Active Design

CREATING ACTIVE ENVIRONMENTS THROUGH PLANNING AND DESIGN

Checklist

Supported by

SPORT ENGLAND

Active Travel England

Office for Health Improvement & Disparities

Active Design Checklist

FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLE

Activity for all

All environments should support physical activity equitably across all ages, ethnicities, genders, and abilities, enabling everyone to be active and build long-term active habits and behaviours. This is essential for the delivery of all the principles of Active Design and is its foundational principle.

1.1	Have effective and creative engagement techniques, a co-design approach and evidence gathering been used as part of developing proposals?	
1.2	Has this been employed throughout the design process?	
1.3	Has local data been used to understand and evidence interventions?	
1.4	Does the provision focus on areas of health inequality in the area?	
1.5	Has a design audit been undertaken?	
1.6	Has safety been adequately considered throughout the design approach?	
1.7	Does the space or provision provide for a wide range of activities, across multiple user groups?	
1.8	Have different experiences of using spaces been considered, ensuring use of a space or provision isn't dominated by a single group?	

THEME 1
Supporting active travel

PRINCIPLE 2
Walkable communities

Facilities for daily essentials and recreation should be within easy reach of each other by active travel means, making it more likely that people will make the journey by using active travel modes (defined in Theme 1). Good active travel connections should be provided to extend the range of services that are accessible while remaining physically active.

2.1	Are day-to-day facilities such as schools, shops, community facilities, healthcare, open spaces and appropriate sports facilities within 800m of all homes?	
2.1	Has employment provision been included as part of the new community?	
2.1	Are local community facilities to be delivered early in the development programme?	
2.2	Has active travel been encouraged wherever possible?	
2.2	Has the user's journey been considered throughout the design process?	
2.3	Have filtered permeability methods been employed to ensure it is more convenient to use active travel rather than drive?	
2.3	Do active travel connections have good natural surveillance from buildings, to enhance safety?	
2.4	Is the development supported by a residential or employment travel plan?	

PRINCIPLE 3
Providing connected active travel routes

Encourage active travel for all ages and abilities by creating a continuous network of routes connecting places safely and directly. Networks should be easy to use, supported by signage and landmarks to help people find their way.

3.1	Has a network of active travel routes been provided, which connects to prominent locations within a development?	
3.1	Does the network connect to existing routes on the site?	
3.1	Have pinch points been effectively identified and has a suitable design solution been integrated to allow active travel priority?	
3.2	Have both utility and leisure routes been accommodated?	

3.2	Are the routes provided high-quality and safe, with suitable widths, treatments and topography which are reflective of their function and purpose?	
3.2	Are routes safe for all users?	
3.2	Are the routes provided fit for purpose?	
3.3	Do active travel routes congregate and lead to onward public transport connections?	
3.3	Are interchanges provided where active travel routes and public transport meet?	
3.4	Has effective signage or wayfinding techniques been employed to ensure routes are navigable and legible?	
3.4	Has digital wayfinding been utilised to support active travel networks?	
3.5	Have active travel connections been provided which link to connections neighbouring the site, and lead to prominent locations in the local community?	
3.5	Do leisure routes provided collect to the local countryside (if close by)?	

PRINCIPLE 4

Mixing uses and co-locating facilities

People are more likely to combine trips and use active travel to get to destinations with multiple reasons to visit. Places with more variety, higher densities, and a mix of uses also reduce the perception of distance when travelling through spaces. They also generate the critical mass of travel demand to better support public transport services.

4.1	Are land uses mixed, avoiding uniform 'zoning' of single land uses?	
4.1	Are conflicts between land uses successfully addressed as part of the design approach?	
4.2	Are mixed use, connected, focal points provided within the design of the development?	
4.2	Does this mixed-use aspect continue at different times of the day?	
4.3	Are sport and recreation facilities located in prominent locations within the development?	
4.3	Are the sports facilities co-located with other, complementary uses?	
4.4	Does the public realm which surrounds sports facilities also encourage activity and active travel?	

THEME 2
Active, high-quality places and spaces

PRINCIPLE 5
Network of multi-functional open spaces

Accessible and high quality open space should be promoted across cities, towns and villages to provide opportunities for sport and physical activity, as well as active travel connections and natural or civic space for people to congregate in and enjoy.

5.1	Have a variety of open spaces been provided, with lots of different functions?	
5.1	Are both small and large spaces provided, to allow multifunctionality?	
5.1	Have any single large spaces been carefully designed to ensure that they may accommodate different activities, or groups, in the future?	
5.2	Are open spaces linked with active travel routes, both within and beyond the site?	
5.2	Has local 'blue' infrastructure opportunities been harnessed, as part of the network?	
5.3	Have spaces which can accommodate a wide range of activities been provided?	
5.3	Do the spaces provided help to address identified imbalances of space provision, or activity provision, in an area?	
5.3	Is formal sports provision integrated into wider open space networks?	
5.3	Has other, non-formal sport, activity provision been provided, such as allotments or community gardens?	
5.4	Have spaces for biodiversity, drainage and other uses been integrated alongside activity spaces?	
5.5	Has space been accommodated for children's play, both as formal and informal provision?	
5.5	Are the play spaces provided accessible and convenient to those they are providing for?	
5.5	Are the play spaces provided accessible for all children?	

PRINCIPLE 6
High-quality streets and spaces

Streets and outdoor public spaces should be Active Environments in their own right. They should be safe, attractive, functional, prioritise people and able to host a mix of uses, with durable, high quality materials, street furniture in the right places and easy-to-use signage. High quality streets and spaces encourage activity, whereas poor quality streets and spaces are much less likely to be used to the same degree.

6.1	Are the proposed streets attractive, and do they function as places in their own right?	
6.1	Have active travel routes been separated from vehicular routes?	
6.1	Is this separation effective, and does it contribute positively to the quality of the street?	
6.1	Are footways and cycleways uninterrupted and direct, free from impact of street furniture, bins etc?	
6.1	Have ground floor building frontages been provided to animate the street?	
6.1	Has parking been accommodated without impact on active travel infrastructure?	
6.2	Have appropriate and durable materials been used to deliver a street, being fit for purpose and encouraging active travel?	
6.2	Are streets appropriately surfaced, with active travel routes clearly demarcated?	
6.2	Does the street look and feel safe?	
6.2	Do the materials used and design of the spaces make reference and take inspiration from local design context and landscape?	
6.2	Has the maintenance of spaces been considered in the design?	
6.3	Have safe, flexible spaces been designed which can support multiple forms of activity?	
6.3	Are public spaces proposed multifunctional, and can they flexibly incorporate many different activity forms?	
6.3	Has activity infrastructure been provided at appropriate locations within the public space?	
6.3	Has seating been provided at appropriate locations?	
6.4	Have spaces been designed to be resilient, so they are active in all seasons?	

PRINCIPLE 7
Providing activity infrastructure

Infrastructure to enable sport, recreation and physical activity to take place should be provided across all contexts including workplaces, sports facilities and public space, to facilitate activity for all.

7.1	Has infrastructure been provided which supports a broad range of users, not just those who are traditionally active?	
7.1	Is the provision of activity infrastructure safe and within prominent locations?	
7.1	Is the activity infrastructure accessible to all groups?	
7.1	Have public toilets been provided which are free to use?	
7.1	Is safe and secure cycle parking available?	
7.1	Has parking for other active travel modes been provided?	
7.2	Has infrastructure which supports physical activity been provided?	
7.2	Has equipment storage been provided at appropriate locations?	
7.2	Have connections been provided to expand public rights of way networks?	
7.3	Has supporting infrastructure been provided which enables people to utilise spaces flexibly?	
7.3	Has the provision of infrastructure to support dog walking, and prevent associated conflicts?	
7.4	Has the impact of micro-mobility been considered, with space to park equipment provided within the public realm?	
7.4	Have opportunities which can be provided by digital technology been accommodated?	

Active buildings,inside and out

Buildings we occupy shape our everyday lives, both when users are inside and outside. Buildings should be designed with providing opportunities for physical activity at the forefront, considering the arrival experience, internal circulation, opportunities to get up and move about, and making the building an active destination.

8.1	Have buildings been designed to encourage activity?	
8.1	Has cycle parking and storage for other wheeled mobility options been located close to the buildings entrance, in a prominent location?	
8.1	Has level access been provided through the main entrance of a building?	
8.1	Has car parking been provided in a location which does not dominate the entrance to buildings?	
8.1	Are stairways prominent within the design of the building, and used as a design feature, where appropriate?	
8.2	Has secure cycle parking been provided?	
8.2	Have showers, changing spaces and bike maintenance equipment been provided in key buildings?	
8.2	Has cycle storage been conveniently located within homes, making it easier to cycle than to use the car?	
8.2	Have buildings been adapted, or designed, for lifetime use?	
8.3	Have informal spaces around buildings been utilised, or optimised within the design, to promote activity?	
8.3	Have covered spaces been provided within the public space framework to allow people to stop and linger in adverse weather?	
8.4	Have local assets been harnessed and utilised, with physical activity promoted?	

Creating and maintaining activity

PRINCIPLE 9
Maintaining high-quality flexible spaces

Spaces and facilities should be effectively maintained and managed to support physical activity. These places should be monitored to understand how they are used, and flexible so that they can be adapted as needed.

9.1	Has the management and maintenance of space been considered as part of the design approach?	
9.1	Has this management and maintenance been appropriately secured?	
9.1	Have a broad range of users been accommodated by this management of space?	
9.1	Has the broader community use of school sports facilities been considered and secured? Have the facilities been designed to maximise the opportunity this creates?	
9.2	Have appropriate monitoring mechanisms been created to ensure understanding of effectiveness and efficiencies within activity interventions?	
9.3	Have spaces been designed to operate flexibly, and respond to changing user needs?	
9.3	Has consideration been given to how this monitoring and management may be funded over time?	

PRINCIPLE 10
Activating spaces

The provision of spaces and facilities which can help to improve physical activity should be supported by a commitment to activate them, encouraging people to be more physically active and increasing the awareness of activity opportunities within a community.

10.1	Has consideration been given on how provision may be activated in the early years of operation?	
10.1	Has investment been identified for programming and activation of a space?	
10.2	Have spaces been designed which allow for social connections to be made as part of, before or after activity?	
10.3	Has effective communication techniques been utilised to promote physical activity opportunities?	
10.4	Have opportunities such as temporary uses of space been utilised to text the effectiveness of proposed interventions?	