

be accompanied by thorough evidence which demonstrates that there are exceptional circumstances consistent with the requirements of national policy.

- 8.3 Additional stretches of the River Thames should not be designated as Metropolitan Open Land, as this may restrict the use of the river for transport infrastructure related uses. In considering whether there are exceptional circumstances to change MOL boundaries alongside the Thames and other waterways, boroughs should have regard to Policy SI 14 Waterways – strategic role to Policy SI 17 Protecting and enhancing London’s waterways and the need for certain types of development to help maximise the multifunctional benefits of waterways including their role in transporting passengers and freight.
- 8.3.4 Proposals to **enhance access to MOL** and to improve poorer quality areas such that they provide a wider range of benefits for Londoners that are appropriate within MOL will be encouraged. Examples include improved public access for all, inclusive design, recreation facilities, habitat creation, landscaping improvement and flood storage.

Policy G4 Open space

A Development Plans should:

- 1) undertake a needs assessment of all open space to inform policy. Assessments should identify areas of public open space deficiency, using the categorisation set out in Table 8.1 as a benchmark for the different types required.¹³⁶ Assessments should take into account the quality, quantity and accessibility of open space
- 2) include appropriate designations and policies for the protection of open space to meet needs and address deficiencies
- 3) promote the creation of new areas of publicly-accessible open space particularly green space, ensuring that future open space needs are planned for, especially in areas with the potential for substantial change
- 4) ensure that open space, particularly green space, included as part of development remains publicly accessible.

¹³⁶

Areas of Deficiency in Access to Public Open Space, GiGL, <https://www.gigl.org.uk/open-spaces/areas-of-deficiency-in-access-to-public-open-space/?highlight=open%20space%20deficiency>

B Development proposals should:

- 1) not result in the loss of protected open space
- 2) where possible create areas of publicly accessible open space, particularly in areas of deficiency.

- 8.4.1 Open spaces, particularly those planned, designed and managed as green infrastructure – provide a wide range of social, health and environmental benefits, and are a **vital component of London's infrastructure**. All types of open space, regardless of their function, are valuable in their ability to connect Londoners to open spaces at the neighbourhood level. Connectivity across the network of open spaces is particularly important as this provides opportunities for walking and cycling. Green spaces are especially important for improving wildlife corridors.
- 8.4.2 Boroughs should undertake an open space needs assessment, which should be in-line with objectives in **green infrastructure strategies** (Policy G1 Green infrastructure) (drawing from existing strategies such as play, trees and playing pitches). These strategies and assessments should inform each other to deliver multiple benefits in recognition of the cross-borough function and benefits of some forms of green infrastructure. Assessments should take into account all types of open space, including open space that is not publicly accessible, to inform local plan policies and designations.
- 8.4 The creation of new open space, particularly green space, is essential in helping to meet the Mayor's target of making more than 50 per cent of London green by 2050. **New provision or improved public access** should be particularly encouraged in areas of deficiency in access to public open space. It is important to secure appropriate management and maintenance of open spaces to ensure that a wide range of benefits can be secured and any conflicts between uses are minimised.
- 8.4.4 Proposals to **enhance open spaces** to provide a wider range of benefits for Londoners will be encouraged. Examples could include improved public access, inclusive design, recreation facilities, habitat creation, landscaping improvement or Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).

Table 8.1 - Public open space categorisation

Open Space categorisation	Description	Size guideline	Distance from homes
Regional Parks	These are large areas, corridors or networks of open space, the majority of which will be publicly-accessible and provide a range of facilities and features offering recreational, ecological, landscape, cultural or green infrastructure benefits. They offer a combination of facilities and features that are unique within London, are readily accessible by public transport and are managed to meet best practice quality standards.	400 ha	3.2 to 8 km
Metropolitan Parks	These are large areas of open space that provide a similar range of benefits to Regional Parks and offer a combination of facilities at a sub-regional level. They are readily accessible by public transport and are managed to meet best practice quality standards.	60 ha	3.2 km
District Parks	These are large areas of open space that provide a landscape setting with a variety of natural features. They provide a wide range of activities, including outdoor sports facilities and playing fields, children's play for different age groups and informal recreation pursuits.	20 ha	1.2 km
Local Parks and Open Spaces	These provide for court games, children's play, sitting out areas and nature conservation areas.	2 ha	400 m



Open Space categorisation	Description	Size guideline	Distance from homes
Small Open Spaces	These include public gardens, sitting out areas, children's play spaces or other areas of a specialist nature, including nature conservation areas.	under 2 ha	less than 400 m
Pocket Parks	These are small areas of open space that provide natural surfaces and shaded areas for informal play and passive recreation that sometimes have seating and play equipment.	under 0.4 ha	less than 400 m
Linear Open Spaces	These are open spaces and towpaths alongside the Thames, canals and other waterways, paths, disused railways, nature conservation areas and other routes that provide opportunities for informal recreation. They can often be characterised by elements that are not public open space but that contribute to the enjoyment of the space.	N/A	N/A

This table gives examples of typical open space typologies in London; other open space types may be included to reflect local circumstances