in which open space and outdoor recreation facilities are considered as part of the review of the local plan as well as in dealing with planning applications. The survey highlighted that a high proportion of those surveyed used open spaces, in many cases on a regular basis. The Open Space category highlighted by the largest number of households as a high priority for potential improvement/new provision was better footpaths, bridleway and cyclepath provision (46%) followed by woodlands, wildlife areas and nature reserves (43%).
- 3.6 Further detail on the application of the open space quantity and access standards is enclosed within Appendix 1.

Local Activity Strategy

3.7 Adur & Worthing Councils are currently preparing a Physical Activity Strategy which seeks to raise levels of physical activity across all areas of the community. Many of the themes / recommendations therein are also linked to the Sport, Leisure and Open Space Study.

Joint Green Infrastructure Strategy

3.8 The Councils are preparing a joint Green Infrastructure Strategy which will identify strategic green infrastructure corridors (i.e. the coast, River Adur), major green infrastructure projects (Brooklands Park, intertidal habitat creation, kelp habitat creation), local green infrastructure projects (pocket parks, estate greening) and a Green Space Factor.

4 Worthing Local Plan - Policy DM7: Open Space, Recreation and Leisure

- 4.1 In considering the approach to open space, sport and recreation within the Worthing Local Plan, the requirements of the NPPF provide a key consideration. The recommendations contained within the Joint Sport, Leisure and Open Space Study informed the policy approach as set out within Policy DM7: Open Space, Recreation and Leisure.
- 4.2 The policy sets out that the starting point for schemes of 10+ dwellings will be to provide open space on site in accordance with the Council's adopted standards. Where it is not possible to provide open space on site, contributions will be sought to provide or improve open space off-site within the ward or nearby ward to which the development is located.
- 4.3 It was considered appropriate to clarify the circumstances when the loss of open space, sport and recreation facilities may be considered acceptable. Regard was given to paragraph 97 of the NPPF in identifying such circumstances.
- 4.4 Taking account of national guidance and the local situation, a single policy is proposed in relation to the provision and retention of open space, sport and recreation facilities. The proposed policy wording is set out below.

Policy DM7: Open Space, Recreation and Leisure

- a) Schemes of 10+ dwellings will be required to provide open space on site in accordance with the Council's adopted standards. Where it is not possible to provide open space on site, contributions will be sought to provide or improve open space off-site within the ward or nearby ward to which the development is located.
- b) Proposals incorporating leisure/recreation facilities should use the findings of the Sport, Leisure and Open Space Study to inform the types required.
- c) The loss of existing open space, or sports and recreation buildings/ facilities will be refused unless:
 - i) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the need for which clearly outweighs the loss; or

- ii) an assessment has been undertaken which clearly shows the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements and not required to meet any other shortfalls in open space types; or
- iii) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or improved provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location. For open space, there should be a net gain in provision.
- d) Proposals for built sports facilities and formal sports provision will be supported where they are in accordance with policies in this plan. e) Sites which have significant nature conservation, historical or cultural value (such as Registered Town and Village Greens) should be afforded protection, even if there is an identified surplus in quality, quantity or accessibility in that local area.

Appendix 1: Briefing Note on the application of open space quantity and access standards.

Open Space

The Open Space Study sets minimum provision standards for different open space typologies in Adur and Worthing. In terms of quantity and access, the local standards are as follows (all quantities are hectares per 1000 population):

Summary of open space quantity and access standards (see table 6.6 - p.64)

Typology	Quantity standards for existing provision and new provision (ha/1000 population)	Access standard
Allotments	0.20	720 metres or 15 minutes' walk-time
Amenity Green Space (sites >0.15 ha)	0.60	480 metres or 10 minutes' walk-time
Park and Recreation Grounds (public and private combined)	0.80	720 metres or 15 minutes' walk-time
Play Space (Children)	0.06	480 metres or 10 minutes' walk-time
Play Space (Youth)	0.06	720 metres or 15 minutes' walk-time
Accessible Natural Green Space	1.0 (for new provision only)	960 metres or 20 minutes' walk-time and ANGst Standards for accessible natural green space above 20ha
Total for new provision	2.72 ha / 1000	

It should be noted that a key issue for the area is limited land available for new development, given the South Downs National Park to the north, and the English Channel to the south. Therefore, it will be a challenge to achieve these standards everywhere, and the enhancement of existing facilities (including improving access to facilities) will be key to meeting unmet demand.

Current supply against the standards

The tables below show the existing supply of open space for each typology at the Study Area, Local Authority, and Ward levels. The supply is calculated using the population figures (ONS mid-year 2017 estimates) for each of the geographies and the quantity of open space compared to what the requirements for open space are against the recommended standards. Positive figures show where the Study Area/Local Authority Area/Wards meet the quantity standard for the open space typology, and negative figures (red text) show where there is a shortfall in supply against the quantity standard.

Although these figures highlight where there are shortfalls in supply against the quantity standards and therefore where new provision should be sought, new provision may not be achievable (unless, for example, through new development). These figures can help inform decisions about the form of new open spaces and improvements to existing open spaces, rather than it being imperative that every Ward must achieve a '+' number.

Table 7.1 Open space supply at the study area level (Adur District and Worthing Borough) against the quantity standards (see page 66)

Typology	Existing (ha)	Existing (ha / 1000)	Required Provision (ha)	Standard / Required Provision (ha / 1000	Supply (ha)	Supply (ha / 1000)
Allotments	31.21	0.18	34.67	0.2	-3.46	-0.02
Amenity Greenspace (>0.15ha)	88.22	0.51	104.01	0.6	-15.79	-0.09
Parks & Recreation Ground	138.99	0.8	138.68	0.8	0.31	0.00
Play (Child)	5.36	0.03	10.4	0.06	-5.04	-0.03
Play (Youth)	1.13	0.01	10.4	0.06	-9.27	-0.05

Table 7.2 b) Open space supply at the Worthing Borough level against the quantity standards (see page 67)

Typology	Existing (ha)	Existing (ha / 1000)	Required Provision (ha)	Standard / Required Provision (ha / 1000	Supply (ha)	Supply (ha / 1000)
Allotments	15.89	0.14	21.93	0.2	-6.04	-0.06
Amenity Greenspace (>0.15ha)	43.95	0.4	65.78	0.6	-21.83	-0.20
Parks & Recreation Ground	90.05	0.82	87.71	0.8	2.34	0.02
Play (Child)	2.91	0.03	6.58	0.06	-3.67	-0.03
Play (Youth)	0.51	0	6.58	0.06	-6.07	-0.06

Table 7.3 Open space supply (ha) at Ward level against the quantity standards (see page 68)

Ward	Allotments	Amenity Greenspace	Parks & Recreation Grounds	Play (Child)	Play (Youth)
Worthing	-6.04	-21.83	2.34	-3.67	-6.07
Broadwater	-1.26	-5.34	-6.25	-0.35	-0.54
Castle	-1.57	-2.44	-1.11	-0.29	-0.51
Central	-2.18	-5.33	4.05	-0.25	-0.52
Durrington	-1.16	-3.1	-0.54	-0.16	-0.31
Gaisford	-1.96	-5.88	-3.36	-0.47	-0.59
Goring	-1.62	11.34	1.02	-0.44	-0.49
Heene	-1.67	-4.76	-6.69	-0.5	-0.5
Marine	-1.29	-3.91	-4.3	-0.3	-0.48
Northbrook	1.38	15.26	8.74	0.6	-0.21
Offington	-1.26	-2.73	7.01	-0.44	-0.47
Salvington	-1.79	-5.03	2.18	-0.35	-0.48
Selden	3.49	-4.7	6.99	-0.37	-0.51

Tarring	4.86	-5.22	-5.4	-0.36	-0.47

Table 7.3 shows that open space provision varies across Wards and typologies, with some meeting the standards and some falling below e.g. for youth play space there are shortfalls in provision in every Ward within the Study Area. This will be an important consideration when determining the need for on-site open space as part of new development.

It is important that the supply figures are not considered in isolation, as the access and quality results are equally important (see example in Table 8.1, Section 8.4). Just because a typology is in sufficient supply, this does not mean it is 'surplus' to requirements, as the access and quantity standards also need to be considered alongside the quantity requirements. There may also be other factors such as a sites nature conservation, historic or cultural value, or its contribution to the Green Infrastructure network which mean it should be protected (see Section 8.2 of this report).

Future need for open space

The figures for open space requirements are for indicative purposes - the calculations are based on all open space being provided on site (which will not be the reality in some cases, as consideration of the individual development size and proximity to existing open spaces needs to be taken into account.

Table 7.4 Open space requirements resulting from housing allocations (see page 69)

	Α	В	С	D	
	Assumed Household Size	Housing Numbers (2018-2036)	Predicted Population Increase (A*B)	Open space requirements against quantity standards (C* quantity standards –See Table 6.6)	
Adur District	2.27	3,130	7,105	Allotments: 1.42 ha	
				Amenity Greenspace: 4.26 ha	
				Parks & Recreation: 5.68 ha	
				Play (Child): 0.43 ha	
				Play (Youth): 0.43 ha	
				Accessible Natural Greenspace: 7.10 ha	
Worthing	2.17	3,764	8,168	Allotments: 1.63 ha	
Borough				Amenity Greenspace: 4.90 ha	
				Parks & Recreation: 6.53 ha	

			Play (Child): 0.49 ha Play (Youth): 0.49 ha
			Accessible Natural Greenspace: 8.17 ha
Overall		15,273	Allotments: 3.05 ha
Study Area			Amenity Greenspace: 9.16 ha
			Parks & Recreation: 12.22 ha
			Play (Child): 0.92 ha
			Play (Youth): 0.92 ha
			Accessible Natural Greenspace: 15.27 ha

Application of access standards

Section 7.3 (see pages 70-79) provides an overview of access to different types of open space typologies across the Study Area, using the access standards summarised in Table 6.6. The maps are intended to provide an overview and are for illustrative purposes only. More detailed maps by Ward are provided for each typology within Appendix 2 (see example at Figure 7.1).

The maps show the walk-time buffers for each open space typology and are created using QGIS and the OSM Tools plugin which relies on the openstreetmap paths and street network to accurately map realistic potential walking routes. The buffers are based on a walk-time of 5 kilometres/3.1 miles an hour..

Table 2.1 (section 2.4 of the OS report) shows how walk-time relates to straight-line distances and pedestrian route distances. The straight-line walking distances do not take into account roads or barriers to access and so the actual route walked (the pedestrian route) is generally further i.e. straight-line distances are around 60% of actual distances. The more basic straight-line buffer access analysis approach has been used for the ANGSt standards, as this approach is more appropriate for larger sites.

The access maps also show Census 2011 Output Areas (OAs), which are data points (shown in red) on the maps below. Each OA centroid is the lowest level of geography from the census which contains roughly 129 households. Using this point dataset helps to clearly show where the key gaps in access are (i.e. in the populated parts of the study area) when analysing large scale maps.

This section also shows the public rights of way network, which forms an important part of access to open space and the wider countryside.

Table 7.5 Summary of access issues for allotments, amenity green space, parks and recreation grounds, play space (children and youth) (see page 74 & 75)

Typology	Key Access Issues
Allotments	There are significant gaps across several built-up areas of many Wards, including – Goring, Salvington, High Salvington, Offington, Central. East Worthing and Selden.
Amenity Green Space	There are significant gaps in access in a large part of Worthing including: Marine, Heene, Gaisford, Broadwater, Selden, Central, Salvington and Offington.
Parks & Recreation Grounds	There are few gaps across any built-up areas of wards.
Play Space (Children)	There are significant gaps across several built-up areas of wards, including Central, Heene, Goring, Offington (notably Findon Valley area).
Play Space (Youth)	There are significant gaps across several built-up areas of wards, including Goring, Marine, Heene and Selden.

Table 7.6 Summary of access issues for accessible natural green space (see page 79)

Standard	Key Access Issues
Access to accessible natural green space – 960m buffer	There are significant gaps across several built-up areas of wards, including Marine, Heene, Central, Selden, Tarring, Gaisford and Broadwater.
At least one accessible 2 hectare site, no more than 300 metres (5 minutes) walk from home	When applying this access standard, it can be seen that there are significant gaps in access across the vast majority of the Study Area. Therefore it is considered that this standard is not very realistic or achievable within the Study Area, and the locally derived 960m buffer is more appropriate in identifying in where the key access gaps are.
At least one accessible 20 hectare site within two kilometres from home	There are significant gaps across several built-up areas of wards, including Marine, Heene, Central, Selden, Tarring, Gaisford and Broadwater.

One accessible 100 hectare site within five kilometres from home	Good access across Worthing.
One accessible 500 hectare site within ten kilometres from home	There are no 500 hectare sites mapped within the Study Area.
A minimum of one hectare of statutory Local Nature Reserves per thousand population	There are 4 (totalling 77.82 ha in size) Local Nature Reserves within the Study Area, all of which are located in Adur. At the Study Area level, this equates to 0.45ha per 1000 population of nature reserves which falls below the ANGSt standard of 1ha/1000.
Access via the PROW network	The PROW network provides access between open spaces and provides an important element of access to / within the countryside. The coastline and South Downs National Park also provides an important recreational resource (for residents but also attracting tourists from a wide area).

Quality of open space – audit findings

The quality audit was undertaken at 224 open spaces (including 86 children's and youth play spaces) across the Study Area. The details of the quality audits are contained within the GIS database provided to the local authorities. For each of the Wards within the Study Area, a map showing the results of the quality audit has been produced, showing the sites which scored good, average or poor quality (see Appendix 3).

Table 7.8 below provides an overview of the quality audit results across the Study Area. As can be seen, the majority of open spaces were assessed as being of good quality.

Typology	Ogy Quality Audit Grade			
	A (Good	B (Average)	C (Poor)	Total
Accessible Natural Greenspace	12	4	1	17
Amenity Greenspace	59	15	1	75
Green Corridor	1			1
Park & Recreation Grounds	40	5		45
Play (Child)	45	10		55
Play (Youth)	25	5	1	31
Green Corridor	1			
Total	182	39	3	224

Developer Contributions

New residential development will be required to provide on-site open space in accordance with the standards. The exceptions to this approach will be where the site or development is not of sufficient size in itself to make the appropriate provision feasible, or where it is preferable to seek contributions towards a specific facility in the locality. The potential to make off-site provision will be considered on a case by case basis.

Where a development is unable to provide sufficient on-site provision of open space to mitigate the impact of that development, contributions towards the provision or improvement of offsite open space are set out in the Open Space Study and calculated using the capital cost of provision using the assumption of an average household size of 2.2 persons/household.

A **cost calculator** has been provided to the Councils so that the on and off-site requirements for open space can be calculated for different sized developments. It provides an example of how costs might be calculated, but site circumstances will also need to be taken into account e.g. topography.

The cost calculator is based on the following assumptions:

- Average household size (2.2 persons/household)
- The open space quantity standards (see Table 6.6)
- The cost of open space per m2 (see Table 8.2, page 97)
- Thresholds for on-site provision (see Table 8.5, page 101)

The cost calculator factors in the number of bedrooms per dwelling. Where the number of beds are not known, the total number of units can be inputted. The same charges apply to both provision of new facilities and the upgrading/improvement of existing facilities (where related to new development), which will normally include at least some new provision. The Open Space study report provides an example of how to use the cost calculator - see page 98.

Maintenance Contributions

Where new open space is provided, the developer would be expected to provide the open space and either maintain the open space through a management company, or if the site is to be adopted by the Local Authority, then maintenance fees of at least 20 years will be included in the Section 106 legal agreement. If the open space is maintained by a Management Company then the open space should be publicly accessible in perpetuity. It is expected that a management plan for the open space would be submitted and approved by the council as a planning condition or part of the legal agreement.

In the event that the open space would be adopted by the Council/Parish Council, they may be willing to accept a commuted sum and make arrangements for management of the open space. The amount payable for the commuted sum will be calculated using the figures in Table 8.3 below.

Typology	Cost/sq m per annum
Play Space (Children)	£13.34
Play Space (Youth)	£9.21
Parks and Recreation Grounds	£3.47
Amenity Greenspace	£0.77

Eligible Types of Development For On-Site Provision

Table 8.4 (see page 100) outlines the type of housing that will be considered eligible for making contributions towards open space to meet the needs of future occupants.

Category	Open Market Housing / Flats	Affordable Housing	Older People's Accommodation	Permanent mobile homes
Play Space (Children & Youth)	Yes	Yes	X	Yes
Parks & Recreation Grounds	Yes	Yes	On a case by case basis	Yes
Amenity Open Space	Yes	Yes	On a case by case basis	Yes
Accessible Natural Green Space	Yes	Yes	On a case by case basis	Yes
Allotments	Yes	Yes	On a case by case basis	Yes

Thresholds for Provision

The required open space, sport and recreation facilities should in the first instance be provided on-site, with off-site provision/contributions only to be considered where on-site provision is either not needed (considering the analysis of supply, accessibility) or not possible/practicable.

Where facilities are to be provided on-site, Worthing Borough Council will expect the developer to provide the land for the facility and either:

- Design and build the provision to the satisfaction of the Councils; or
- Make a financial contribution to the Councils so that they may arrange for the construction and development of the required facility.

The decision on whether facility provision is to be on-site, off-site or both depends on the following considerations:

- The scale of the proposed development and site area;
- The suitability of a site reflecting, for example, its topography or flood risk;
- The existing provision of facilities within the parish/neighbourhood;

- Other sites in the parish/neighbourhood where additional provision is proposed;
- Existing access to facilities within the parish/neighbourhood.

Table 8.5 (see page 101) provides guidance on how to assess different scales of development sites that could generate a need for facilities in the categories listed to be provided on-site (also see the flow chart at Figure 8.1, which shows how the quantity, access and quality analysis needs to be taken into account). It should also be considered that where a development is of a size that could generate the need for provision of open space on-site, if there is sufficient provision (quantity and access) of an open space typology within the vicinity, then consideration will be given to improving existing facilities as an alternative to new on-site provision.

Where a development would result in less than 0.15ha of amenity green space, it will be provided as a single space. For developments that result in more than 0.15ha of amenity green space, the minimum size considered acceptable is 0.15ha. This will avoid a proliferation of small amenity spaces which have no real recreation function.

It is also considered that the minimum size of equipped children's play provision would be 100 sqm. In addition to this, buffer zones/playable space (which will take a landscape design approach) will be provided between 5m and 30m, depending on the size of the play area.

While Table 8.5 acts as a useful guide to the recommended types of provision in relation to the size of a scheme, each proposal will still be considered on a site by site basis, with on-site provision always to be considered as the first solution. The table below will be most applicable to greenfield sites. For high density brownfield sites, off-site contributions rather than on-site open space provision is considered to be reasonable, due to the limited land available for new development within the study area. The enhancement of existing facilities (including improving access to facilities) will be key to meeting unmet demand.

Type of Provision	10-19 dwellings	20-49 dwellings	50-99 dwellings	100-199 dwellings	200+ dwellings
Allotments	Off-site	Off-site	Off-site	On-site	On-site
Amenity Green Space	Off-site	On-site	On-site	On-site	On-site
Parks & Recreation Grounds	Off-site	Off-site	Off-site	Off-site	On-site
Play Space (Children)	Off-site	Off-site	Off-site	On-site	On-site
Play Space (Youth)	Off-site	Off-site	Off-site	Off-site	On-site
Accessible Natural Green Space	Off-site	Off-site	Off-site	On-site	On-site

Worthing Borough Council
Planning Policy
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