

Ashford Borough Council

Spatial Planning for Open Space

- 1.1 The spatial plan for open space is based on relationships. The plans purpose is to define what those relationships need to be and to provide a simple but flexible spatial model capable of delivering those relationships in compliance with adopted quantitative and qualitative standards.
- 1.2 The driver for spatial planning is to ensure that:
 - There is a sustainable model which will enable delivery of the desired relationships between open space, people's homes and key community facilities
 - The planning approach will deliver the best possible integration of new and existing communities.
- 1.3 It is intended that each spatial area will be served by an open space hub, but this will not necessarily be within new development areas. Where the hub is not within new development, the development must support the viability of the hub through effective planning of open space to build connectivity and excellent access to connecting green spaces.
- 1.4 The spatial planning relationships to consider are:
 1. The interface between open space and its surrounding built and semi-natural environment
 2. The role of open space in local off-road transport provision
 3. Relationships between different open space typologies
 4. Open space as a setting for mutually supporting community facilities (e.g. sports pitches and changing rooms, formal play areas, community centres and associated facilities, parking, shops, schools, toilets, and refreshments)
 5. Open space as a setting for informal play.
 6. New open space provision balanced with pre-existing opportunities and needs.

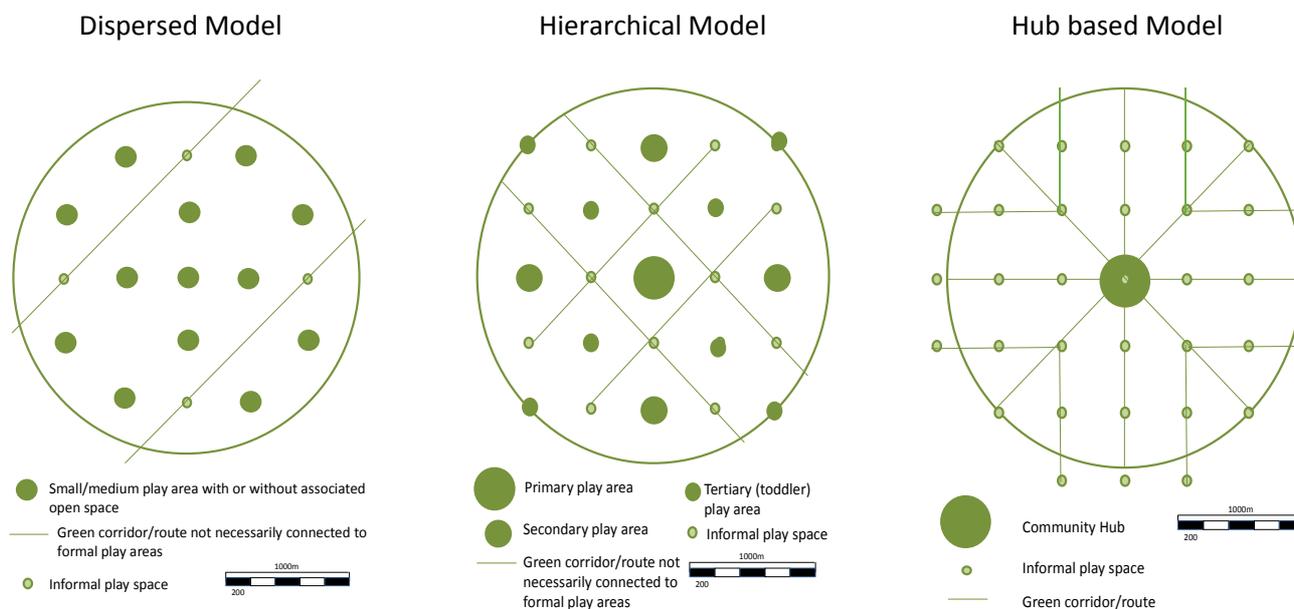
New open space provision and pre-existing opportunities and needs

- 1.5 New open space is to link up as far as possible with existing open spaces and green corridors.
- 1.6 Some new development sites will be required to provide a new open space hub. In these cases the local catchment for the hub will extend far into existing residential areas. The planning of open space must as far as possible create a very permeable interface with existing residential areas that will facilitate easy and good quality access to the open space hub.

Appendix 10 – Open Space Strategy 2017

- 1.7 Where a development is within the catchment of a nearby open space hub it will be required to support that hub in the planning of on-site open space. Residents must be no further than 300m away from green informal open space routes which provide good quality off-road access to the hubs.
- 1.8 Where hubs are more than 1,000m away from residents one or more smaller secondary open spaces will be required comprising a play area and associated informal play and kick about space to bring these activities to within a reasonable distance of residents.
- 1.9 The integration of new and existing development and open space provision is one of the most challenging aspects of this spatial strategy. The level and quality of open space provision within existing residential areas can be below current standards and opportunities for creating connectivity are potentially limited.
- 1.10 However opportunities do exist and in some areas it may be possible for existing open space and associated facilities to support new development.
- 1.11 Therefore the opportunities and constraints presented by existing residential areas and associated provision need to be considered more fully under each spatial area.

Spatial Models Comparison



Appendix 10 – Open Space Strategy 2017

| Value Offered | Dispersed Model | Hierarchical Model | Hub Model |
|--|--|---|---|
| Sustainability of mutually supporting community facilities through co-location | Spaces too small to accommodate associated facilities | Most spaces too small to accommodate associated facilities. The main two or three spaces could provide a modest range of associated facilities, e.g. small scale formal sports. | The central space is large enough to co-locate several mutually supporting open space and built community facilities on one central site, giving greater sustainability, variety and a wide appeal. |
| Achievable scale of formal facilities (important for their financial viability and attractiveness) | Only small sites available and the offer will be small scale throughout | Most sites small but some chance to build a more exiting scale of facility on two to three sites | Large scale facilities can be accommodated enabling greater viability and recreational offer. |
| Promotion of off-road transport. The role of open space in local off-road transport provision. | Most of open space taken up by many small sites with little available for green routes. Connections therefore along the highway. | The partial centralisation frees up some space for green routes between key open spaces. | Consolidation of green space and community facilities into a central hub leaves green space to provide a good network of green off-road routes. |
| Connectivity of open space for wildlife and people. | Generally not well connected unless along a pre-existing natural feature such as rivers. | Some open space available for green route provision but this aspect of provision underdeveloped. | Up to 50% of space available to deploy as green routes. Sufficient to provide a network of green routes connecting with each other, the central space, key destinations and habitats. |
| The maximum workable catchment area. | Will tend to create many small very local catchments -for each space, journeys to other spaces would have to be along roads. | The available green routes would be sufficient to join some spaces and give a greater catchment to the larger spaces. | The green network would make the hub available to a large area via pleasant and safe pedestrian routes, with local catchments for informal play and kickabout space within the green routes. |
| Local identity | Small spaces will help to give character to nearby residences and could be sufficiently different to be landmark features and reflect local character differences. | Small and larger spaces will help to give character to nearby residences and could be sufficiently different to be landmark features and reflect local character differences. | The hub would provide a major landmark. The green corridors design can respond to more local character. |

Appendix 10 – Open Space Strategy 2017

| Value Offered | Dispersed Model | Hierarchical Model | Hub Model |
|--|--|--|---|
| Availability of informal open space | Nearby separate spaces available for informal play and kick about space but no long green walks | Nearby separate spaces available for play and kick about space. Access to long green walks could be close to some residents | Spaces within the green routes can provide local informal space for recreation plus local access to long green walks close. |
| Cost of safety inspection for formal play areas. Given equal capital investment in formal play across all models | Many small formal play spaces with high inspection costs due to travelling and recording. | Fairly high inspection costs but reduced by some consolidation of play facilities into secondary hubs | Cost reduced by concentration of formal play facilities into a single large site |
| The interface between open space and its surrounding built and semi- natural fabric | Potentially very good with regard to overlooking and informal supervision. Could be difficult to give more boisterous activities enough room to stop them being a nuisance | Potentially very good with regard to overlooking and informal supervision. The larger site will give a few places where boisterous activities can take place without much conflict. | Potentially very good with regard to overlooking and informal supervision. The central hub would give plenty of space for a variety of boisterous activities to take place simultaneously |
| Relationships between different open space typologies | Formal play areas can be associated with modest sizes area of informal open space. Otherwise not much association of different typologies | Formal play areas can be associated with modest sizes area of informal open space. The larger spaces and connecting green corridors give some opportunity to associate amenity space with sports areas and wildlife habitats, e.g. along rivers and old hedgerows. | The hubs can accommodate a variety of open space typologies play, sport, allotments, habitats etc. and the green routes provide excellent opportunities to preserve and enhance water ways and other linear habitats. |
| New open space provision and pre-existing opportunities and needs | Very little impact on existing residential areas. | Some positive impact on access to green space and associated facilities could be achieved where the larger sites or green routes are close to existing areas | Maximises the opportunities for existing residents to access good central open space facilities where the green routes run up to existing residential areas especially where they can connect with existing routes. |