

Policy G5 Urban greening

- A Major development proposals should contribute to the greening of London by including urban greening as a fundamental element of site and building design, and by incorporating measures such as high-quality landscaping (including trees), green roofs, green walls and nature-based sustainable drainage.
- B Boroughs should develop an Urban Greening Factor (UGF) to identify the appropriate amount of urban greening required in new developments. The UGF should be based on the factors set out in Table 8.2, but tailored to local circumstances. In the interim, the Mayor recommends a target score of 0.4 for developments that are predominately residential, and a target score of 0.3 for predominately commercial development (excluding B2 and B8 uses).
- C Existing green cover retained on site should count towards developments meeting the interim target scores set out in (B) based on the factors set out in Table 8.2.

- 8.5.1 The inclusion of **urban greening measures** in new development will result in an increase in green cover, and **should be integral to planning** the layout and design of new buildings and developments. This should be considered from the beginning of the design process.
- 8.5.2 **Urban greening** covers a wide range of options including, but not limited to, street trees, green roofs, green walls, and rain gardens. It can help to meet other policy requirements and provide a range of benefits including amenity space, enhanced biodiversity, addressing the urban heat island effect, sustainable drainage and amenity – the latter being especially important in the most densely developed parts of the city where traditional green space is limited. The management and ongoing maintenance of green infrastructure should be considered and secured through the planning system where appropriate.
- 8.5.3 A number of cities have successfully adopted a 'green space factor' to encourage more and better urban greening. The Mayor has developed a generic **Urban Greening Factor** model to assist boroughs and developers in determining the appropriate provision of urban greening for new developments.



This is based on a review of green space factors in other cities.¹³⁷ The factors outlined in Table 8.2 are a simplified measure of various benefits provided by soils, vegetation and water based on their potential for rainwater infiltration as a proxy to provide a range of benefits such as improved health, climate change adaption and biodiversity conservation.

- 8.5.4 The UGF is currently only applied to major applications, but may eventually be applied to applications below this threshold as boroughs develop their own models. London is a diverse city so it is appropriate that each borough develops its own approach in response to its local circumstances. However, the challenges of climate change, poor air quality and deficiencies in green space need to be tackled now, so while each borough develops its own bespoke approach the Mayor has recommended the standards set out above. Further guidance will be developed to support implementation of the Urban Greening Factor.
- 8.5.5 Residential development places greater demands on **existing green infrastructure** and, as such, a higher standard is justified. Commercial development includes a range of uses and a variety of development typologies where the approach to urban greening will vary. Whilst the target score of 0.3 does not apply to B2 and B8 uses, these uses will still be expected to set out what measures they have taken to achieve urban greening on-site and quantify what their UGF score is.
- 8.5.6 The Urban Greening Factor for a proposed development is calculated in the following way:
- (Factor A x Area) + (Factor B x Area) + (Factor C x Area) etc. divided by Total Site Area.
- So, for example, an office development with a 600 sq.m. footprint on a site of 1,000 sq.m. including a green roof, 250 sq.m. car parking, 100 sq.m. open water and 50 sq.m. of amenity grassland would score the following;
- $$(0.7 \times 600) + (0.0 \times 250) + (1 \times 100) + (0.4 \times 50) / 1000 = 0.54$$
- 8.5.7 So, in this example, the proposed office development exceeds the interim target score of 0.3 for a predominately commercial development under Part B of Policy G5 Urban greening.

¹³⁷ Urban Greening Factor for London, The Ecology Consultancy, 2017, https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/urban_greening_factor_for_london_final_report.pdf



Table 8.2 - Urban Greening Factors

Surface Cover Type	Factor
Semi-natural vegetation (e.g. trees, woodland, species-rich grassland) maintained or established on site.	1
Wetland or open water (semi-natural; not chlorinated) maintained or established on site.	1
Intensive green roof or vegetation over structure. Substrate minimum settled depth of 150mm – see livingroofs.org for descriptions. ^A	0.8
Standard trees planted in connected tree pits with a minimum soil volume equivalent to at least two thirds of the projected canopy area of the mature tree – see Trees in Hard Landscapes for overview. ^B	0.8
Extensive green roof with substrate of minimum settled depth of 80mm (or 60mm beneath vegetation blanket) – meets the requirements of GRO Code 2014. ^C	0.7
Flower-rich perennial planting – see RHS perennial plants for guidance. ^D	0.7
Rain gardens and other vegetated sustainable drainage elements – See CIRIA for case-studies. ^E	0.7
Hedges (line of mature shrubs one or two shrubs wide) – see RHS for guidance. ^F	0.6
Standard trees planted in pits with soil volumes less than two thirds of the projected canopy area of the mature tree.	0.6
Green wall –modular system or climbers rooted in soil – see NBS Guide to Façade Greening for overview. ^G	0.6
Groundcover planting – see RHS Groundcover Plants for overview. ^H	0.5
Amenity grassland (species-poor, regularly mown lawn).	0.4
Extensive green roof of sedum mat or other lightweight systems that do not meet GRO Code 2014. ^I	0.3
Water features (chlorinated) or unplanted detention basins.	0.2
Permeable paving – see CIRIA for overview. ^J	0.1
Sealed surfaces (e.g. concrete, asphalt, waterproofing, stone).	0

Notes for Table 8.2

- A. <https://livingroofs.org/intensive-green-roofs/>
- B. <http://www.tdag.org.uk/trees-in-hard-landscapes.html>
- C. <https://livingroofs.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/grocode2014.pdf>
- D. <https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profile?pid=868>
- E. <http://www.susdrain.org/case-studies/>
- F. <https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profile?pid=351>
- G. <https://www.thenbs.com/knowledge/the-nbs-guide-to-facade-greening-part-two>
- H. <https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profile?PID=818>
- I. <https://livingroofs.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/grocode2014.pdf>
- J. <https://www.susdrain.org/delivering-suds/using-suds/suds-components/source-control/pervious-surfaces/pervious-surface-types/pervious-surface-types.html>

Policy G6 Biodiversity and access to nature

- A Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) should be protected.
- B Boroughs, in developing Development Plans, should:
 - 1) use up-to-date information about the natural environment and the relevant procedures to identify SINCs and ecological corridors to identify coherent ecological networks
 - 2) identify areas of deficiency in access to nature (i.e. areas that are more than 1km walking distance from an accessible Metropolitan or Borough SINC) and seek opportunities to address them
 - 3) support the protection and conservation of priority species and habitats that sit outside the SINC network, and promote opportunities for enhancing them using Biodiversity Action Plans
 - 4) seek opportunities to create other habitats, or features such as artificial nest sites, that are of particular relevance and benefit in an urban context