



賽馬會
跨代共融遊樂空間
JC IG PLAY SPACE

JC Intergenerational Play Space
Summary Report



From JC Operation Solnno, to Real Case

Public Open Space (POS) serves a crucial function as an essential “third place”^[1], helping to foster community cohesion—particularly in high-density, vertical cities such as Hong Kong. Historically, POS in Hong Kong have been designed with an age-segregated approach, targeting specific age groups to facilitate management and functionality. Whilst this may be practical, it has inadvertently restricted opportunities for meaningful intergenerational (IG) interaction and resulted in uneven utilisation of valuable public resources.

In response to the urgent challenges of “Double Ageing”^[2]—the simultaneous ageing of both the population and infrastructure—the Jockey Club Design Institute for Social Innovation (J.C.DISI) is advocating a shift from age-segregated to age-integrated, functionally integrated public open spaces. This innovative approach aims to advance social infrastructure and promote healthy ageing by embedding smart health and smart ageing principles within a software-led hardware design framework. The goal is to develop scalable models that nurture IG solidarity, optimise the use of resources, and enhance overall community well-being.

With the generous support of the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust (The Trust), J.C.DISI is privileged to collaborate with the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS)—regarded as Hong Kong’s “housing laboratory”—to pilot the IG Play Space (IG Play Space) concept within two public housing estates.

This collaboration has established a replicable, software-led hardware model for IG Play Spaces that can be adapted to different housing environments. We are deeply grateful to the Social and Elderly Wellness Section, Project Management Division, and Property Management Division of HKHS for their expert guidance and partnership, which were key to developing two IG Play Space design schemes now ready for implementation. We also thank the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups (HKFYG), local stakeholders, and our design consultant MLKK for their valuable insights and creative input, which have enriched the IG Play Space designs for Jat Min Chuen (JMC) and inspired new solutions. This initiative demonstrates the power of cross-sector collaboration, uniting experts from diverse fields to build social capital, promote healthy ageing, and future-proof housing estates for ageing in place.

Looking ahead, we are optimistic about expanding and adapting the IG Play Space concept across Hong Kong’s public open spaces. By creating inclusive environments that promote healthy ageing and IG solidarity, these play spaces will bring together people of all ages and abilities, making a lasting contribution to the health and resilience of Hong Kong’s communities for generations to come.

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April 2024

[1] The ideology of “third place” was proposed by an American Sociologist, Ray Oldenburg. The “first place” refers to one’s home while the “second place” refer to the workplace, “third places” are the publicly accessible community spaces that provide social lives, such as restaurant, plaza, park, streets, etc.

[2] Double ageing refers to the arising issue in Hong Kong that both the population and housing stocks are ageing at fast speed simultaneously.

Reference: Ling, K.K. and Lee, K. (2019), “Tackling Double Ageing with Double Smart”, Journal of the Hong Kong Institute of Planners, Vol. 33, 2019, pp. 4-20. Retrieved from: <https://www.hkip.org.hk/s/f-HKIP-Journal-33.pdf>

J.C.DISI's IG Play Space design concept envisions more than just a simple play area; it creates a vibrant social ecosystem that:

- **Promotes Healthy Ageing** by encouraging gentle, integrated movement and social interaction, supporting both physical and mental well-being.
- **Fosters Social Connectedness** through spontaneous encounters and meaningful engagement among people of all ages.
- **Builds IG Solidarity** by enabling shared experiences, collaborative activities, and collective care, thereby strengthening bonds between younger and older generations.
- **Enhances Social Capital** by inspiring repeated visits and group participation, cultivating trust, relationships, and a stronger sense of community.
- **Enables Social Prescribing** by providing a thoughtfully designed, software-enabled environment equipped with walking paths, fitness equipment, and interactive play structures to support physical health and address challenges such as sedentary behaviour, mobility difficulties, and social isolation.

Building on the WHO Age-friendly City framework—specifically “Outdoor Space and Buildings”, “Social Participation”, “Community Support and Health Services”, and “Respect and Social Inclusion”—J.C.DISI integrates four Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into the “JC Intergenerational Play Space” project: SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). The project aims to:

1) **Innovate Age-Integrated Hardware and Infrastructure**

Implement the IG Play Space design in public housing to create a replicable model for upgrading ageing housing stock and civic infrastructure. This is achieved through cross-sector collaboration to enhance social connectedness, build social and promote respect and social inclusion through designing for IG play and well-being;

2) **Advance Software-Led Hardware Design**

Through user habit studies, participatory design and co-invention, promote service innovation via multi-sector partnerships and social capital development to ensure sustainable community impact, boost social inclusion, and support ageing in place;

3) **Establish a New Partnership Model**

Develop strategic partnerships among the HKHS, local NGOs, J.C.DISI, and The Hong Kong Polytechnic University to jointly create appropriate hardware and software solutions that promote smart ageing, stimulate industry innovation, and accelerate upgrades to social infrastructure.

A BLUEPRINT FOR IG PLAY SPACE

J.C.DISI's IG play space design concept reimagines public spaces as vibrant, inclusive ecosystems that nurture healthy ageing, foster social connections, and build IG solidarity. By shifting the focus from static, equipment-centric designs to dynamic environments that prioritise everyday lived experiences, J.C.DISI aims to create spaces that seamlessly integrate into the rhythm of community life.

Grounded in core principles of inclusion, adaptability, and resilience, our approach emphasises co-design with the local community to ensure spaces evolve with their users, reflecting diverse needs and stories to add to the unique character of the area overtime. **Active design, choice architecture** and **software-led hardware design** guides our design to transform traditional play space into creates dynamic hubs where people of all ages and abilities come together to connect, play, and thrive. This helps to activate and breathe new life into public space to encourage spontaneous play and chance encounter, transforming routine activities into moments of joy and connection.

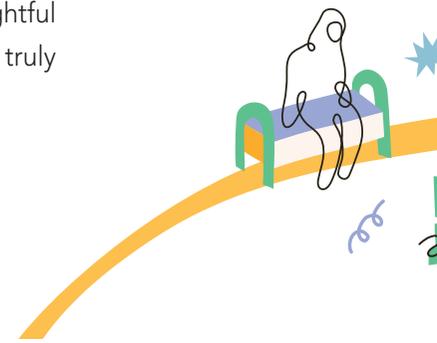
Five guiding principles are summarised to support its replication to different typology of public open space and for play space of different sizes and provisions: -

Guiding Principle 1: Age-integrated Play Environments

Play spaces should be designed to encourage interaction across generations, moving away from age-segregated layouts. Prioritise shared areas and multi-functional features that cater to a range of abilities, enabling spontaneous engagement and IG bonding. Incorporate sensory-rich elements—such as varied textures, bold colours, engaging sounds, and nature-inspired features—to stimulate curiosity and offer a vibrant, multisensory environment for exploration and play.

Guiding Principle 2: Enhancing Agency and Inclusiveness

Universal accessibility is essential to ensure individuals of all abilities can actively participate and engage. Beyond providing barrier-free access and intuitive layouts, it is crucial to design seamless transitions between private, semi-private, semi-public, and public spaces. Such transitions enhance personal agency, freedom of movement, and opportunities for natural exploration and social interaction. Intuitive wayfinding, clear signage, and carefully selected planting schemes support navigation, making the space welcoming for all users, including neuro-diverse individuals and those with mild cognitive impairment. These thoughtful elements promote natural exploration, social interaction, and truly inclusive play experiences.





Guiding Principle 3: An Enabling Environment for IG Play

Safety and comfort are essential for creating welcoming IG play spaces that foster inclusivity and engagement. Thoughtful lighting, open layouts, and climate-responsive features such as shaded areas and cool materials enhance security and year-round comfort. Comfortable amenities, such as ergonomic seating, rest areas and providing public toilets are key to encourage longer visits. By addressing both physical and emotional safety, these environments become trusted spaces where users of all ages feel secure, at ease, and inspired to connect and explore.

Guiding Principle 4: Experience Design to Foster IG engagement

Start by asking three key questions when developing a masterplan for IG play spaces: **Can We Go? Can We Stay? Can We Play?** to create engaging, inclusive environments enriched with sensory features and adaptable structures. Draw inspiration from local culture, history, or the natural environment to establish meaningful connections. These elements encourage exploration, collaboration, and shared experiences, strengthening bonds and fostering a sense of belonging across generations.

Guiding Principle 5: Software-Led Hardware Design

A software-led hardware design approach is essential for creating sustainable IG play spaces that are adaptable, inclusive, and responsive to the evolving needs of the community. By integrating flexible programming with thoughtful, inclusive physical design, this approach transforms static areas into vibrant hubs by balancing structured and unstructured activities, ensuring ongoing engagement and lasting relevance for diverse users.

Can We GO? (Attracting users)

To draw children, families, and community members, play spaces must be accessible, easy to navigate, safe, and visually distinctive — making them natural destinations for play, exercise, leisure, and social interaction.

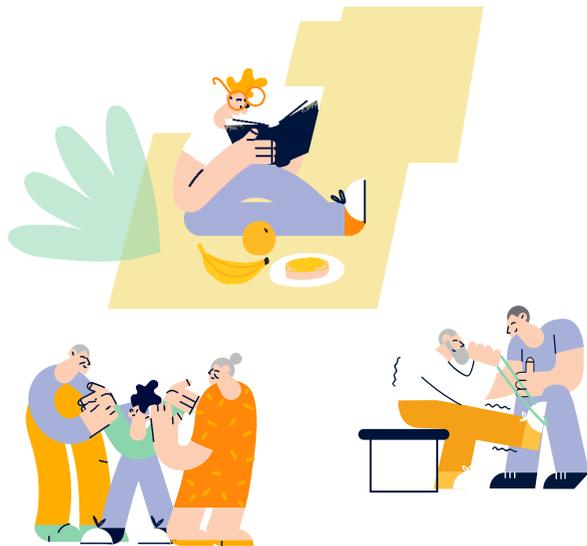


1. **Accessible:** Design play areas so everyone can reach and enjoy them, including those with mobility challenges. Ensure barrier-free access, level out uneven surfaces, and locate play spaces near public transport and key amenities. These features make the upgraded play space a preferred destination for IG play and interactions.
2. **Legible:** Create an intuitive layout with clear signage and pathways to guide users of all ages and abilities. Use simple, high-contrast signs with symbols and descriptive text to aid wayfinding, including for young children, visitors, and people with mild cognitive impairment (MCI).
3. **Safe:** Prioritise safety through suitable materials, equipment, lighting, and layout to minimise risk. Extend safety beyond the play area by introducing non-slip surfaces, rounded edges, and secure boundaries, such as fencing near roads, to protect users.
4. **Distinctive:** Incorporate unique feature — such as artistic elements, interactive installations, trees, or water features — that set the play space apart and enhance its sensory appeal. These landmarks not only aid wayfinding but also encourage repeated visits and make the area memorable for all users.

Can We STAY?

(Encouraging people to stop, stay and play)

Design play spaces to invite individuals and families to linger and enjoy by focusing on safety, comfort, and essential amenities.



1. **Feel Safe:** Create an environment where users feel secure. Ensure adequate lighting throughout, and encourage natural surveillance by facilitating community presence and active site management.
2. **Familiar Place:** Foster a sense of belonging by integrating elements that reflect local culture and collective memory. Use familiar materials, motifs, and features that resonate with the community.
3. **Comfort:** Thermal comfort and comfortable seating are essential to transform spaces into destinations where people naturally choose to stay, connect and enjoy. Ensure access to clean toilets and hydration points or water stations, making it easy for users to meet their basic needs and extend their stay.
4. **Convenience:** Make use of nearby retail options, especially food and beverage outlets, and public rest areas to create a vibrant, welcoming atmosphere. Encourage socialising and community activities that invite people to stay.
5. **Software-led hardware design:** Blend physical infrastructure (play equipment, exercise stations and the playscape) with ongoing programmes (community-led workshops, festivals, and events) to create vibrant areas where people want to stay and explore. Design multipurpose spaces to support unstructured activities — such as tai chi, outdoor yoga, or picnics — encouraging spontaneous play, exercise, and social interaction.

Can We PLAY? - DESIGN SIDE (Diversity of experience)

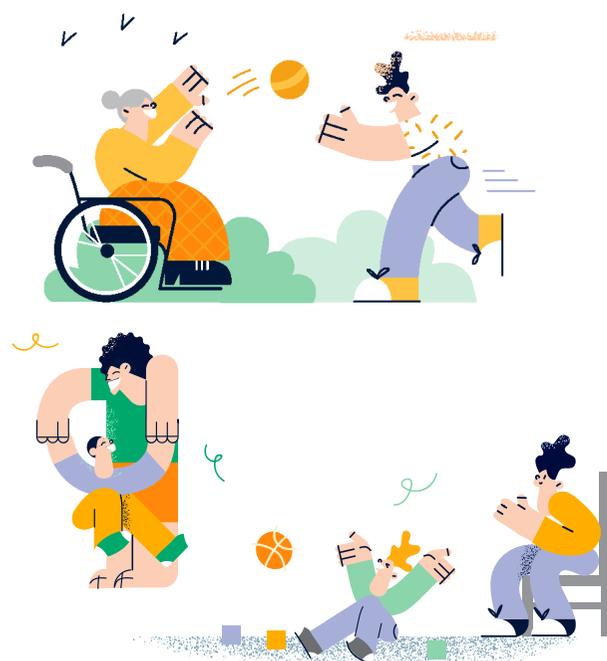
Move beyond traditional play equipment by embracing a wide range of sensory, nature-based, interactive, and imaginative activities that can evolve over time. Design spaces to engage all users—children, adults, older adults, and people from diverse backgrounds—by offering a variety of experiences that cater to different interests and abilities to empower IG play.



1. **Revitalising existing spaces:** Transform underused areas, such as wind voids and corridors, into sheltered, functional zones for light exercise and interactive activities. Reimagine community gardens as sensory-focused spaces that stimulate cognitive engagement and foster IG connections, turning them into vibrant hubs for activity, relaxation, and socialisation.
2. **Designing for inclusivity:** Create play spaces that welcome all ages and abilities, encouraging shared experiences and connections. For example, walking trails with nature-inspired play elements—such as logs and textured surfaces—stimulate imaginative play for children and creative exercise for adults. Provide equipment in various scales and sizes to enable IG cooperative play and spontaneous interaction, ensuring everyone feels included and can have fun together.
3. **Balancing challenge and safety:** Introduce play and exercise equipment at a range of heights and difficulty levels to encourage children, adults, and older adults to play and explore together, supporting IG play, skills development and building confidence. Ensure clear signage and straightforward instructions for safe and effective use of equipment, maximising the benefits of graduated challenges. Use soft, non-slip surface materials to minimise injury risk and support prolonged engagement.
4. **Dynamic programming:** Integrate initiatives such as the HKHS' Caring Engaging Smart initiative and HKFYG's The Jockey Club IG H.E.Y Hub Project to foster IG connections and enrich the communal experience. Support dynamic, community-led programming to keep the space vibrant and sustainable over time.

Can We PLAY? - SITE MANAGEMENT SIDE (Fostering interaction and exchange)

Supportive site management is essential for sustaining IG play and ensuring the space adapts to evolving community needs, remaining a vibrant hub for engagement across all age groups.



1. **Play Strategy:** A well-defined Play Strategy provides organisations with practical tools to address diverse user needs, while proactively managing potential conflicts or nuisances related to space usage.
2. **Supportive Management:** By identifying and monitoring “hotspots” where different age groups naturally converge, management can minimise friction and foster positive IG engagement.
3. **Awareness and training:** Implement supportive management strategies to design and oversee inclusive spaces, ensuring safety and enjoyment for all age groups while mitigating conflicts over space use. Training enables frontline staff, including venue operations, security and customer service teams, to implement temporary measures, manage crowd flow, and address safety concerns in high-use areas.
4. **Regular inspection and timely repair:** Utilising IoT solutions, such as QR codes for instant reporting, ensures maintenance issues are swiftly addressed. This proactive approach removes barriers to play and keeps the site safe and accessible for all users.
5. **Technology-ready Site and Equipment:** Futureproof sites with WiFi and technology-ready amenities empowers ongoing innovation for organisations, including adaptive play environments, personalised experiences for older adults and other users and remote health monitoring, supporting healthy ageing and inclusive engagement for years to come.

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1

PROJECT PARTICULARS

1.1 J.C.DISI PROJECT TEAM

J.C.DISI, the mastermind and project lead for the JC IG Play Space, partners with Hong Kong Housing Society to scale up its pilot play spaces. Through close engagement with stakeholders and collaboration with academia and practitioners, J.C.DISI drives knowledge transfer and develops software-led hardware solutions, ensuring safe and inclusive play spaces as Certified Playground Safety Inspectors.

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1.2 DESIGN CONSULTANT TEAM (JMC SCHEME) – MLKK

MLKK Studio is founded in 2016 by four young architects with a vision to participate in the redefinition of architectural responses to present and future problematics of the human habitat. The studio's approach, methodology and practice is informed by a conscious and mindful understanding of human needs uncovered through rigorous in-the-field.

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1.3 DISCLAIMER

“JC Intergenerational Play Space” is a project funded in 2022 by The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust (The Trust) and operated under The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU). The events and reports under this project are solely organised and implemented by J.C.DISI. The Hong Kong Jockey Club is not involved in the process.

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1.4 CITATION

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2

ABOUT INTERGENERATIONAL PLAY SPACE (IG PLAY SPACE)



Building on the achievements of PolyU Jockey Club “Operation Solnno” Season 4 (S4): Intergenerational Play Space, J.C.DISI advanced the IG Play Space concept from prototype to actualisation through two pivotal Action Projects: the Kowloon Park Fitness Trail IG Play Space Proof-of-Concept Study (2019–2021) and the Intergenerational Play Space Design Competition at HKHS Prosperous Garden (2020). These initiatives served as critical proof-of-concept studies, allowing the team to test the feasibility of age-integrated public open space design across different play space typologies and to assess stakeholder receptiveness to IG play and interaction.

With generous support from The Trust and HKHS, J.C.DISI launched the JC Intergenerational Play Space Project (2022–2024) in two public rental estates managed by HKHS. This phase marked the transition from prototype to real-world implementation, reimagining public realms and communal areas as vibrant IG play spaces, demonstrating how a soft programme-led hardware design approach can foster healthy ageing and strengthen community well-being.

Central to this initiative is the development of a feasible and replicable model, rooted in deep engagement and co-design with local stakeholders to support the scaling up and adaptation of the IG Play Space concept across different communities, paving the way for more inclusive and vibrant public spaces for all ages.



2.1

WHAT IS IG PLAY SPACE?

“An Intergenerational Play Space (IG Play Space) is designed with an age-integrated, functionally-integrated design concept in mind to encourage users of all ages and abilities to engage, interact and play together in the same play space at the same time.”

- J.C.DISI’s definition

If applied in a public play space setting, an IG Play Space is designed to go beyond the standard specifications of an inclusive playground. It features purposefully selected play and fitness equipment that enables use by different age groups, creating an environment that actively supports IG play and interaction.

IG PLAY SPACE AS A NEW TYPOLOGY OF PLAY SPACE

In Hong Kong, age-segregated social welfare and outdoor exercise and play equipment provision discourage social interactions across age groups. Reconfiguring public play areas through the IG Play Space concept will create an enabling environment for IG activities.

By adopting an age-integrated spatial arrangement and carefully selecting play and fitness activities that encourage cross-generational interaction, this social design approach provides opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to play, exercise, interact, and socialise together—allowing users to enjoy the benefits of IG play.

Furthermore, this approach enables NGOs and service providers to utilise the IG Play Space to develop programmes that promote social interaction and connect at-risk older individuals and vulnerable families, encouraging them to become more physically active and to benefit from improved public play spaces. Software-led IG Play Space design will encourage greater participation in outdoor activities, increase exposure to diverse social experiences, and help address social isolation while promoting IG solidarity.

2.2

IG PLAY IN HOUSING ESTATES?

When introducing IG Play Spaces into residential developments, it is important to balance the benefits — such as increased vibrancy and enhanced community engagement — with potential challenges in operational management. Design teams must be proactive in addressing concerns raised by residents and the property management team during the project inception stage, particularly the risk that upgraded play areas may become “instafamous” destinations, attracting large crowds and causing disturbances.

Careful planning should ensure these spaces remain welcoming and accessible for local users, whilst minimising nuisance and overcrowding. A Play Strategy will help iron out the concerns to support post-implementation site management.

IG PLAY SPACE AND DESIGN FOR WELL-BEING

J.C.DISI and PolyU’s applied research in Double Ageing, spatial design, rehabilitation sciences, nursing, and applied social sciences provides J.C.DISI with a strong foundation to explore how public open spaces within housing developments can serve as critical infrastructure for supporting citizens in health management and enhancing their overall well-being.

A central concept of J.C.DISI’s IG Play Space design is the reimagining of public open space as “third places”, encouraging people of all ages and abilities to gather, interact, and feel welcome within the community, thereby fostering IG interactions and engagement.

1. To incentivise physical activity to promote healthy and active ageing

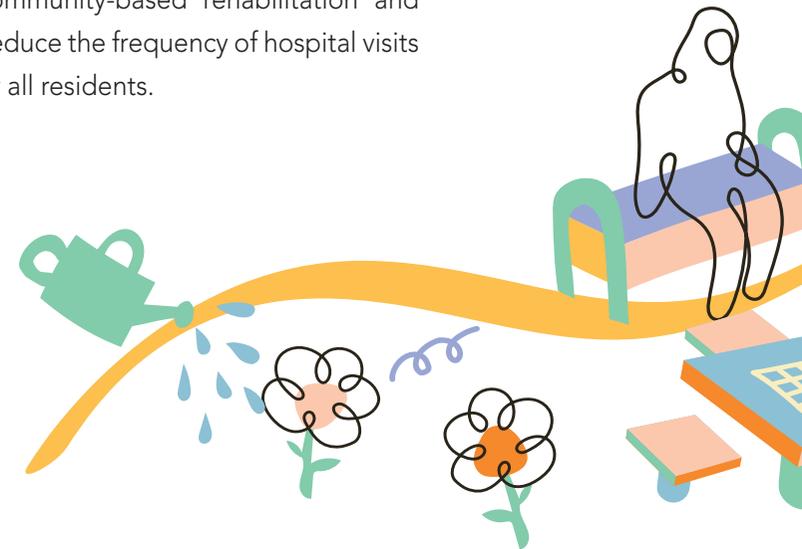
Thoughtfully designed public open spaces can act as catalysts for physical, cognitive, and sensory enrichment. By transforming these areas into IG play spaces, we create welcoming environments where people of all ages—including older adults with chronic illnesses, young people, working-age adults with sedentary lifestyles, and those experiencing social isolation—can benefit.

Importantly, IG play spaces serve as vital “third places” within the community, supporting health, social connection, and community vitality for all. By adopting a lifecourse approach to healthy ageing, these spaces encourage individuals to develop and maintain healthy habits at every stage of life, ensuring that the advantages of active living and social engagement are accessible and sustained across generations.

2. IG play as a medium to encourage self-care and health management

Embedding play and exercise into the daily routines of residents is a highly effective means of encouraging spontaneous physical activity and supporting self-care and health management. Rather than selecting play equipment based solely on age or traditional features — such as slides intended for young children — choosing equipment according to function, such as those designed to enhance cognitive skills, muscle strength, balance, agility, coordination, and vestibular movement, creates a more inclusive environment. This approach enables people of all ages and abilities to benefit from a broader range of play and exercise opportunities, fostering IG interaction and engagement.

Adults and older adults can also utilise these play and fitness features to maintain and build physical strength. With clear signage and professional guidance from physicians, OT and PT specialists and sports science experts, these spaces can support pain management and rehabilitation following operations, such as recovery from frozen shoulder or stroke. By providing accessible, community-based rehabilitation and promoting smart ageing, IG play spaces can help reduce the frequency of hospital visits and support healthier, more independent living for all residents.

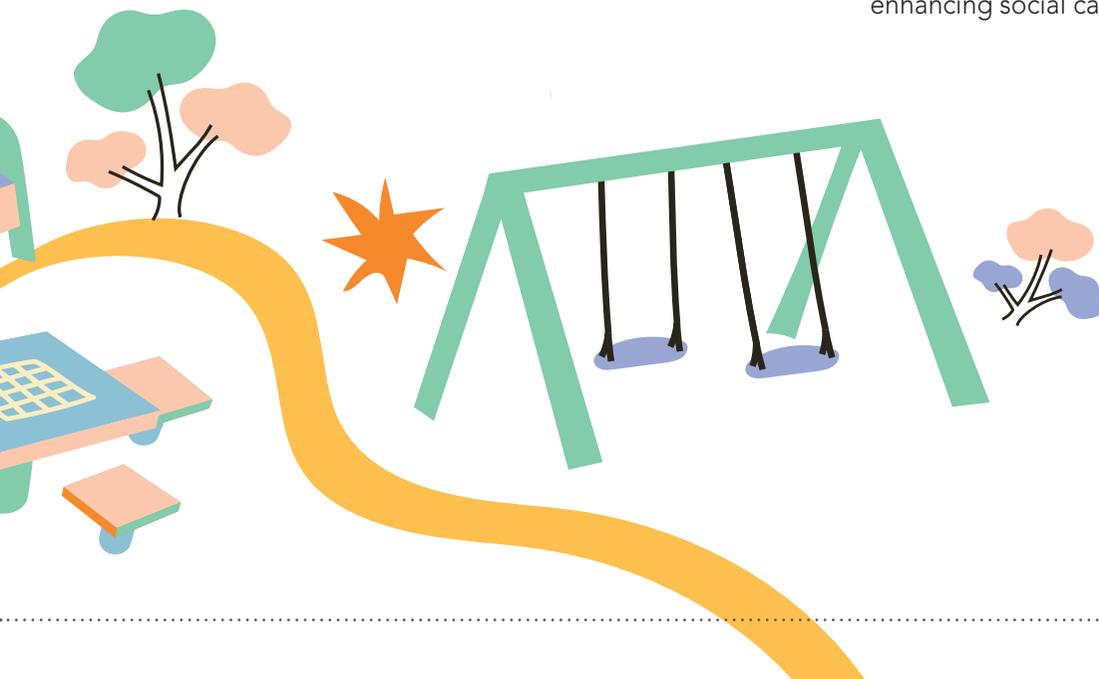


3. IG play as the bridge linking different generations to strengthen bonding

IG play spaces act as vital bridges, connecting people of all ages and fostering meaningful social interactions while cultivating mutual respect within multi-generational communities.

By providing a diverse array of activities and amenities that cater to different abilities and interests, IG play spaces encourage users to participate, interact, and build relationships across generations. Thoughtful, inclusive design ensures that everyone—children, adults, and older adults—feels welcome and at ease participating together.

The strategic placement of play and exercise equipment, street furniture, and group activity areas, complemented by well-curated soft programmes, creates opportunities for both spontaneous and organised play. This user-focused approach encourages residents to linger, socialise, and engage, thereby strengthening IG relationships and enhancing social capital throughout the community.



2.3

“PLAY IS NOT ONLY FOR FUN”

A fundamental principle of play is that it is not exclusively for children; it is a valuable activity for people of all ages.

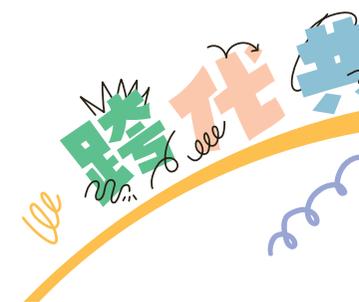
Enjoyable and engaging play experiences within IG play spaces provide opportunities for children and parents to bond, whether it is a 7 year-old with a 30 year-old parent, or a 60 year-old with their 85 year-old parent. These shared moments help nurture cognitive, emotional, physical, and social well-being. IG play fosters deeper connection and mutual understanding, strengthening family relationships across generations.

Play is also, by its very nature, a form of respite. IG play spaces provide safe and stimulating environments where players can interact and enjoy themselves, allowing carers to step back and experience moments of relief from their daily responsibilities. This simple act of play not only eases carer stress but also helps nurture a more balanced and supportive family dynamic.

POSITIVE EFFECTS OF IG PLAY ON HEALTHY AGEING

IG play spaces are designed to support health and wellbeing throughout every stage of life, embodying a lifecourse approach to healthy ageing. They intentionally bring together children, adults, and older adults to encourage physical activity, emotional growth, and cognitive stimulation through shared experiences. For children, IG play introduces new viewpoints and collaborative problem-solving, building empathy, adaptability, and social skills essential for lifelong resilience. Adults benefit from stress relief and meaningful social connections, while older adults engage in stimulating activities that help maintain independence, delay functional decline, and enhance self-care. The benefits of IG play are wide-ranging:

- **Physical Benefits:** IG play spaces encourage regular physical activity for both children and older adults. For children, participation develops strength, coordination, and motor skills. For older adults, engaging in play supports mobility, balance, and endurance, helping to slow age-related muscular decline, i.e. sarcopenia and maintain functional capacity. Shared physical activities also create a supportive environment where participants motivate one another, enhancing adherence and enjoyment.
- **Neurological and Cognitive Benefits:** Play is a powerful stimulus for mental agility and creativity. IG play exposes children to new perspectives and problem-solving strategies through interaction with older generations. For older adults, playful engagement is especially important to maintain their functional capacity as it provides physical, emotional, and sensory stimulation to encourage them to stay active, and thus, delay physical and cognitive decline. The dynamic setting of IG play also keeps the brain active, supporting lifelong learning and adaptation for both age cohorts.





- **Physiological and Emotional Benefits:** IG play is effective in reducing emotional stress and improving overall mental wellbeing. For children, exposure to varied interactions and collaborative challenges supports emotional regulation and cognitive flexibility. For older adults, the social and emotional connections formed during play help counter feelings of isolation, foster a sense of purpose, and build emotional resilience. These interactions nurture mutual understanding and empathy across age groups.
- **Social Benefits:** By design, IG play spaces are inclusive and harmonious, encouraging participation from all community members. For children, IG play offers opportunities to learn from and connect with older generations, fostering respect and empathy. For older adults, IG play can be particularly beneficial in addressing social isolation, especially among carers or individuals from hard-to-reach families. The welcoming ambience of IG play spaces strengthens community bonds and builds IG solidarity, contributing to a more cohesive and resilient society.

Taken together, the neurological, physical, psychological, emotional, and social benefits of IG play highlight its value as a robust framework for park and public space design. By prioritising shared, collaborative activities over age-segregated zones, IG play spaces support healthy ageing as an ongoing process, beginning in childhood and extending into later life. They transform parks from simple recreational areas into vital social infrastructure that keeps minds active, bodies moving, emotions supported, and communities connected.

2.4 J.C.DISI's IG PLAY SPACE - BLENDING CROSS-DISCIPLINARY KNOW-HOW, WITH SOCIAL INNOVATION ACTION RESEARCH

To design vibrant, inclusive, and engaging IG play spaces that foster community connections, promote healthy ageing, and enhance health and well-being of individuals across the lifespan.

Core Values

Inclusivity: Spaces designed for all ages and abilities, fostering a sense of belonging and shared experience.

Accessibility: Universal design principles applied to ensure physical and cognitive accessibility for everyone.

Engagement: Stimulating and diverse activities that encourage active play, social interaction, and cognitive stimulation.

Sustainability: Environmentally responsible design that promotes long-term ecological and social well-being.

Co-design: Co-design with local stakeholders to ensure play spaces meet their needs and preferences.

1. Urban Design & Planning for IG Connection:

- **Seamless Integration:** Blend seamlessly with the surrounding urban fabric, creating inviting destinations within existing neighborhood to enhance urban integration.
- **Active Design:** Encourage movement and exploration through strategically placed pathways, fitness zones, and interactive elements to incentivise physical activity.
- **Choice Architecture:** Design spaces that offer choices, promoting decision-making and autonomy and encourage self-directed play.
- **Inclusive Community Planning:** Consider the needs of all users, including children, older adults, carers, and individuals with reduce physical and cognitive abilities.

2. Experience Design for Multi-Sensory Engagement and Repeat Visits

- **User-Centered Approach:** Prioritise the needs and experiences of all age groups, ensuring comfort, safety, and enjoyment.
- **Sensory Stimulation:** Incorporate elements that engage the senses – touch, sound, sight, smell, balance and body awareness – to enhance cognitive function and create a stimulating environment.
- **Social Interaction:** Design spaces that encourage spontaneous and planned interactions between generations for shared experience, fostering understanding and empathy.
- **Emotional Well-being:** Create spaces that evoke joy, wonder, and a sense of connection to nature and community.

3. Landscape & Playground Design for Safety & Play Value:

- **Safety First:** Adhere to the highest safety standards for playground equipment and design, ensuring a secure and worry-free environment.
- **In-house Certified Playground Safety Inspector knowledge:** Expertise enables J.C.DISI to create play spaces that are not only innovative but also safe and responsibly managed for scaling IG play concepts to other public spaces.

- **Age-Appropriate Challenges:** Provide a range of play and exercise equipment/ features and activities that cater to different ages and abilities, promoting physical, cognitive, and social development.
- **Sensory Integration:** Incorporate natural materials, diverse textures, and planting throughout the space to create a stimulating and restorative environment to support nature play, group play and encourage sensory integration through enhanced engagement with their surroundings.
- **Sustainable Practices:** Support circular economy and upcycling where possible, e.g. leverage PolyU's 3D concrete printing technology, to print street furniture and play equipment and inspire innovation.

4. Play Theories & Healthy Ageing Principles:

- **Diverse Play Types:** Incorporate a wide range of play types – physical, social, imaginative, nature, sensory, cooperative and parallel play – to diversify the play experience and support holistic well-being for people of all ages and abilities.
- **Play Value for All Ages:** Recognise the importance of play - and having fun - for people of all ages and abilities, and its role in promoting physical activity, cognitive function, social skills, and emotional well-being throughout the lifespan.
- **Healthy Ageing Interventions:** Design spaces and programs that support physical activity, cognitive stimulation, and social connection for older adults, promoting active and healthy ageing.
- **IG Programming:** Use play as a natural and positive catalyst to design IG programmes that advance the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing, creating age-friendly environments that strengthen IG solidarity and empower people to do what they value as they age.

5. Smart Ageing and Cross-sector Collaboration for Enhanced Impact:

- **Software-Led Hardware Design:** Develop interactive and adaptive play equipment that responds to user input and provides personalised experiences.
- **Social Prescribing & Community Partnerships:** Explore potential to collaborate with HKHS, healthcare providers and community organisations to integrate play spaces into IG and/ or social prescribing programmes, promoting health and well-being.
- **Cognitive Training & MCI Support:** Partner with PolyU to develop and implement evidence-based programs for cognitive training and support for individuals with MCI.
- **Data-Driven Insights:** Utilise IoT to gather data on usage patterns, user feedback, and, where appropriate, support individuals that signed up to health management programmes for health monitoring, informing ongoing improvements and programme development to empower healthy ageing.

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3

PARTICIPATORY DESIGN: A TRULY INCLUSIVE IG PLAY SPACE

3.1



INTRODUCTION

The development of the IG play space concept at both the Kai Tak 1E1 (KT 1E1) site and Jat Min Chuen (JMC) in Shatin was critically informed by an extensive user habit study conducted in JMC between September 2021 and November 2023. As KT 1E1 is a new development with no existing residents, the design team relied on deep engagement with JMC residents to understand real user behaviours, needs, and aspirations for IG play and public space.

The study comprised detailed observations, resident surveys, and participatory design workshops. These efforts provided a robust evidence base for understanding how residents of varying ages interact with public spaces, their pain points, and their aspirations for IG play.

3.2 PARTICIPATORY DESIGN WITH HKHS X RESIDENTS X LOCAL NGOS (SEPT 2021 – NOV 2023)



* Home Assessment for at-risk elderly – social isolation, elderly singleton/ doubleton needs – soft programme design with HKHS and HKFYG

* Public Open Space age-friendliness – activate underutilised areas, incentivise physical activity and promote IG harmony – curating playscape + hardware selection

Community and User Habit Study at JMC (Sept – Oct 2022)

Across nine engagement sessions, 429 local residents contributed their perspectives and valuable insights on:

- How they use public spaces in their daily lives, including existing barriers to play—especially those affecting social dynamics and opportunities for IG interaction
- Preferences regarding play equipment and types of activities
- Stakeholders’ aspirations for the enhanced JMC IG play space



IG Inclusion Festival (Dec 2022)

The mural art on the grand staircase, as a collaborative effort between HKFYG and HKHS, was unveiled. On the same day, J.C.DISI partnered with the Hong Kong Institute of Planners Community Engagement Committee to host a one-day chalk art event on the elevated walkway to test the impact of tactical urbanism and explore whether creative, playful interventions could encourage pedestrians to pause, observe, and interact with the public space.



JMC IG Fun Day organised by HKHS (12th March 2023)

HKHS hosted a showcase to launch the IG Fun Day at JMC, highlighting HKHS' Caring Engaging Smart initiative, and the collaborative work of HKHS, HKFYG, and J.C.DISI in developing IG soft programmes to bring the IG play concept to life. As part of this initiative, J.C.DISI leveraged the opportunity to test:

- Signage colour palette, positioning, and size for effective wayfinding
- The number of residents using the wind corridor during soft programme activities
- Residents' preferences for colours, favourite play areas, and desired play experiences in JMC



J.C.DISI IG Play Space Co-creation workshops (12th March 2023, 19th March 2023 and 26th March 2023)

Three participatory design workshops led by J.C.DISI in collaboration with design consultant Mlkk and supported by Good Lab as facilitators engaged 113 participants aged 4 to 86, including active involvement from HKHS and HKFYG staff, as well as members of the PolyU IG Play Space Panel.

Participants were seated in mixed-age groups at each table, where facilitators guided discussions to elicit needs, aspirations, and creative ideas for IG play. The workshops generated a wealth of new design concepts, directly informed by community input and cross-generational perspectives.



3.3 SUMMARY OF USER HABIT STUDY AND ENGAGEMENT RESPONSES

Following extensive engagements with kaifongs and subject matter experts, J.C.DISI recommends designers and venue management teams consider the following in choosing appropriate play and exercise equipment and play features to encourage IG play.

Young olds (50-65), older adults (65-75) and old-olds (75+)

Feedback from young olds (aged 50–65), older adults (65–75), and old-olds (75+) indicates that, although much of the play equipment in their communities is rather dated, its distinctive character compared to standard LCSD provision is valued. Many users vary their exercise routines by using equipment located at JMC, the open space between JMC and Sha Kok Estate, and Sha Kok Estate itself, selecting different venues according to mood and convenience. The close proximity to the blue and green network, particularly the Shing Mun River, is highly appreciated by young olds, who frequently walk along the riverside. This suggests that easy access to blue and green spaces encourages outdoor activity and may lessen dependence on facilities situated immediately outside the home. Notably, only a minority of participants mentioned the Nordic Walking pathway, the M \ddot{o} lkky playspace (see image opposite), and the toy bank provided within the estate, which implies that residents remain active and are able to make informed choices regarding leisure, recreation, and exercise.

Most respondents prefer to exercise alone, though a substantial proportion also enjoy activities with their spouse, and some occasionally join friends or neighbours. Across all age groups, there is a strong desire for more comprehensive guidance and professional support when using public fitness equipment. Many respondents noted that they appreciate more instructions, in particular from qualified professionals on site,



Finnish M \ddot{o} lkky introduced in JMC in December 2023 as part of HKHS' Caring Engaging Smart Initiative to engage IG pairing to train older adults' muscles and hand-eye coordination, and test the team members' offensive and defensive tactics (photo credit: HKHS)

Deficiency

Clear signage and instructions on how to use the equipment and how to utilise the equipment to suit individuals' exercise/ training goal, ranging from low impact exercise, stretching and adjustments needed for pain and chronic conditions to support pain management and to improve mobility.

Effective fall prevention, including impact-attenuating surfaces and safety features, to increase the sense of safety for older adults, ensuring that increased activity does not lead to more falls or severe injuries.

to demonstrate how they can do the exercise "correctly", i.e. the number of times, frequency, and correct posture, to reap benefits from using the equipment and support pain management, especially those managing chronic pain or mobility challenges.

Older adults are generally enthusiastic about the IG play space, particularly if it features a broader range of play equipment and well-designed soft programmes that facilitate shared activities with family and friends. They emphasise that opportunities for group play and social engagement are important motivators for participation. A recurring request is for a greater variety of seating options, including more interesting benches with back support, armrests, and tables, as well as covered areas to provide shelter from sun and rain. Many older adults enjoy spending time outdoors but are concerned about thermal comfort, particularly exposure to strong sunlight and heat.

Additionally, older adults have specifically asked that the design team prioritise impact attenuation throughout the play space and improved venue management. Older adults are keen to see robust measures in place to control mosquitoes and maintain high standards of cleanliness and hygiene to encourage them to use the play space more often. They suggest regular cleaning schedules and the use of insect control devices in seating and play areas.

Collectively, these requests reflect older adults' desire for a play space that is not only active and inclusive, but also comfortable, safe, and well-managed to support both independent and social activity, giving them confidence to participate without fear of injury or discomfort.

3.3 SUMMARY OF USER HABIT STUDY AND ENGAGEMENT RESPONSES

Deficiency

Design play spaces to support a range of ages and abilities, moving beyond traditional age-segregated zones to empower family-oriented and IG play activities.

Balance proximity and variety so that doorstep spaces feel inviting and dynamic enough to compete with off-estate destinations.

Introduce play structures sized for adults and children to play together.

More opportunities for group play and social play at the doorstep to diversify the play experience.

Better seating and thermal comfort to encourage exercising and extending stay.

Alternative exercise options beyond elderly fitness equipment to incentivise physical activity

Young adults to young olds (18 - 50+)

Feedback from adults aged 19–50 consider the estate’s play and exercise facilities uninspiring and outdated. The current provision is seen as unattractive and fails to motivate physical activity, leading most residents to favour the nearby Shing Mun River area for running, cycling, and walking. On-estate facilities are perceived as primarily serving older residents with limited mobility, rather than offering inclusive opportunities for all age groups.

Parents report that children show little interest in the playgrounds at JMC, preferring instead to stay indoors or visit nearby estates such as Sha Kok Estate. On weekends, families often travel beyond Sha Tin to access more stimulating and well-designed play environments, including the Tuen Mun Inclusive Playground for water and sand play, Kai Tak Playground for its novelty and ability for adults and children to play together, or rooftop playgrounds in Sha Tin shopping centres for excitement and convenience.

Within Jat Min Chuen, playing badminton is the most popular shared activity for parents and children. There is also strong interest in better seating and shelter to enhance comfort and encourage longer visits, especially as the carers that are waiting for children to finish school or tutorial class in JMC. Many parents indicated that they would be willing to engage in light exercise while waiting for their children, provided that suitable facilities or classes were available. This highlights a clear opportunity to improve the play and exercise provision for adults.

While most participants cannot yet visualise the IG play space concept, they are open to it and believe an upgraded facility could bring new energy to JMC.

Deficiency

Revive JMC's identity through iconic play structures that recall its memorable past while introducing new experiences.

Flexible multifunctional spaces for group activities and socialisation, especially more space for "hanging out" outside of home and the school environment, i.e. third places.

Diversify the play experience for tweens, ball games appear to be the only age-appropriate play for this age cohort.

Opportunity to shape and contribute to IG play space curation, especially if they could be involved in the soft programme design.

This idea resonates particularly with those who grew up in JMC and remember its former reputation for exciting playgrounds, notably its once-tallest slide in Shatin. Many of them, now living elsewhere with their own families, note that such a renewal could attract them to bring their children back to visit and play. Some participants even shared old photos of equipment in the JMC playground in the 1980s, hoping for their reintroduction. Overall, there is a clear preference for more dynamic and engaging local facilities.

Tweens (15-18 years old)

Most teenagers do not regard JMC as an attractive place to spend time, other than occasionally using the seating at Central Plaza to eat or meet friends. The only activities they typically engage in within JMC are badminton or basketball, but their access is limited by restricted opening hours. When asked about their preferences, many highlighted that nearby recreational options, such as cycling along the riverside, are more appealing and better suited to their interests.

However, when presented with the idea of improved facilities, tweens expressed conditional interest. They stated they would be willing to participate, particularly if new features or programmes were introduced that cater to their age group. Inspired by initiatives such as the Jockey Club IG H.E.Y Hub Project, respondents recognised the potential for more diverse activities in an IG play space, especially soft programmes—workshops, pop-up events, or collaborative projects—which they could help organise or lead.

3.3 SUMMARY OF USER HABIT STUDY AND ENGAGEMENT RESPONSES

Deficiency

This feedback suggests that well-considered improvements, integrating both physical upgrades and engaging programme design, could make the area more relevant and appealing to teenagers, while also strengthening IG connections.

Children to Teens (5-15), and their Careres

Alternative play experiences, such as sensory play opportunities.

Children and teenagers participating in the JMC co-creation workshop described local parks as “boring” and “standard”, expressing a strong preference for newer play spaces such as the Tuen Mun Inclusive Playground and Rainbow Jungle in Sun Po Kong (NB: the survey was completed before Cha Kwo Ling Promenade was operational). They enjoy the unique play experience these play space brings, especially the “non-standard” facilities and sensory play experience, including sand and water features.

Interesting doorstep play experience that is appealing to both the players, as well as the carers.

Carers, including parents, grandparents and domestic helpers, also reported that they prefer taking children to these thematic play spaces rather than using the doorstep facilities at JMC, emphasising that both aesthetics and play value influence their choices.

Desire for more stimulating, inclusive IG play spaces with equipment and design that allow carers to participate actively, not just supervise.

Parents and carers frequently admit they struggle to participate in play with their children, with some acknowledging they do not know how to play together. Younger children indicated that they would love to for their parents, grandparents or helpers to play with them and their friends on the equipment, but noted that the equipment are too small to accommodate them at the same time. Carers often find that they play a supervisor role to the play activity to ensure the children do not engage in risky play and are safe, which they admitted to getting bored of, and impatient with, relatively quickly.



JMC co-creation workshop with local stakeholders Session 1 - 12 Mar 2023



JMC co-creation workshop with local stakeholders Session 2 - 19 Mar 2023



JMC co-creation workshop with local stakeholders Session 3 - 26 Mar 2023



JC IG Play Space – “Playscape x Equipment” Hackathon in Aug 2023

4

4

BALANCING TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS, END-USER EXPECTATIONS AND MANAGEMENT CONCERNS

4.1



INTRODUCTION

While age segregation in playgrounds is often intended to ensure safety, it can inadvertently isolate users and hinder collaborative play and meaningful social interaction. An excessive focus on risk-free environments may result in overly cautious designs, restricting opportunities for adventurous play and exploration. Standardised equipment further contributes to uniformity, making playgrounds less appealing for children and families to enjoy play together and bond.

The JC IG Play Space project presents an invaluable opportunity to bring together expertise from playground design, play equipment supply and maintenance, safety, estate management, facilities management, and health to examine this pain point. This collaborative platform enables the balancing of technical requirements, the creation of enjoyable play experiences for end users, and the addressing of site management concerns. It also asks how we might design and curate an age-integrated, functionally integrated playground for family-friendly IG play experiences.

This chapter draws on insights from participatory co-design workshops involving 50 experts from various fields to decode what is considered essential in designing for IG play. It sheds light on how to plan, design, manage, and maintain play spaces that support the scale-up and scale-out of the IG play concept in Hong Kong.

4.2

WHY CONSIDER PLAY VALUE?

Play value is the richness of the play experience in a particular environment.

While cost is an important consideration in play space design and provision, increasing the play value of a play space is key in improving user satisfaction and encourage repeated visits.

The play value can vary greatly depending on age, abilities, daily habit, personality, personal preferences and interests. To increase play value for all, designers should pay attention to the following elements in the hardware design and equipment selection:

- Fun, joy and excitement
- Exposure to challenges to push boundaries
- Creativity and imagination (unstructured play)
- Replayability

CHOOSING APPROPRIATE PLAY & EXERCISE EQUIPMENT

JC IG PLAY SPACE – “PLAYSCAPE X EQUIPMENT” HACKATHON IN AUGUST 2023

JC IG Play Space “Playscape x Equipment” Hackathon invited field experts [3] with rich knowledge in housing management and playscape design to share their vision for an IG Play Space in a public housing setting.

This unique combination of subject matter experts gave the teams creative licence to think divergently how a purposefully designed play space for IG play and healthy ageing would look like. It also provided a platform for key stakeholders in play and fitness equipment selection, designers, site management and service providers to share their pain points and practice wisdom in play space design and management, and their aspirations for IG Play Space, especially on:

- The crucial factors and key considerations for enhancing the play value of a diverse user group while ensuring play safety
- How an “IG Play Space” focused design brief, as opposed to a play feature and cost driven design brief, would influence their selection of play equipment and hardscape design to promote meaningful engagements among individuals of varying ages;
- How to design a play space scheme that would allow non-active park users to enjoy the space, especially for carers and those that uses the place for rest
- Potential soft programmes and technologies that would make the play space more fun and create strong community bond to improve IG harmony and promote healthy ageing.

- [3] Subject Matter Experts
- housing & facilities management
 - playscape & public realm design
 - play and fitness equipment supply and installation
 - playground research
 - playground safety inspectors
 - physical & fitness training
 - rehabilitation sciences
 - sports sciences
 - child play
 - ageing care
 - social worker
 - IoT & health management



SAFE

SAFE

It is imperative to ensure playground safety meets compliance standards to minimise the occurrence of accidents or injuries due to conflict of use in play spaces. By adhering to International Safety Standards [4], the aim is to create play spaces not only to provide enjoyment but also prioritise one’s well-being and personal development. The emphasis is on reducing debilitating injuries that could potentially occur during play.

[4] Hong Kong does not have its own playground safety standard. Both ASTM F1487 and EN1176 playground safety standards are widely accepted in HK.



SAFETY MEASURES

VS



AGE DIFFERENCES

Creating an IG play space that is both safe and inclusive demands careful attention to the varied needs of different age groups and abilities. Inclusive design principles should guide the selection of equipment, ensuring accessibility for users with diverse physical, sensory, and cognitive abilities. Adhering to safety measures, such as maintaining proper clearance zones and clear instructions on how to leverage the play space for a fun, engaging IG play experience, help minimise risk of injury for all.

Engaging community members in the design process is essential to uncover specific requirements and preferences, supporting equitable play opportunities. A well-designed IG play space should offer a balanced mix of active, social, and quiet zones, allowing users to participate comfortably and confidently, while fostering natural interactions and a strong sense of safety.

4.2 CHOOSING APPROPRIATE PLAY & EXERCISE EQUIPMENT



CHALLENGING

Play spaces that are perceived as too safe or too easy can discourage repeat visits. While elements of height or difficulty enhance the appeal, it is the overall experience that sustains engagement and encourages users to return

Physical Challenges - High Intensity Engagement

Certain equipment and game rules are purposefully designed to provoke intense physical activity, presenting demanding challenges. This motivates users of all ages to test their limits, improving muscle strength and endurance. Such features not only support physical fitness, but also foster resilience and determination, appealing to those who seek a more vigorous play experience. These challenges can also promote cooperative play, encouraging users to seek support from others to complete tasks, thus nurturing interaction and mutual respect.

Cognitive Challenges - Stimulating Cognitive Function

IG play spaces can offer scenarios that encourage collaborative problem-solving and creativity to boost the play value, particularly for children. Flexible environments nurture imaginative play and enhance communication skills, while social engagement across age groups supports cognitive flexibility.

For older adults, IG play spaces stimulate cognitive functions through social interaction and mental challenges, helping to reduce isolation and promote overall well-being. Activities that encourage reminiscence or collaboration can help maintain cognitive health and foster a sense of belonging.



CHALLENGING

VS



SAFE

When designing IG play spaces, it is essential to prioritise safety while purposefully introducing controlled challenges. This approach creates environments that are engaging yet secure, encouraging users of all ages to return, explore, and test their abilities.

Experts in gerontology and ageing care emphasise that outdoor exercise and play are highly effective for improving motor skills, dexterity, and the ability to perform Activities of Daily Living (ADL) [5] and Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADL) [6]. Yet, equipment typically found in elderly fitness corners in public spaces and housing estates is mainly intended for gentle exercise and stretching, with limited benefits for strength building or resistance training. Such equipment does little to develop muscle mass or enhance fine and gross motor skills, both of which are crucial for overall fitness and independence.

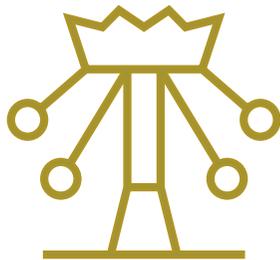
To better support older adults, IG play spaces should include features like low-impact exercise stations, balance beams with optional supports, swings, memory games that also trains dexterity, and dual-task activities to provide controlled challenges that promote motor skill development, agility, reaction time, and cognitive functions — key for navigating complex urban environments and maintaining independence. These practical skills are vital for navigating complex urban environments and boost their sense of autonomy, while the controlled nature of the challenges keeps risk proportionate and acceptable.

For children, the same principle applies: provide imaginative, sensory-rich opportunities and unstructured play, alongside carefully designed height, speed, and climbing elements that build spatial awareness and self-confidence. Pairing these with cognitive tasks—such as sequencing, problem-solving, and cooperative games — helps children develop creativity and teamwork through interactive challenges, without turning the space into a “thrill-seeking” zone. Aligning these playful cognitive challenges with older adults’ dual-task activities also creates natural opportunities for cooperation and shared achievement across generations.

[5] ADL includes walking, feeding, dressing and grooming, toileting, bathing and transferring, ie. being able to move from one body position to another.

[6] IADL includes managing finances, transportation, shopping and meal preparation, housecleaning and home maintenance, communication and medications

4.2 CHOOSING APPROPRIATE PLAY & EXERCISE EQUIPMENT



FUN

FUN

The concept of fun is highly variable and depends on age groups and individual abilities, making it crucial to design play spaces that cater to a wide range of preferences.

Based on feedback from consultations and co-creation workshops conducted since 2019 regarding what would make IG play fun, a fun play experience can be summarised as one that balances physical, cognitive, and social engagement. It should offer variety, flexibility, and inclusivity. Key elements include:

- **Pace and Unpredictability:** Incorporating varied speeds and unexpected features to maintain interest.
- **Shared Experiences:** Opportunities for group activities and interactions that promote bonding.
- **Exploration and Competition:** Elements that encourage discovery and friendly competition.

By integrating these components, play spaces can effectively meet the diverse needs and preferences of young children, teens, adults, and older adults, creating vibrant and dynamic environments for everyone. This approach not only fosters enjoyment but also enhances community cohesion and promotes healthy ageing.



INTERACTIVE

INTERACTIVE

Outdoor spaces serve as vital hubs for social engagement, fostering meaningful connections and relationships within communities. These environments cultivate a profound sense of belonging, transforming passive interactions into vibrant communal experiences. Within play spaces, users actively seek both physical and emotional interactions, irrespective of age.

Physical engagement: Building Bonds Through Play

In play spaces, physical interactions create intimacy and connection, transcending the boundaries of familiarity. IG play spaces can be designed to place an even stronger emphasis on delivering shared activities to allow individuals bond over laughter, challenge, and cooperation. This flexibility empowers everyone—from children to older adults—to engage in ways that resonate with them, enhancing their sense of community.

Emotional Connection: Nurturing Bonds Beyond the Physical

While some users may gravitate towards intense physical engagement, others seek emotional connections that don't rely on direct interaction. IG play spaces should consider how to create environments where users can feel emotionally connected and engaged, even in quieter moments. By offering spaces for reflection, conversation, and gentle interaction, these areas foster a sense of belonging that is crucial for emotional well-being.

4.2 CHOOSING APPROPRIATE PLAY & EXERCISE EQUIPMENT



INTERACTIVE

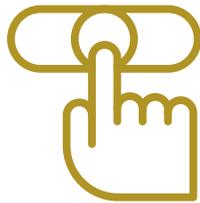
VS



SAFE

The design of interactive play spaces should actively encourage collaborative activities that engage participants of all ages. This can be achieved through equipment that requires teamwork, such as multi-user swings or see-saws. Such designs not only promote physical activity but also enhance communication and bonding across different age groups. Designers should incorporate features that invite joint participation, enriching the play experience and strengthening social connections in IG interactions.

However, equipment intended for IG play must accommodate a wide range of physical abilities while minimising the risk of injury. For instance, the use of soft materials, rounded edges, and low-height structures can greatly reduce the likelihood of accidents, particularly for older adults who may have reduced mobility. It is also essential to implement robust maintenance protocols to ensure all equipment remains in safe working order, thereby creating a secure environment that fosters playful interactions. Additionally, providing clear informational signage on how users can enjoy the interactive facilities together will help maximise the benefits for people of all ages and abilities.



EASY TO OPERATE

EASY TO OPERATE AND SELF-EXECUTION

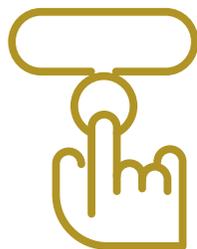
The development of intuitive and self-executing features in IG play spaces is not solely about creating recreational areas; it is fundamentally about empowering individuals with a sense of agency and freedom of movement to fully enjoy the experience. It is therefore essential to ensure that people of all ages and abilities feel confident and capable in these environments.

Easy-to-Operate Equipment

A well-considered layout and intuitive equipment can make exercise more accessible and enjoyable for everyone, particularly older adults or those with MCI. User-friendly instructions, supported by clear diagrams and QR codes linking to instructional videos, enable users to maximise the benefits of play and exercise, while also encouraging group participation. Clear instructions and demonstration videos promote responsible use, reducing the risk of damage and misuse.

Self-execution: Empowerment Through Independence

Intuitive equipment empowers older adults to exercise independently, fostering a sense of competence and confidence. This independence is crucial, as it helps individuals maintain their functional abilities for longer, which is vital for quality of life. As people age, preserving autonomy becomes increasingly important, and accessible IG play spaces can support this need. The ability to use equipment independently encourages users to explore and try new activities, enhancing their overall experience and promoting a more active lifestyle.



EASY TO OPERATE

VS



SAFE

IG play spaces thrive when equipment selection is based on both ease of use and robust safety standards. Achieving this balance is crucial for creating environments that welcome everyone — from young children to older adults — while minimising risks. It is equally important to gather feedback from community members of all ages to ensure the equipment meets genuine needs. Where practicable, designers and site managers should conduct play tests on site, allowing users to provide feedback before the grand opening, ensuring that all equipment is easily operable by everyone.

Safety vs. Usability

Equipment should be intuitive and accessible, enabling users of all ages and abilities to participate without difficulty. Features such as low entry points, support bars, and clear visual instructions help ensure everyone can use the equipment independently. The use of durable, child-friendly materials, soft surfaces, and rounded edges is essential. All equipment must comply with rigorous safety standards and be regularly inspected and maintained to prevent accidents. Accessible pathways, barrier-free layouts, and multi-user equipment foster participation and social interaction. Equipment should be selected for its ability to accommodate diverse physical and cognitive abilities.

Informed Selection Process

Avoid relying solely on equipment catalogues. Instead, involve fitness professionals, occupational therapists, and physiotherapists to assess the needs of older adults and recommend appropriate equipment. Engage Certified Playground Safety Inspectors (CPSI) early in the design phase to proactively address potential hazards and avoid costly modifications after installation. Regular inspections and ongoing maintenance are critical for sustaining safety and usability over time.

Co-creation ideas from participatory design workshops over 3 days, with participation of 113 local stakeholders aged 4-86 (March 2023)





5

KTA
igps

賽馬會
跨代共融遊樂空間
@啟德1E1 JC IG PLAY SPACE
@KT1E1

5

JC IG PLAY SPACE @ KT 1E1 SITE (SEPT 2021 - NOV 2022)

5.1



INTRODUCTION

KAI TAK 1E1 SITE (KT 1E1 SITE) - CASA DELIGHT

Kai Tak 1E1 (KT 1E1) Site is HKHS' Dedicated Rehousing Estates (DRE) development with 1/3 residents expected to be residents from decanted sites. It is therefore expected that the KT 1E1 will have a relatively high portion of older residents when compared with other new public housing developments.

The KT 1E1 site includes both public rental housing (PRH) and subsidised sale flats (SSF). The schematic design produced by J.C.DISI focuses on the PRH section, specifically the podium deck and the ground-level garden that connects Cheung Wan Road to the KT 1E1 shopping complex.

J.C.DISI's conceptual design aims to reimagine the 5,000m² communal public area at podium level through the IG Play Space concept, enhancing the doorstep play experience for residents. By integrating both hardware and software solutions, J.C.DISI envisions that the IG Play Space intervention will foster greater social connectedness within the community.

5.2

ALIGNMENT WITH HKHS' VISION FOR IG CO-LIVING

HKHS is set to launch Hong Kong's first IG themed mall - KEyPoint - at the KT 1E1 site, guided by the vision of "creating an IG living circle." This groundbreaking initiative reflects HKHS' dedication to social well-being, enabling ageing in place and fostering a lively, inclusive community where people of all ages can flourish.

J.C.DISI's IG play space design concept brings this vision to life by fostering opportunities for meaningful interaction across generations and nurturing a strong sense of place, belonging and shared purpose. Through dynamic spaces for play and connection, KEyPoint will become a true hub for community engagement and active living, exemplifying the spirit of IG harmony.

DESIGN CHALLENGE

The key challenge at KT 1E1 was to transform the playground into an inclusive environment that promotes IG engagement, setting it apart from the adventure-focused playground at Kai Tak Runway Park. As KT 1E1 is a decanting site with no existing residents for direct consultation, J.C.DISI had to proactively anticipate the needs of a diverse future community, with particular attention to older adults and IG co-living. With one-third of future residents expected to be older adults, many relocating from other HKHS estates, the design needed to enable family-oriented play and meaningful connections across generations, including those with mild cognitive impairments (MCI).

To maximise the likelihood of adoption and integration into HKHS' superstructure contract to be tendered in August 2022, our proposed interventions respected the basic arrangements of the approved general building plan, while ensuring changes could be swiftly incorporated. This necessitated a focus on minor tweaks and quick-win solutions — such as the use of proprietary products to streamline procurement and commissioning within the provisional sum. Our challenge, therefore, was to:

- Emphasise doorstep play and sensory experiences to foster IG co-living.
- Develop user experience (UX)-based solutions to encourage spontaneous IG play and interaction, with dedicated support for those with MCI.
- Shift the ambience from a conventional landscaped garden with play equipment to a more organic, user-driven space, empowering HKHS and local communities to shape the environment with minimal reliance on resource-intensive programmes.

The result is a play environment that offers sense of agency, supports healthy ageing, and remains adaptable to evolving needs—setting a new benchmark for inclusive, IG design in Hong Kong's housing context.



5.3

DESIGN APPROACH

1. Play and exercise as part of the daily routine

The design optimises the landscaped garden and three dedicated play zones to create a weather-resistant, age-inclusive IG Play Space. By weaving these spaces into the daily routes of residents, the scheme encourages physical activity and play as a natural part of everyday living, for all age groups.

2. Integrating Hardware and Software to Build Community

Adopting a software-led approach, the design curates appropriate street furniture, play equipment, and hardscape elements to enhance play and exercise experiences and encourage lingering. Holistic soft programmes — to be delivered by HKHS and potential collaborators — are layered onto the physical environment, prompting residents to use these facilities, participate in activities, and foster a sense of community, belonging, and social capital.

3. Design Tweaks and User Experience (UX) Enhancement to enrich the original design

Working within the provisional budget, the proposed IG design interventions actively incorporate valuable feedback from HKHS' Projects Division (PJD) and Property Management Division (PMD). Special focus is placed on enhancing the future operation of the elderly lounge, with insightful contributions from the Social and Elderly Wellness Section (SEW). Thoughtful design improvements — including flexible spatial reconfiguration, upgraded paving and lighting, and enhanced measures for cleaning, maintenance, and noise management — create a welcoming, age-friendly and dementia-friendly environment that supports wellbeing and enriches the daily lives of all residents.



5.4 G/F COMMUNAL GARDEN

The communal garden on the ground floor, facing Concorde Road, was originally conceived as a rest area and a secondary entrance, linking the bus stop with the shopping mall and residential complex.

Inspired by HKHS' vision to promote IG connections through an IG-themed shopping mall, J.C.DISI has reimagined the garden as a symbol of urban integration. This vibrant space now serves as a focal point for social engagement, seamlessly blending practical function with community-focused design. It encourages interaction and connection across IG groups, making it a welcoming hub for all residents.



G/F Landscape Plan in Approved General Building Plan

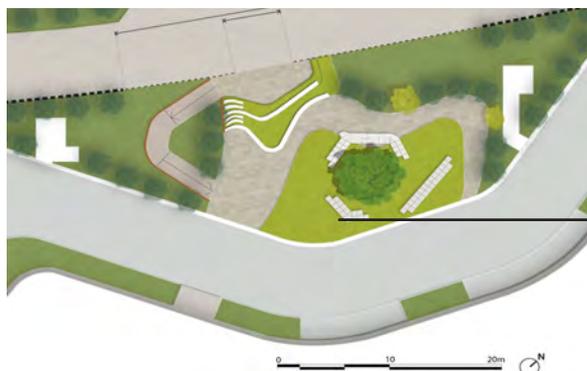
CAN WE GO?

J.C.DISI's proposal sets out a bold transformation of the communal garden, turning it from a static resting area into an inclusive, accessible, and vibrant hub for community life. The redesigned space will support a wide range of activities, encouraging residents of all ages to connect and engage with each other and the surrounding neighborhood.

Key improvements include:

- **Optimised entry points and advanced wayfinding:** These features will make the garden easy to navigate for people of all mobility levels, improving visibility and accessibility.
- **Welcoming access and movement:** Thoughtfully designed entrances and pathways will create an inviting atmosphere. Ramps with gentle gradients and routes that follow natural movement patterns will ensure convenient connections between the bus stop, mall, and housing block.

The overall goal is to create a balanced environment where IG connections, relaxation, and social interaction flourish. In line with HKHS' commitment to inclusive and functional design, this proposal aims to foster urban integration, strengthen the sense of belonging, and build a thriving community.



J.C.DISI conceptual design scheme for the reconfigured communal garden, furniture to emboss brick pattern of Chun Seen Mei Estate



Built Form of Chun Seen Mei Estate, one of the decanted sites

Key features to support community making and creating IG interaction opportunities:

- **Reconfigured the barrier-free access route** and interface with Concorde Road, opening up the vista and positioning it as a welcoming multi-purpose space, rather than a second entrance to KT 1E1 development to inject vibrancy
- **Making use of the topography**, introduced a stepped-terrace design in the garden to improve accessibility from Concorde Road to the slightly sunken garden, creating an inviting resting spot for the community.
- **Incorporated interactive elements**, such as seating that reflects the collective memory of decanted housing estates, to enhance placemaking and foster a sense of belonging
- **Moveable furniture and event-ready spatial set up** allows HKHS, retail operators and nearby NGOs to run joint events to facilitate community interactions, making the garden a hub for community life and IG interactions.



CAN WE STAY AND PLAY?

To transform the communal garden into a vibrant hub for IG interaction and sustained engagement, several thoughtful design interventions are proposed.

A multi-purpose stepped terrace with open vistas is envisioned to transition the garden from a secondary entrance into an inviting and dynamic environment. Modular seating blocks, inspired by the architectural character of Chun Seen Mei Chuen where 1/3 of its residents will be relocated from, will provide functional seating while fostering a sense of cultural continuity within this decanted housing estate. They can be easily dislodged and moved aside for large events. Flexible seating arrangements will accommodate pop-ups and community events, while an amphitheater that doubles as a stage will serve as a focal point for activities such as performances and movie screenings.

These enhancements aim to encourage collaboration between HKHS and local NGOs, promoting IG play and social bonding. By creating a lively atmosphere, the garden will not only become a cherished community space but also stimulate foot traffic to the shopping mall, seamlessly integrating it into the neighbourhood's social and commercial fabric.

J.C.DISI's proposed G/F Communal Garden configuration with terrace treatment for residents to rest, engage in IG play and for pop-up events to take place

5.5 5/F PODIUM GARDEN

The Podium Garden, situated on the fifth floor, functions as both the rooftop garden of the IG-themed shopping mall, and a vital access point to the public housing portion of mixed use development. This dual-purpose role underscores its importance as a shared space that connects the residential and commercial elements of the development, promoting circulation, social interaction and community engagement across generations.

CAN WE GO?

One of the key advantages of the podium garden is its car-free environment and is highly accessible from the housing block. Residents can incorporate visits to the weather-proofed garden into their daily routines without concerns about traffic, making regular outdoor activity simple, safe and effortless. This ease of access not only supports healthy ageing by encouraging gentle movement and time spent outdoors, but also strengthens social participation, helping residents to feel more connected and engaged within their community.

Additionally, this accessible play environment provides a controlled and supportive space for young children, neurodiverse individuals, and those with physical or cognitive impairments, including MCI and dementia. This design allows them to enjoy the space freely while minimising the risk of accidents and the fear of getting lost, making this an ideal place for IG play and interactions for people of all ages and abilities.



- 1 Children Playground (165m²)
- 2 Proposed IG Playground (135m²)
- 3 Elderly Fitness Area (125m²)
- 4 Elderly Lounge (135m²)
- 5 Landscaped Garden (50m²)

Approved General Building Plan before J.C.DISI IG Play Space Concept was introduced

Key Interventions for Making the Podium Garden Dementia-Inclusive While Ensuring Accessibility, Distinctiveness, Comfort, and Safety for All:

1. **Remove Physical Barriers:** Eliminate obstacles between play zones and fitness areas by creating open sightlines and shared pathways.
2. **Ensure Safety and Ease of Movement:** Implement clear sightlines and non-slip surfaces to enhance safety and facilitate movement for all users.
3. **Incorporate Smart Lighting:** Use adjustable smart lighting to accommodate different times of the day, minimising harsh glares and deep shadows to create a balanced and visually comfortable environment.
4. **Optimise Seating Arrangements:** Position seating based on sunpath analysis and provide weather protection to ensure usability in various conditions, making the space inviting year-round.
5. **Create Enclosed or Semi-Enclosed Areas:** Design spaces that are safe yet open, fostering both security and freedom of play.

“The Play + Exercise Trail”

The trail serves as a transformative element, converting a thoroughfare into a multifunctional space that promotes inclusivity, interaction, and physical activity for all age groups and cognitive abilities.

Designed with simplicity, safety, accessibility, and sensory integration in mind, the trail features clear sightlines, slip-resistant surfaces, and soft, non-glare lighting to ensure a secure and navigable environment. Sensory gardens and zoned play areas enhance orientation while encouraging IG engagement. Year-round functionality is supported by shaded seating, weather-protected zones, and open yet secure spaces that invite exploration. Thoughtful use of colors and patterns provides guidance and sensory stimulation, creating a calming atmosphere for individuals with cognitive impairments.

Its versatile design accommodates a variety of activities, promoting meaningful social connections and community building. By seamlessly blending practicality with recreation the trail becomes a dynamic space that prioritises well-being, fostering a sense of belonging in a cohesive and inclusive manner.





Other design considerations to make the podium garden more accessible and safe for IG play and activities.

Lighting

The proposed lighting design prioritises safety, functionality, and sustainability, while creating a welcoming atmosphere after dark. By selecting bollard lights instead of traditional fixtures, the scheme discourages noisy play and late-night activity, supporting a calmer environment by design. LED strips integrated into street furniture add practicality and visual interest, blending harmoniously with the setting. Smart lighting solutions will enhance visibility and pedestrian safety, reducing confusion in low-light conditions. With strategic placement, motion-sensitive lighting will increase the usability of the play space, contributing to an environmentally friendly and well-designed outdoor IG space that meets energy efficiency standards.

Colours and patterns

Vibrant colours and complex patterns have been deliberately avoided to accommodate the reduced colour perception often experienced with ageing eyesight. Bright colours and busy patterns can also be overwhelming for many neurodiverse users, especially those with autism. By using softer, muted colours and simpler designs, the IG playground is less visually chaotic and helps to reduce sensory overload. This clarity supports orientation, fosters a sense of security and independence, and encourages exploration and play.

Flooring material choice

Pour-in-place EPDM is recommended for the walking trail because of its excellent shock-absorbent properties, which help to reduce the impact of falls. This material is also more resistant to temperature and humidity changes and provides better drainage than AGT, thereby minimising tripping hazards. Although EPDM is more costly than AGT and concrete, it offers greater design flexibility and requires minimal maintenance, making it easier to keep clean.

CAN WE STAY?

1) Key Amenities

Incorporating restrooms and water points into play areas is essential for enhancing user convenience and encouraging longer visits to IG spaces, despite challenges such as facility management and limited space. Close collaboration between architects and engineers is crucial to develop compact, lightweight solutions that make efficient use of available space without sacrificing greenery or visual appeal. A comprehensive structural assessment is required to ensure the infrastructure can support the extra weight from plumbing systems and water tanks. Early engagement with relevant authorities is important to guarantee compliance with building codes and regulatory standards.

To support sustainability, it is advisable to adopt eco-friendly measures such as rainwater harvesting systems and low-flow fixtures. These approaches help to reduce environmental impact and lower running costs over time.

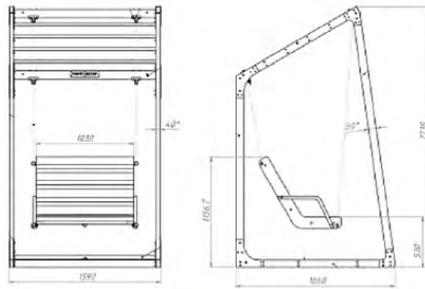
Legend

- Planned Building Footprint
- Proposed*
- Proposed Flush Planter
- Proposed additional Seatwall along Planter
- Proposed Interactive Seating
- Proposed Less-intensive Fitness Equipment wi
- Proposed Water Access Point
- Proposed Revised Planter Line

** Other potential enhancements not included in the conceptual design scheme at this stage as would require further technical studies:

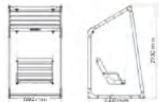
1. Toilet facilities, including plumbing
2. Storage facilities for soft programme delivery
3. IoT infrastructure to support site management and health management
4. Smart lighting system for energy efficiency as well as deterring noisy activities and anti-social behaviour after dark





Public space
Bench on suspension means

Model: PG702/1012/5
Height: 2730 mm
Width: 1592 mm
Depth: 1665 mm
Material: steel, wood, powder coating



More traditional swing chairs on suspension means

3) Adding swing chairs for sensory integration and social play

Recognising HKHS' concerns regarding the safety and noise associated with traditional swings, swing chairs are recommended as a safer and quieter alternative. Swing chairs offer a tranquil environment that encourages relaxation, social interaction, and longer periods of outdoor engagement. Their gentle rocking motion provides therapeutic benefits — such as muscle relaxation, stress reduction, and emotional grounding through vestibular stimulation — which are beneficial for people of all ages. These qualities help to alleviate anxiety, enhance mindfulness, and support overall mental well-being.

Swing chairs designed for multiple users further promote social connections, creating warm and inviting spaces for conversation and family time. When positioned in areas with good natural light and fresh air, they can improve mood, help regulate sleep patterns, and encourage extended outdoor activity. This installation will also help create inclusive, therapeutic environments that invite relaxation, facilitate social bonding, and enhance community well-being — while effectively addressing safety and noise concerns.

This concept can also be adapted for use on the refuge floor or within the sky garden, where swing chairs can serve as interactive, low-impact fitness zones or IG play spaces to improve social well-being across age groups.



LED swing seat, which can also facilitate sensory play and social play

Key Design Considerations for Transforming Low-Traffic, Underutilised Spaces into Comfortable, Safe, and Familiar Areas for IG Play and Exercise:

1. **Introduce Active Design Features:** Use floor markings to subtly encourage users to engage in passive play and light exercise.
2. **Create Seating Clusters:** Place seating close to activity zones to provide areas for rest, social interaction, and alternating movement.
3. **Incorporate Passive Play Elements:** Add resistance-based exercise options to enhance muscle strength and balance, meeting the needs of those seeking low-intensity physical activity.
4. **Encourage Social Play Opportunities:** Mix problem-solving activities with light physical challenges to promote IG interactions and sustained participation.

1) Activating low foot traffic, sheltered areas for light exercise to extend stay

An unprogrammed, sheltered area is a valuable asset for light exercise and passive play. By transforming these low-traffic zones into “self-reinforcing health hubs”, communities can use the space for gentle physical activity, quiet reflection, and spontaneous social interaction.

In addition to static fitness equipment, features such as floor markings, balance rails for stretching, and seating with resistance-based exercise options can be introduced to accommodate individuals of all ages and fitness levels. Unlike equipment-heavy fitness stations, which may intimidate or exclude those not interested in intense workouts, these low-intensity, high-frequency areas are accessible and inviting.

Seating clusters will further encourage a balance of rest, socialising, and low-intensity physical activity, promoting spontaneous engagement. These spaces can also inspire children to engage in imaginative and social play, enhancing IG interaction. With minimal upgrades required, previously overlooked areas can be revitalised to serve as essential community assets that encourage gentle movement, relaxation, and social interaction.



CURATING AN INCLUSIVE IG PLAY ENVIRON

Key Design Considerations for Creating a Welcoming and Calming Play Environment for Everyone

1. **Use Simple, Intuitive Design:** Incorporate straightforward design elements and clear signage with symbols or plain language to enhance accessibility and minimise confusion
2. **Avoid Complexity:** Steer clear of overly intricate or overwhelming features to maintain a calming and inclusive atmosphere, especially for individuals with cognitive impairments
3. **Prioritise Flexibility:** Design spaces that can adapt to various activities, encouraging interaction among different age groups and fostering meaningful IG connections.

CAN WE PLAY?

Relying solely on physical equipment often leads to maintenance challenges and waning engagement. To address this, J.C.DISI integrates soft programmes—such as community activities and facilitated play—alongside hardware improvements, rather than focusing only on equipment. This approach transforms the podium garden and playground into vibrant hubs for recreation, social interaction, and well-being for people of all ages and abilities.

By applying experience design and choice architecture, the concept ensures inclusive, accessible doorstep play. The redesigned garden prioritises accessibility and sensory integration, offering clear sightlines, intuitive pathways, and distinct activity zones with clear signage to support diverse users, including those with cognitive challenges. The “play+exercise” walking trail and carefully selected equipment invite both organised and spontaneous play, creating dynamic spaces for meaningful community connections.

With targeted enhancements, the HKHS Elderly Lounge and flexible sensory garden/activity areas are now positioned to encourage IG engagement and informal interaction. Transitional spaces are reimagined to support passive and spontaneous activities, strengthening bonds between generations. Sensory features stimulate creativity, cognitive function, and orientation for all.

This lively environment can be jointly managed by HKHS and residents, who can introduce soft programmes to further strengthen community bonds. Overall, this comprehensive redesign creates a welcoming, playful space that supports active living, emotional well-being, and meaningful connections across generations.

HKHS Elderly Lounge and flexible zone

Key Interventions for optimising space for soft programmes and for increasing organic interactions

Foldable Doors:

- Replace the front and back doors with foldable doors to facilitate seamless transitions between indoor and outdoor spaces.

Transformable Elderly Zone:

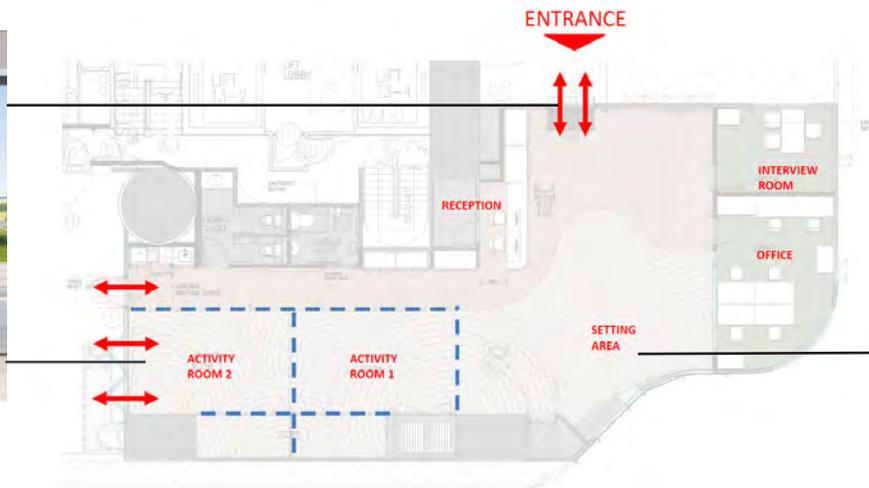
- Implement moveable planters designed at wheelchair height to encourage participation in planting activities from both children and older adults.
- Area can also be cleared to accommodate larger group activities as needed.

Repositioning the HKHS Elderly Lounge to promote IG interactions

With a focus on “Can We Play”, J.C.DISI introduces foldable doors to the Elderly Lounge, allowing the space to fully open up to the outdoors. This simple design change transforms the atmosphere — activities can flow outside, creating a lively, energetic environment that encourages spontaneous interactions among Lounge members and visitors of all ages. The seamless indoor-outdoor connection makes the lounge feel less like a closed facility and more like a vibrant community hub.

Crucially, this design preserves the Lounge’s ability to deliver essential services to older adults. The flexible doors allow staff to adjust the environment as needed, ensuring that dedicated programmes and private activities for members can continue without disruption. When required, the lounge can be closed off for specific sessions, maintaining comfort and privacy for its core users.

At the same time, the open design actively invites collaboration. Local schools, NGOs, volunteers, and Lounge members can co-develop IG programmes with HKHS, making use of both indoor and outdoor zones. This not only enriches the experience for older adults per the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing document, it fosters meaningful engagement across generations, breaking down barriers and building a sense of shared community.



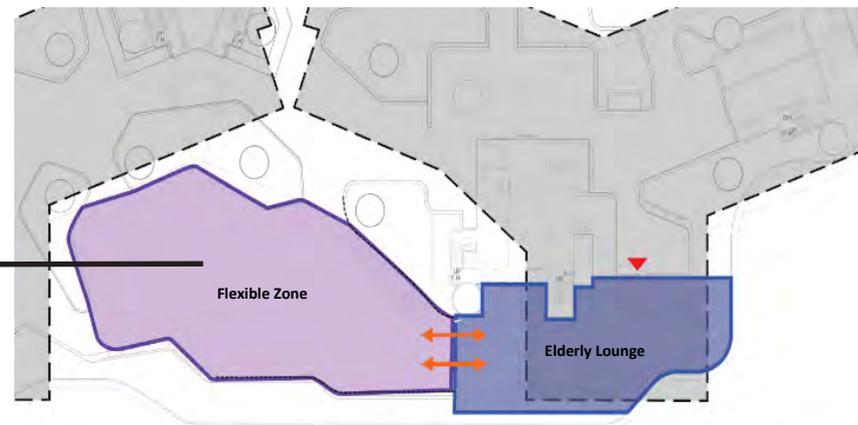


IG programmes outdoors

The lounge’s flexible layout allows for easy transitions between various activities, supporting outdoor occupational therapy, group sessions, and larger events such as IG afternoon tea gatherings that members can run for residents as well. The sensory garden features movable, accessible raised planters, enabling children and those with mobility or joint issues to join in gardening and sensory activities, which helps build a sense of purpose and community. This design encourages activities to flow into adjacent flexible zones, inviting participation from all ages.

When the lounge is closed in the evenings or at weekends, the planters can be moved aside, transforming the flexible zone into a venue for group classes, such as IG yoga and IG workshops, further enhancing the space’s versatility.

By focusing on efficient management, the redesigned lounge maximises space use and creates a warm, welcoming environment that nurtures meaningful connections and a sense of belonging. This creative approach to experience design ensures the space remains accessible, functional, and inclusive, strengthening its role as a lively hub for shared experiences and social engagement.



A Diverse Play Environment for all

Recommended selection criteria for IG play space equipment in residential settings:

1. Older adults - Choose equipment and exercises that focus on improving balance, coordination, and muscle strength through low-impact movements to prevent overstraining.
2. Adults - Include fitness stations or fixtures that facilitate strength training, cardiovascular health, and relaxation, contributing to overall wellness.
3. Tweens - Select activities that challenge them, promote teamwork, and inspire exploration, supporting their physical fitness and social development.
4. Children - Beyond providing opportunities for physical play, incorporate sensory and imaginative play components that nurture creativity and develop both fine and gross motor skills.

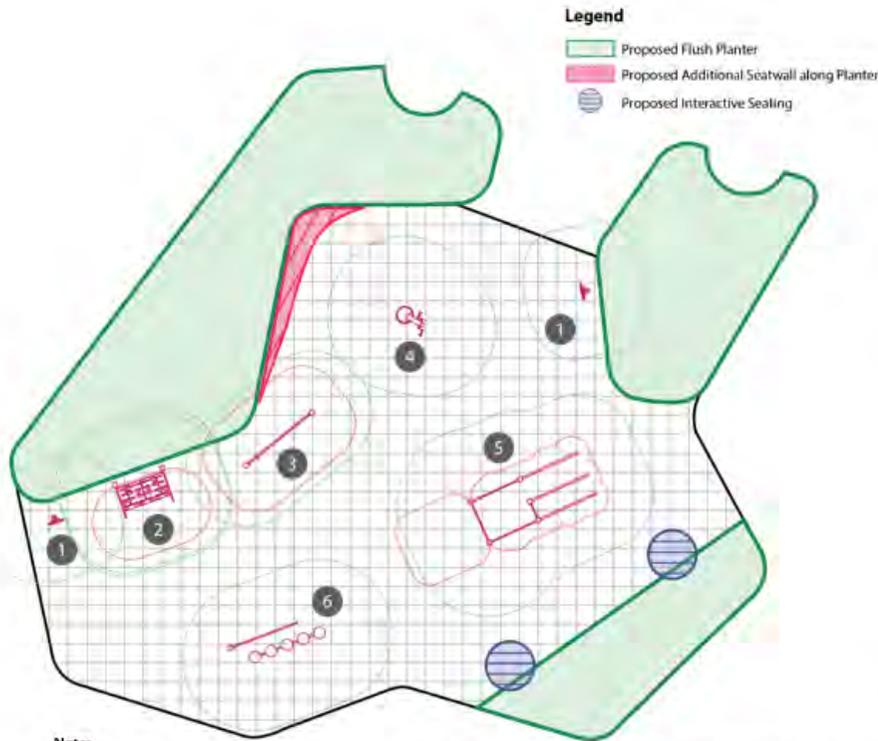
Play Equipment Selection

Recognising HKHS' concerns about noisy play activities and the potential impact on residents, the playscape has been purposefully designed to be engaging without being excessively stimulating, encouraging meaningful interactions among users.

Equipment has been selected with safety, adaptability, and functionality as top priorities. While children's play equipment is chosen for its developmental benefits, it is also strategically positioned to enhance balance, strength, proprioception, and executive function for both children and older adults. This fully embraces the age-integrated, functionally integrated IG play space concept, empowering IG play and interaction. In collaboration with the PolyU Department of Rehabilitation Sciences, School of Nursing, and Department of Applied Social Sciences, cognitive exercises — such as sequencing, problem-solving, and other occupational therapy-based training programmes — can be developed as soft programmes to boost mental engagement and complement physical activity for both older adults and children.

The design encourages collaborative and imaginative play, with seating thoughtfully arranged around the periphery to support light exercise and encourage participation from individuals with varying activity levels. The needs of caregivers are also considered, ensuring a comfortable and supportive environment for social and cooperative play for people of all ages and abilities. This holistic approach fosters shared experiences, learning, and connection in a safe, inclusive setting that reflects community needs and values.

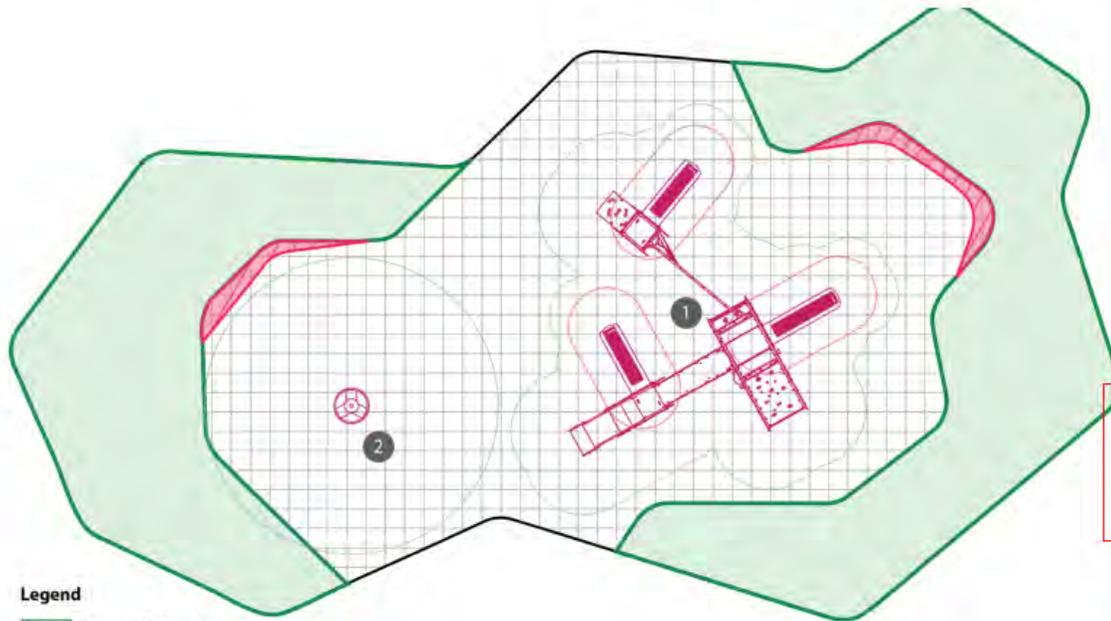
Choice of equipment based on development benefits and user experience for HKHS' reference



Note:
The proposed equipment serve to illustrate JCDISI's Head-to-Toe fitness and IG play + social interaction concept to realise the IG play space concept. The proposed IG play and fitness equipment and its information are only for reference. Should the preferred options have been endorsed, HKHS may take forward the provided equipment description and development benefits for incorporation into the Main Contractor's specs to procure the play and fitness equipment.

<p>1 Outdoor Play Timer</p>  <p>Description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timer for play and exercise for both IG interactions and fitness training <p>User Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 timer functions • 8 replaceable AA batteries • Supports self-challenges and timing their exercise <p>Development Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Time management # Endurance 	<p>4 Hand Bike</p>  <p>Description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fitness equipment for both IG interactions and fitness training <p>User Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipped with resistance for different abilities • Available for uses from both directions, also catering to wheelchair users <p>Development Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Agility # Fine Motor # Hand Grip
<p>2 Memory Game</p>  <p>Description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cognitive equipment for both IG interactions and fitness training <p>User Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable multi-player interactive gaming • Better effect supported with software programme <p>Development Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Memory # Cognitive Training # Coordination # Communication 	<p>5 Street Workouts</p>  <p>Description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fitness equipment for both IG interactions and fitness training <p>User Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand stand, push ups, Bulgarian split squats • Street fitness and basic stretching <p>Development Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Core Strength # Upper Body Strength # Flexibility # Swinging
<p>3 Wave Bar</p>  <p>Description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cognitive equipment for both IG interactions and fitness training <p>User Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help to develop hand-eye coordination and concentration • Helpful daily training for patients with parkinson's disease <p>Development Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Eye-hand Coordination # Fine Motor 	<p>6 HealthBeat® Balance Steps</p>  <p>Description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balancing equipment for both IG interactions and fitness training <p>User Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipped with handrail in steel • Soft foot padels for all age to train for stability and knee joint mobility <p>Development Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Balancing # Core Body Strength # Motor Planning # Stability

Choice of equipment based on development benefits and user experience for HKHS' reference



Legend

- Proposed Flush Planter
- Proposed Additional Seatwall along Planter

Note:

The proposed equipment serve to illustrate JCDISI's Head-to-Toe fitness and IG play + social interaction concept to realise the IG play space concept. The proposed IG play and fitness equipment and its information are only for reference. Should the preferred options have been endorsed, HKHS may take forward the provided equipment description and development benefits for incorporation into the Main Contractor's specs to procure the play and fitness equipment.

1 Palace, Fortress, Bridge & Net Tower



Description

- Comprehensive set for different ages of children (2-5, 5-12)

User Experience

- Cognitive training on early childhood language and brain development on the understanding to engage in play and towards space, speed and distance
- Different climbing elements for body coordination training
- Provide crawling experiences to train spatial awareness

Development Benefits

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| # Coordination | # Cognitive |
| # Balance | # Socialise |
| # Climb | # Sensory |
| # Pull | # Dramatic Play |
| # Slide | # Construct |

2 Drop Shot



Description

- Interactive and inclusive equipment

User Experience

- Train social communication skills and provide opportunities for interactive play
- Suitable for all age and all ability

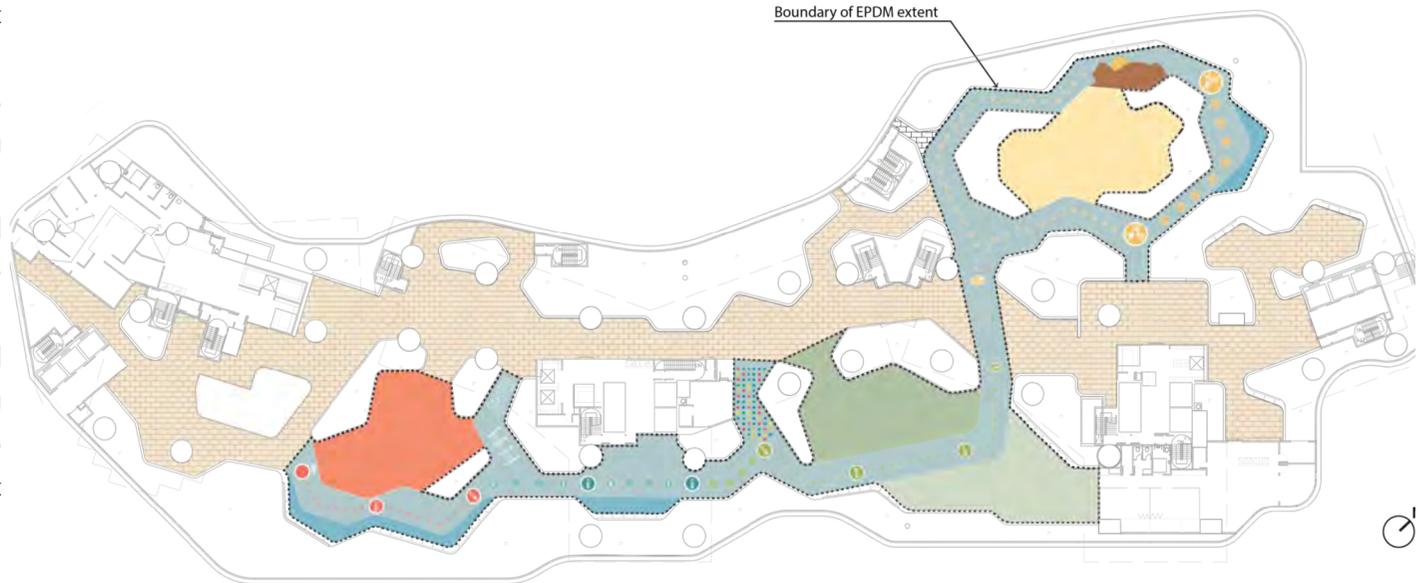
Development Benefits

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| # Coordination | # Imaginative Play |
| # Core Body Strength | # Social Skill Development |
| # Lower Body Strength | # Motor Planning |
| # Communication | |

**More than fall prevention:
EDPM treatment with playful elements to embrace physical activity and free play**

EPDM floor markings can be strategically designed to encourage physical activity, foster interactive play, and support cognitive training — especially through dual-task activities that benefit individuals with MCI. Beyond simply marking walking distances or featuring motivational messages, these markings can be used in group exercise classes for endurance drills, agility games, and circuit training, making movement more engaging and visually guided. The key is not making the patterns too complex while also making them versatile to support different functions.

For play, EPDM markings encourage imaginative play and allow classic board games such as Twister, aeroplane chess, or beanbag toss, to be played directly on the ground, using the markings as boundaries or targets. This approach not only inspires more creative and spontaneous play, but also makes the space adaptable for both structured and unstructured IG activities.



5.6 DESIGN SUMMARY FOR IG PLAY SPACE @ KT 1E1

The redesigned ground floor community and podium gardens represent a major step forward in promoting IG co-living within housing developments, with user experience at the heart of the landscaped garden design. This approach places inclusivity, accessibility, and resident well-being ahead of management convenience.

The design is guided by three key questions—can we go, can we stay, and can we play—integrating venue management into the framework to create dynamic, functional community spaces. Built on experience design and choice architecture, the scheme encourages residents of all ages and abilities to access, linger in, and enjoy these spaces, without limiting their options. The walking trail is transformed from a simple corridor into an inclusive IG play space, with transitional zones that support passive play and spontaneous activity, helping residents build meaningful IG connections. Targeted improvements, including upgraded seating and toilets, encourage residents to stay and participate, while carefully chosen play and exercise equipment support physical, cognitive, social, and emotional well-being.

The UX-focused, software-led hardware design now places the HKHS Elderly Lounge at the centre of an inclusive play environment, welcoming diverse users and empowering them to shape the IG play experience and nurture community bonds that sustain IG activities. By prioritising thoughtful design, accessibility, and inclusive play, this scheme not only enhances quality of life for current and future residents, but also offers a replicable model for other residential developments with landscaped gardens or refuge floors to scale up the IG play space concept. The approach supports healthy ageing, active living, and IG harmony, ensuring the IG play space is welcoming and usable for people of all ages and abilities.

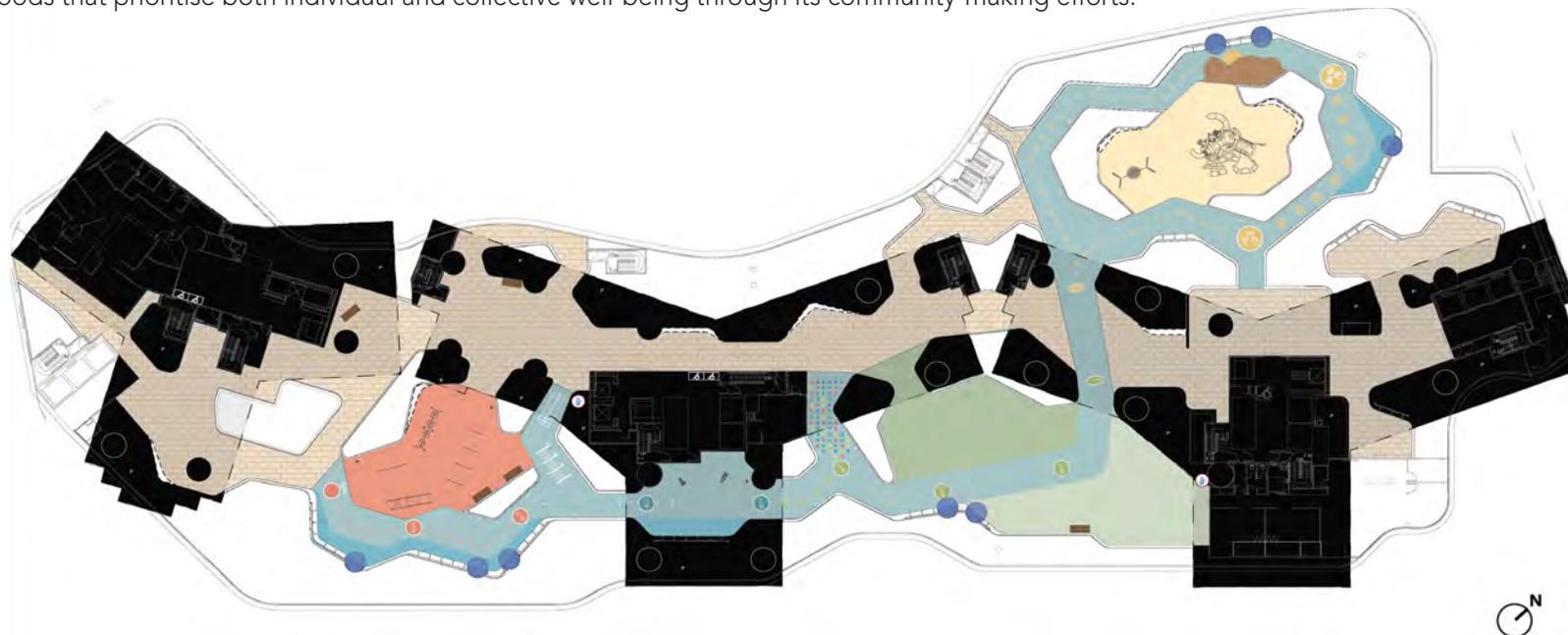


5.7 CONCLUSION: IG PLAY AS A NEW BENCHMARK FOR SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND IG COMMUNITY DESIGN

The KT 1E1 development exemplifies a forward-thinking approach to embedding social sustainability within residential design. J.C.DISI has enhanced HKHS' KT 1E1 decanting site by reimagining its communal spaces and gardens as IG play areas, using play as a catalyst for community cohesion and promoting the well-being of residents across all ages.

Through a collaborative co-design process with HKHS' Project Development Division, Property Management Division, and Social Innovation and Well-being team, J.C.DISI has gained valuable insights into addressing both technical and practical challenges in transforming shared spaces into versatile environments that encourage interaction, active living, and bridge generational divides. This ensures that the integration of the IG play space concept is streamlined, cost-effective, and easily adaptable to the KT 1E1 superstructure contract, while maintaining simplicity and functionality throughout the design.

KT 1E1 serves as a replicable model for future projects, demonstrating how intentional design can transform communal areas into IG play spaces that support social integration and community building. In doing so, the JC IG Play Space @ KT 1E1 project sets a new benchmark for creating vibrant, interconnected neighbourhoods that prioritise both individual and collective well-being through its community-making efforts.



6

JC IG PLAY SPACE @ JMC (APRIL 2022 - APRIL 2024)

6.1



INTRODUCTION

Jat Min Chuen (JMC) stands as a testament to the evolution of Sha Tin New Town, blending heritage and modern living since its completion in 1981. Now home to nearly 9,440 residents (Census 2021), with around 40% of its population aged 60 or above and a quarter aged 75+, the estate is uniquely positioned to become a model for healthy ageing and inclusive community living.

The opening of Chung Yuet Lau in 2024, an innovative elderly housing complex built using Modular Integrated Construction (MiC), presents a fresh opportunity to revitalise the estate's civic infrastructure. HKHS' commitment to piloting new IG initiatives under the 'Caring, Engaging Smart' (CES) framework, supporting residents to age in place, further enables JMC to lead the way in futureproofing Hong Kong's housing estates.

Central to this transformation is the IG Play Space concept — a strategy that prioritises active design, choice architecture and software-led hardware design solutions. By demonstrating how public spaces can be reconfigured to promote IG play and interaction, JMC will serve as a blueprint for transforming estates citywide — helping communities thrive across generations, now and into the future.

6.2

IG PLAY SPACE AS A STRATEGY FOR URBAN INTEGRATION

Establishing an IG play space in JMC offers significant benefits for enhancing urban integration with the neighbouring Sha Kok Estate. Such spaces act as neutral meeting points where residents from both communities can relax, interact informally, and build relationships. By encouraging spontaneous social encounters, these venues help to foster friendships and a sense of community, thereby strengthening social capital.

Residents already share and utilise facilities across both estates. By designing areas that engage all ages, we help create an accessible environments where residents can interact and take part in community life. Such spaces promote healthier lifestyles, reduce isolation, and, through regular encounters, foster trust and a sense of community. Ultimately, the IG play space helps transform separate estates into a more cohesive, resilient community, making integration both visible and sustainable.

DESIGN CHALLENGE

The main challenge at JMC is to sensitively enhance the existing IG play space, bringing renewed vibrancy to the estate while maintaining its genuine, community-focused atmosphere and deliberately avoiding a trend-driven, “instafamous” destination. After thorough consultation with HKHS and HKFYG, the strategy is to focus on small-scale interventions that strengthen the sense of place, respect the qualities valued by residents, improve the natural environment, and prepare the area for soft programme delivery. Given site constraints, no car parking spaces are to be removed, and works should be limited to minor upgrades, with minimal addition and alteration to avoid disruption. There is a clear opportunity to open up vistas and improve connectivity by making better use of wind corridors, which are currently obstructed by bicycles or underused due to seating placement.

The play space, designed primarily for HKHS residents, should avoid features that generate excessive noise or encourage boisterous behaviour. Instead, it should foster a calm setting that supports gentle IG activities and encourages older adults to be more active. The design challenge, therefore, is to:

- Maintain the unique atmosphere and sense of belonging residents value;
- Deliver improvements that blend into daily life without attracting excessive use that crowds out local residents;
- Improve the hierarchy of space to optimise use and support urban integration;
- Prioritise resident well-being and enjoyment through thoughtful, user-led enhancements rather than resource-intensive or visually dominant installations.

The outcome should be a play space that quietly supports social connection, healthy ageing, and everyday IG moments—setting a benchmark for community-first design in Hong Kong’s established housing estates, realised through a soft programme-led hardware approach.

6.3

J.C.DISI and Milkk's DESIGN VISION

We believe fostering social harmony and vitality relies on cultivation of daily habits and repeated exposure. IG inclusivity goes beyond being merely a community design strategy, it represents a natural connection that occur daily between individuals of different ages in their daily lives. The key is to enable people to live inclusively.

To achieve an "inclusive community", we must prioritise emotional connections between people -- How can we encourage strangers set aside their suspicions and barriers? How can we initiate step to genuinely get to know those around us, interact and establish meaningful connections?

Our focus is therefore to leverage the foundation of "daily life" as the blueprint. By deeply exploring residents' living habits and interests, we have restructured and integrated public spaces and activity facilities within the JMC to cultivate an interactive atmosphere and progress towards a state of "IG inclusivity."

DESIGN APPROACH

1. Enhancing Connectivity and Spatial Integration

The design builds upon the existing Nordic Walking Trail (北歐式健行徑) and Mõlkky (芬蘭木棋) active sports zone, introduced under the HKHS Caring Engagement Smart initiative in December 2022. The intent is to reconfigure the public realm within Jat Min Chuen into a continuous, meandering "play and exercise" trail, establishing seamless connectivity across the estate. This intervention is guided by principles of active design and choice architecture, facilitating physical activity and spontaneous social interaction amongst residents.

2. Promoting Active Lifestyles

A key objective is to embed opportunities for movement throughout the estate, supporting the recommended target of 8,000 steps per day. The strategy incorporates a diverse range of play and exercise installations, enabling residents to engage in full-body workouts within their daily routines. By situating these interventions at the doorstep, the design aims to stimulate informal social encounters and foster a culture of active living, thereby strengthening community ties and enhancing overall wellbeing.

3. Activating Transitional and Underutilised Spaces

The scheme prioritises the transformation of underutilised areas linking residential blocks to public open spaces. Transitional zones are reimagined as dynamic environments, enabling fluid progression from private to semi-private, semi-public, and public domains. This approach accommodates a spectrum of preferences and physical abilities, ensuring inclusive access to play and exercise opportunities. The design intent is to create vibrant, multi-generational spaces that support both active engagement and social connectivity.

6.4

CREATE "THIRD PLACES" FOR GATHERING AND SOCIALISING

SITE CONTEXT

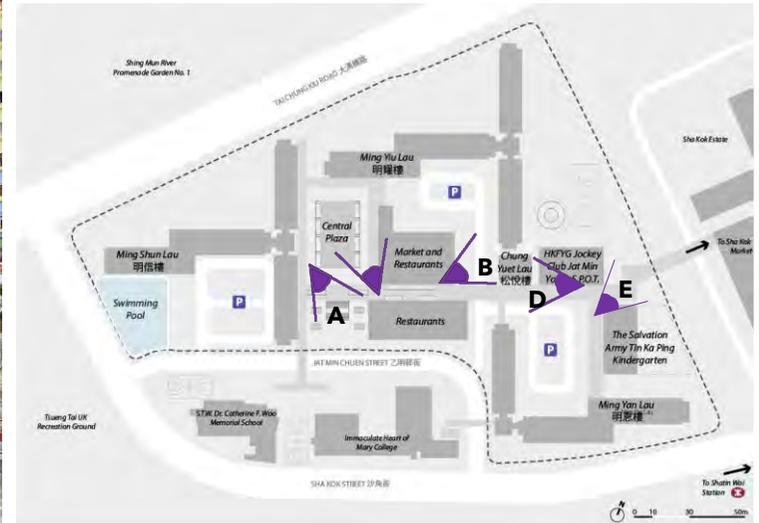
With the introduction of Chung Yuet Lau as an elderly housing block, there is a unique opportunity to redesign key areas within JMC and activate underused spaces. By implementing thoughtfully curated soft programmes and IG play activities, these spaces can be transformed into vibrant destinations for socialising, play, and meaningful interaction among residents of all ages.



View A - Chung Yuet Lau (completed in 2024)



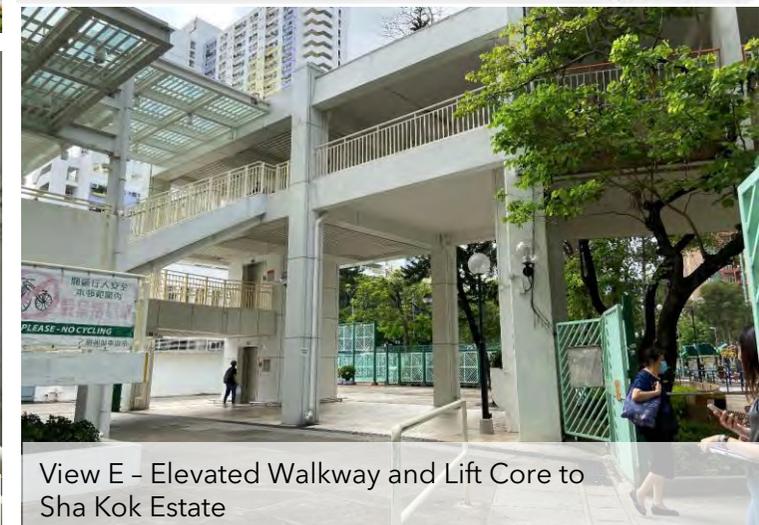
View C - Central Plaza



View B - Grand Staircase



View D - Elevated Walkway



View E - Elevated Walkway and Lift Core to Sha Kok Estate

EMPOWER DOORSTEP PLAY THROUGH SOFTWARE-LED HARDWARE DESIGN

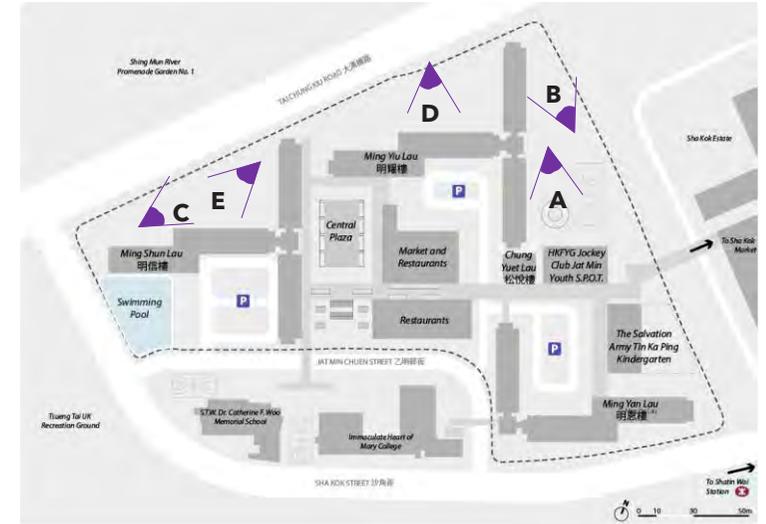
While the public space is pleasant and spacious, it currently lacks diverse play opportunities to foster a truly playful atmosphere. By integrating adaptable play and exercise equipment with engaging programmes, the space is transformed into a vibrant doorstep play environment that encourages spontaneous interaction and playful encounters.



View A - Existing Urban Farming Area 1



View C - Walking Trail near Ming Shun Lau



View B - Existing Urban Farming Area 2



View D - Children's Playground near Ming Yiu Lau



View E - Elderly Fitness Corner near Ming Shun Lau

6.4

EXPERIENCE DESIGN TO INJECT VIBRANCY & ENCOURAGE HEALTHY LIVING

SITE CONTEXT

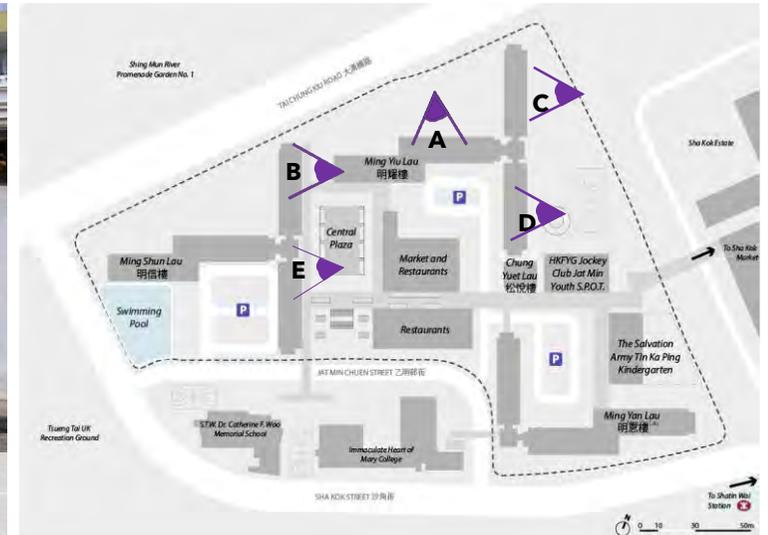
By studying user habits, experience design can transform underused spaces into vibrant community hubs. These spaces activate play and foster social connections, making it easier for people to engage in healthy lifestyles and improving well-being for all.



View A - Wind Corridor for Bike Parking and Storage



View C - Community Room and Toy Bank at Ming Yiu Lau



View B - Wind Corridors under Ming Shun Lau



View D - Wind Corridor under Ming Yiu Lau



View E - Wind Corridor near Central Plaza

6.5

To understand how residents engage with open spaces and mobility within JMC, J.C.DISI and volunteers from PolyU Research Centre for Gerontology and Family Studies conducted an extensive User Habit Study between Aug - Sept 2022, combining direct observation, mapping, and in-depth interviews with 429 residents over 9 sessions. Quantitative results from the survey were triangulated with qualitative insights from interviews and route mapping.

USER HABIT STUDY

Residents were invited to indicate and guide researchers along their daily routes, highlighting frequently used spaces, barriers, and preferred pathways. This “urban hiking” approach enabled real-time mapping of user journeys and spatial habits.

Based on a simplified version of J.C.DISI’s Double Smart Elderly-friendly Assessment Indicators, residents provided feedback on their experience of the environment, rating aspects such as ease of navigation, safety, comfort, convenience and opportunities for play, exercise, rest and social interaction. Special attention was given to the needs of young children, older adults and those with cognitive impairments. This holistic approach enabled a comprehensive understanding of how public spaces are used, what barriers exist, and where improvements are needed.



6.5

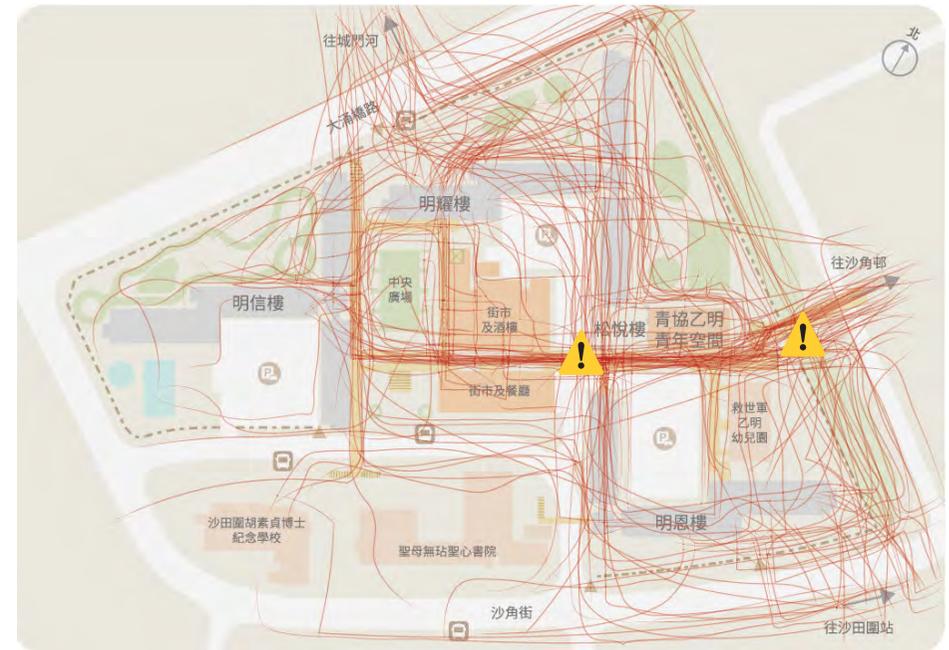
USER HABIT STUDY - CAPTURING THE LIVED EXPERIENCE

Mapping daily routes uncovers how residents actually use the urban environment, highlighting gathering spots, overlooked areas, and social nodes. Residents can point out physical obstacles, such as disconnected pathways and unsafe zones, and social barriers, such as places perceived as unwelcoming, guiding targeted interventions. The maps and qualitative feedback provide actionable data for J.C.DISI and HKHS to do pre and post intervention monitoring.

USER HABIT STUDY

The maps below consolidate data from 429 respondents to show the main areas frequented by the community and the daily routes taken by residents. Most activities are concentrated along the main corridor connecting the wet market to the Central Plaza, the surrounding building blocks, and the thoroughfare to Sha Kok Estate and Sha Tin Wai MTR station.

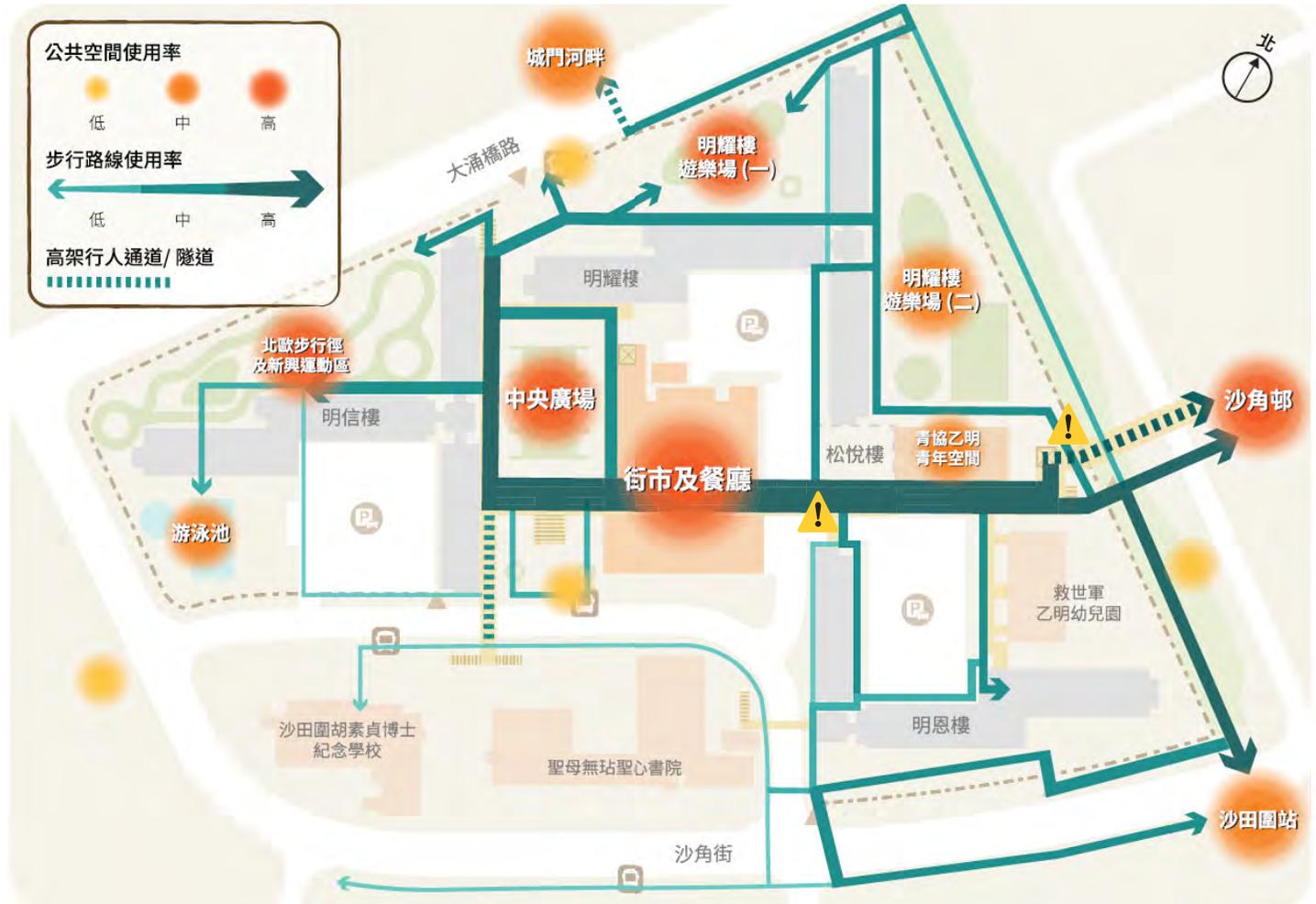
The maps also highlight specific nodes where pedestrian and vehicular conflicts occur, indicated by . These areas require targeted improvements to enhance connectivity, increase safety, and provide a better walking experience for residents and visitors as they move through and arrive at the estate.



The heatmap is generated from data collected in the user habit study detailed on the opposite page.

Analysis of these patterns reveals distinct daily movement routes, pinpoints priority areas for accessibility improvements (where  is indicated). The heatmap also helps the team identify key nodes and opportunities to strengthen estate connectivity — improving walkability and integrating the estate with neighbouring Sha Kok Estate and Sha Tin Wai Station.

Additionally, it clarifies the spatial hierarchy and highlights underused areas that could be activated to encourage residents to complete the IG walking trail, injecting new life and vibrancy into these corners.



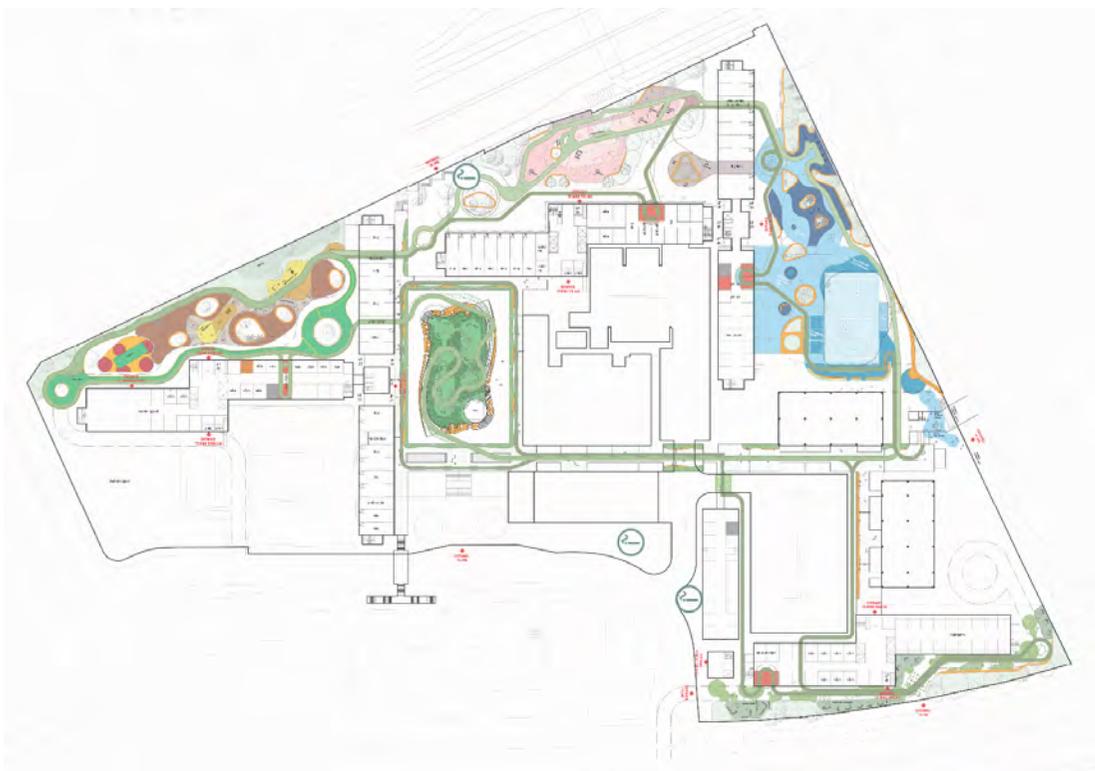
6.6 CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR IG PLAY AND EXERCISE

J.C.DISI and MLKK’s strategy for transforming JMC is rooted on a software-led hardware design concept, activating the public realm to encourage physical activity, strengthen social connections, and create opportunities for spontaneous play to foster IG solidarity.

By moving beyond the traditional, age-specific designated playspace of 1,500m², this approach reimagines public spaces as larger, inclusive environments — expanding to a 7,500m² IG playspace (opposite page). The new design ensures that people of all ages and abilities can enjoy play and physical activity on their doorstep, with age-integrated zones, flexible layouts, and a diverse range of play offers.



Three existing designated play space, totalling 1,500m² (shaded light green above)



Connecting key nodes and play zones to activate play and exercise for all — the IG play design concept will expand from its original 1,500m² age-specific designated playground to a full 7,500m² IG playscape, empowering truly inclusive and welcoming doorstep play for everyone.

Active design principles and choice architecture are at the heart of this transformation. The IG walking trail now links the entire estate, with wind corridors activated to improve accessibility and introduce new facilities, such as toilets and JM GYM, encouraging residents to stay and play. Play and rest areas are thoughtfully positioned along routes where people naturally pass by and pause, while sensory features and flexible programming support relaxation, play, and exercise. The playscape has been carefully shaped to be play-ready, offering a rich mix of active and passive play opportunities that support HKHS' aspiration to upgrade the environment for residents — without attracting excessive numbers of external visitors who might overwhelm the local community.

This combination of adaptable hardware and ongoing soft programming makes the estate a vibrant and welcoming place, where lifelong activity and social bonds can flourish naturally within everyday life. By delivering the improvement works in phases, facilities remain accessible and inviting throughout, whilst allowing spaces to be flexibly adapted and upgraded over time in response to the changing needs of the community.

The following sections will illustrate the design concepts and the overall conceptual design scheme.

6.7

MAKING IT SAFE, COMFORTABLE AND ACCESSIBLE TO REACH THE IG PLAY SPACE @ JMC



CAN WE GO?

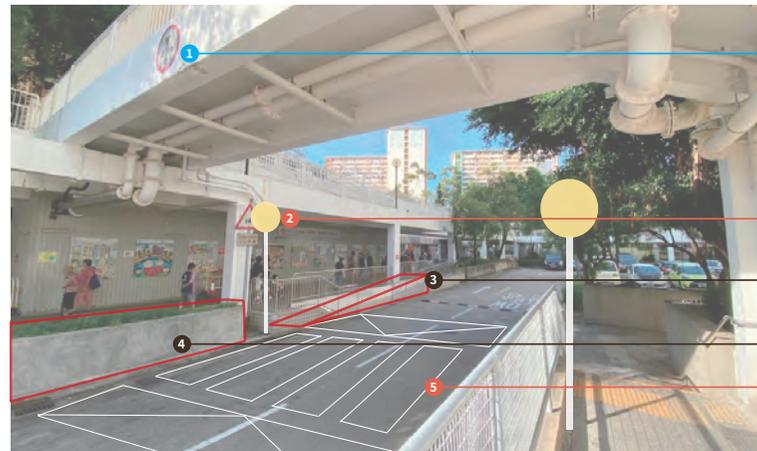
IMPROVING CONNECTIVITY AND TRAFFIC SAFETY IN JMC - THE IG WALKING TRAIL

The walking experience in Jat Min Chuen (JMC) is generally pleasant, with sheltered paths and flat terrain. However, residents traveling from the wet market to the lower block of Ming Yan Lau face significant inconvenience, especially during rainy days.

To address this, the IG Play Space conceptual design scheme recommends optimising and straightening the crossing arrangement between Ming Yan Lau and Chung Yuet Lau (the new elderly housing block to be constructed by MiC).

Key improvements include:

- Relocating crossing facilities under shelter
- Adjusting ramps, stairs, and planters for easier access
- Ensuring all changes comply with the latest transport regulations



- 1 To confirm whether raising the road surface at the crossing will affect the height clearance for vehicles entering and exiting
- 2 Install yellow crossing signals
- 3 Relocate ramp to this area
- 4 Remove planters to introduce crossing point
- 5 Elevated crosswalk for step-free crossing

** Further technical studies will be required before implementation

Beyond improving pedestrian safety and comfort for everyone in JMC, the proposed highway improvement will complete the IG walking trail, seamlessly connecting all three residential blocks. This integrated network invites residents to discover each IG play space and actively supports the “8,000 steps a day” health goal.

By prioritising accessibility, comfort, and safety—especially through urban integration and traffic calming—the IG walking trail encourages residents to walk throughout the estate at any time of day. The design supports daily routines and errands while promoting healthy ageing by linking key destinations and creating an environment that inspires regular physical activity, spontaneous play, and social interaction across the community.



1



Current route to Sha Kok Estate: functional and lacks character



After intervention: enlivened public realm with smart wayfinding system to support wandering MCI individuals

2



Current entrance: narrow, congested with a poor of sense of place



After intervention: lively and welcoming, with a strong sense of identity and enhanced access to boost safety

6.7

IG WALKING TRAIL

We envision an IG “play+exercise” walking trail that redefines everyday movement and interaction within the estate. Informed by user behaviour studies and shaped through participatory design workshops, this trail transforms transitional spaces into vibrant, inclusive hubs at residents’ doorsteps. By seamlessly integrating playful and active elements, we create an ecosystem where people of all ages can enjoy diverse, accessible experiences. This approach revitalises ordinary spaces, fosters spontaneous encounters, and strengthens social bonds—making the IG Walking Trail a model for community-driven, healthy, and joyful urban living.

居民瑞芳:「希望中央廣場有多D花,因為本身會到其他地方賞花。現時去公園未必有特定目的,但主要會與年紀相約的人交談。」



來自26/3/2023 Group 1 居民意見



梓康: 鍾意去打籃球, 同埋去青協跆拳道

來自19/3/2023 Group 3 居民意見



居民單慧竹:「中央廣場休息時會有草地觀賞,享受熱鬧氣氛,認為可以將中央廣場設計成活動為主的地標。」



來自12/3/2023 Group 1 居民意見



來自26/3/2023 Group 4 居民意見

華陽: 每星期媽咪都要帶我去平台補習班。有時會去公園玩

CAN WE GO?

CURATING A TRULY ACCESSIBLE AND LEGIBLE PLAY SPACE TO INSPIRE EXPLORATION AND DWELLING

Guided by Active Design principles and Choice Architecture theory, the IG walking trail strengthens connectivity across the estate and transforms the spaces between housing blocks into vibrant, accessible play zones. The trail incorporates a range of hardware upgrades and soft programmes, offering both physical and interactive activities alongside sensory and nature play opportunities. By supporting both structured and unstructured play, the design encourages spontaneous social interactions and independent mobility. Rich programming further promotes social play and well-being for residents of all ages.

THEMATIC AREAS FOR ORIENTATION

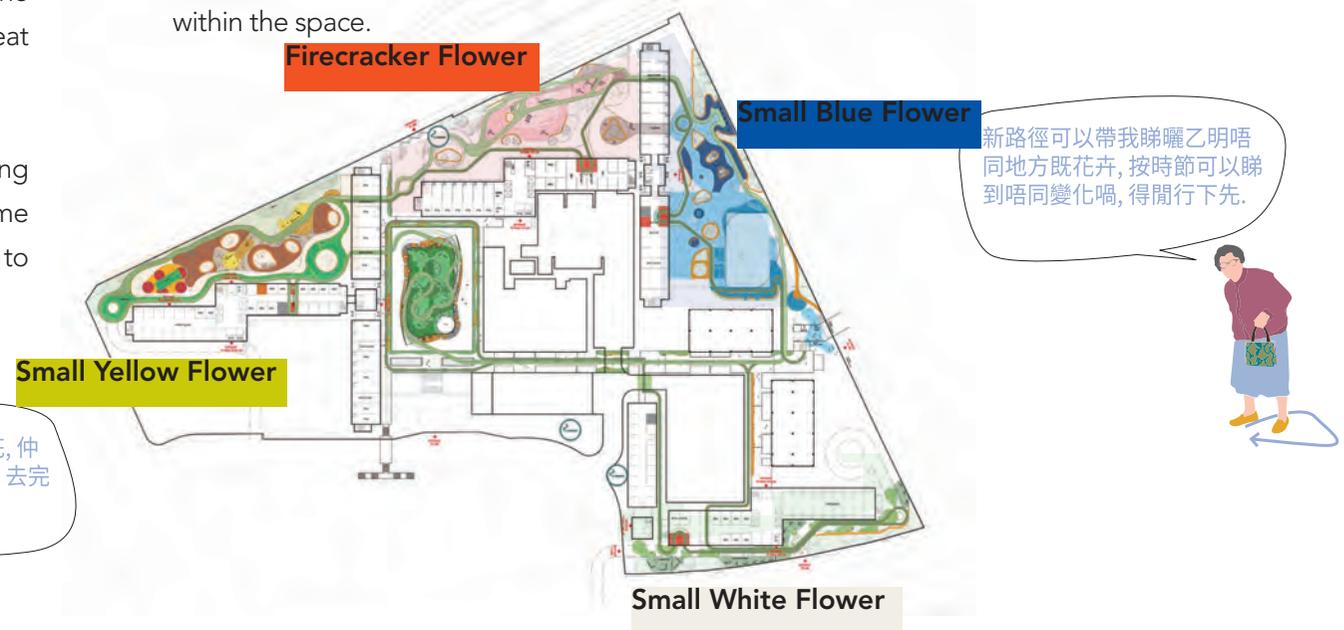
Consistent thematic elements along the trail establish a cohesive visual identity, making navigation intuitive for all users. This familiarity supports mental mapping, helping visitors and residents — especially those with cognitive challenges — remember their routes and confidently find their way back. Clear themes also enhance decision-making at key junctions and nodes, ensuring everyone can move through the space safely and independently to boost repeat visits.

Aside from signage, colour, images, landscaping and landmarks can all help bring the theme of the area to life to support orientation and to contribute to wider placemaking efforts.



FOSTERING A STRONGER SENSE OF PLACE BY ENHANCING FAMILIARITY AND CELEBRATING DISTINCTIVENESS

Play spaces and ornamental plantings are designed to harmonise with the “IG walking trail,” creating a cohesive environment. Each play area features a distinct theme, using specific colors and landscaping to enhance identity, support wayfinding, and improve orientation — especially for neuro-diverse individuals, older adults and those with MCI or dementia. The design team has chosen four unique colors and corresponding plant schemes to make each area memorable and easier to navigate. This approach helps residents and visitors intuitively recall their surroundings, provides positive sensory stimulation for neuro-diverse individuals, and supports those with cognitive challenges in feeling comfortable and engaged within the space.



6.8

ACTIVATING UNDERUTILISED SPACE

The launch of the “Toy Bank (玩具銀行)” at Ming Yiu Lau by HKHS in 2022 demonstrates how underutilised wind voids and corridors can be reimagined as lively, accessible community assets through thoughtful spatial programming and IG activities (see pictures below).

This strategy enables ongoing development of IG programmes and establishes a model for gradually guiding residents from private to semi-private, semi-public, and public spaces, encouraging social interaction, well-being, and a sense of belonging.



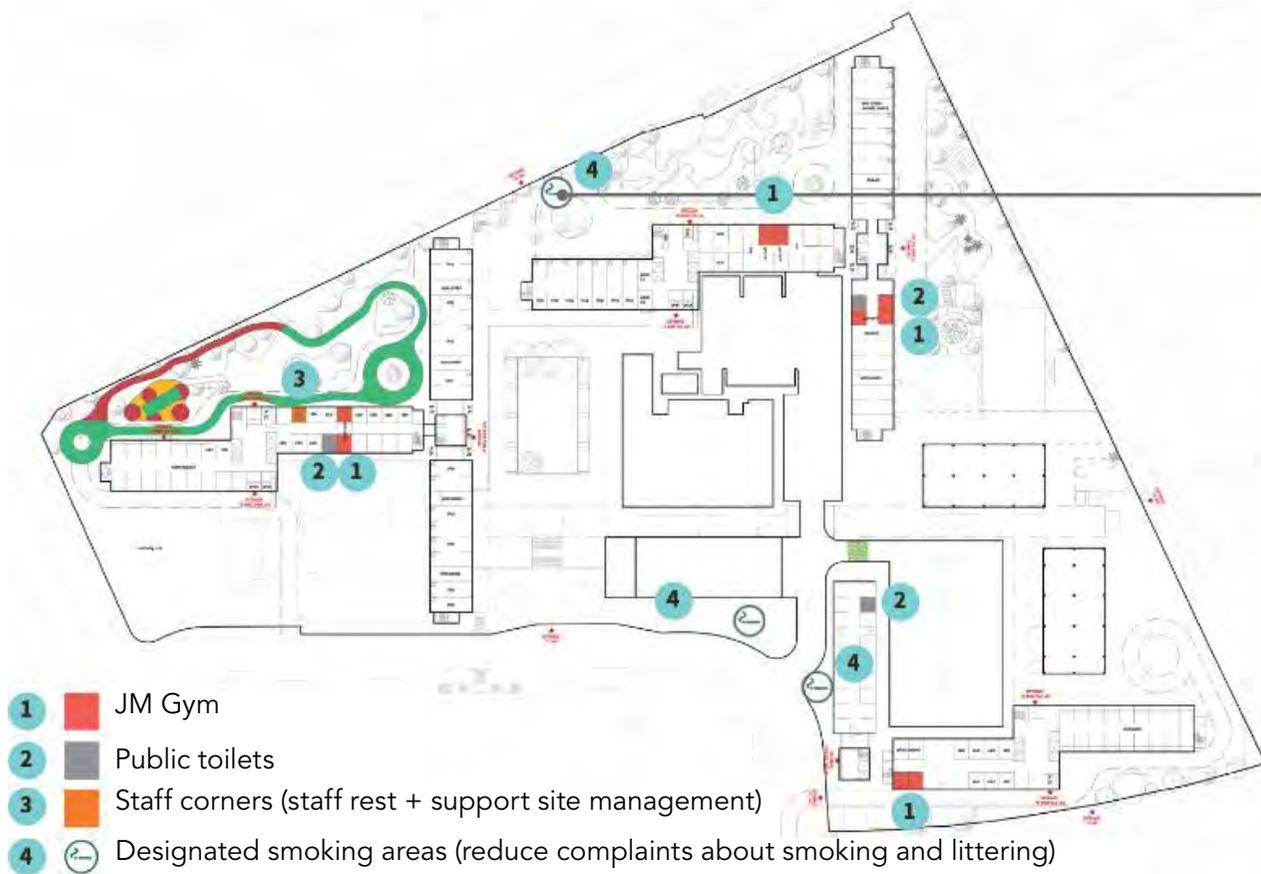
CAN WE STAY?

MAKING DOORSTEP PLAY COMFORTABLE AND DELIGHTFUL

To quickly enhance the play experience and better serve community needs, we propose a series of practical improvements to the wind corridors. These include general painting works to refresh the corridors, ensuring they remain clean and inviting as key thoroughfares for movement, rest, and seating.

For less popular or cluttered areas — such as those currently used for bike storage or filled with underused street furniture — we recommend activating and repurposing these spaces into public toilets and staff corners. These upgraded facilities will be complemented by new sheltered zones that offer alternative options for play and exercise, making doorstep play experiences more comfortable and delightful.

Adding public toilets and staff corners will greatly increase convenience and accessibility for users of all ages. Relocating staff facilities from 1/F to these new corners will also enable staff to provide more direct and timely support, improving both safety and the overall quality of the play environment.



Introducing designated smoking areas away from key play zones will improve the play and exercise experience for all. It will also help reduce complaints about smoking and littering.



Usage and conditions of some of the wind corridors

6.9

JM GYM CONCEPT

Introducing a semi-outdoor gym as a transitional space offers a seamless connection between semi-indoor fitness facilities and fully outdoor play zones. This design encourages users to engage in a wide range of physical activities within a sheltered environment, supporting gradual adaptation to different activity intensities and environmental conditions.

Adding this simple yet effective design intervention in the JMC IG Play Space masterplan will transform routine movement and leisure into joyful, inclusive experiences, nurturing physical, cognitive, and social well-being for people of all ages.

CAN WE STAY, AND PLAY?

GRADUAL TRANSITIONING AND EMPOWERMENT THROUGH DESIGN

Active design and choice architecture are central to JM Gym, creating welcoming layouts and a range of activity zones that promote movement, social interaction, and personal choice. This ensures JM Gym fits seamlessly within the urban environment and fulfils the IG Play Space masterplan.

JM Gym is a semi-outdoor facility designed to empower residents through clear spatial organisation and gradual transitions. Each IG Play Space zone is thoughtfully themed, with wind corridors activated as dynamic areas that offer a wide range of play and exercise options with low entry barrier, making them accessible to all.

The enhanced wind corridors remain open and unobstructed, supporting free movement while providing gentle, climate-controlled exercise opportunities. This is especially beneficial for those who value privacy or prefer to select activities that match their comfort level, enabling participation at their own pace. The semi-outdoor spaces blend indoor comfort with fresh air and natural light, offering an intermediate experience that bridges indoor and outdoor environments.

Clear instructions at every station guide users from beginner to advanced levels, supporting light exercise, IG play, and more vigorous training. Residents are encouraged to explore all four zones and engage in outdoor IG play, helping them achieve daily activity goals — such as 8,000 steps a day — and enjoy a holistic workout that engages body, mind, and senses, to reap the health benefits.

By layering spatial experiences, JM Gym allows residents to choose their level of engagement, gradually building confidence and participation. Through active design and choice architecture, JM Gym becomes more than just a collection of facilities — it is seamlessly integrated into the estate, connecting different spaces, promoting spontaneous activity, and realising the inclusive vision of the IG Play Space masterplan.

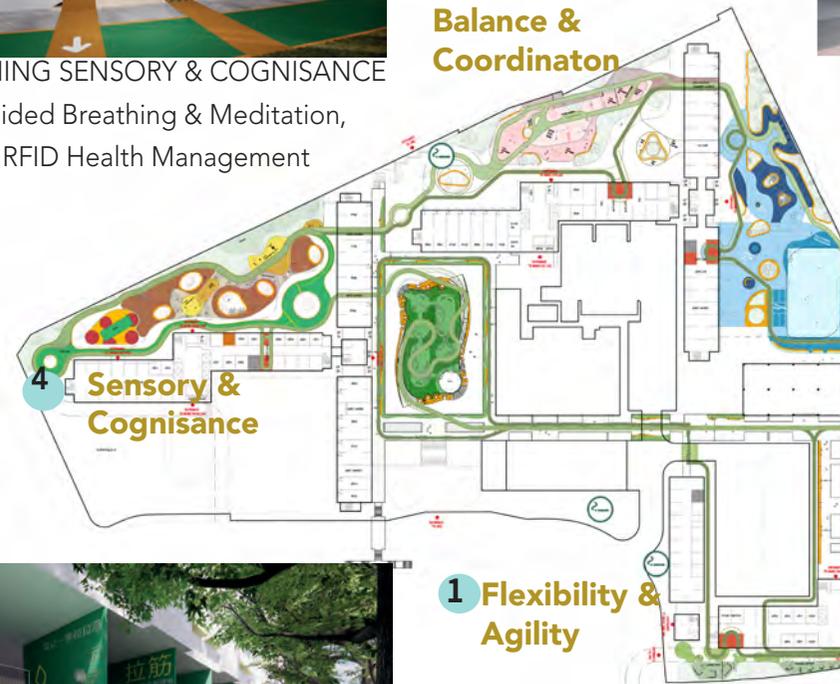
A clear hierarchy and rhythmic flow of spaces enhance orientation and urban integration, inviting residents from surrounding blocks to participate. This thoughtful design supports a vibrant, healthy, and connected community, where everyone feels welcome to join in and benefit from shared experiences.



4 TRAINING SENSORY & COGNISANCE
Guided Breathing & Meditation,
RFID Health Management



3 TRAINING BALANCE, COORDINATION & AGILITY -
Star Excursion Balance Test &
Tic-tac-toe Grid Test

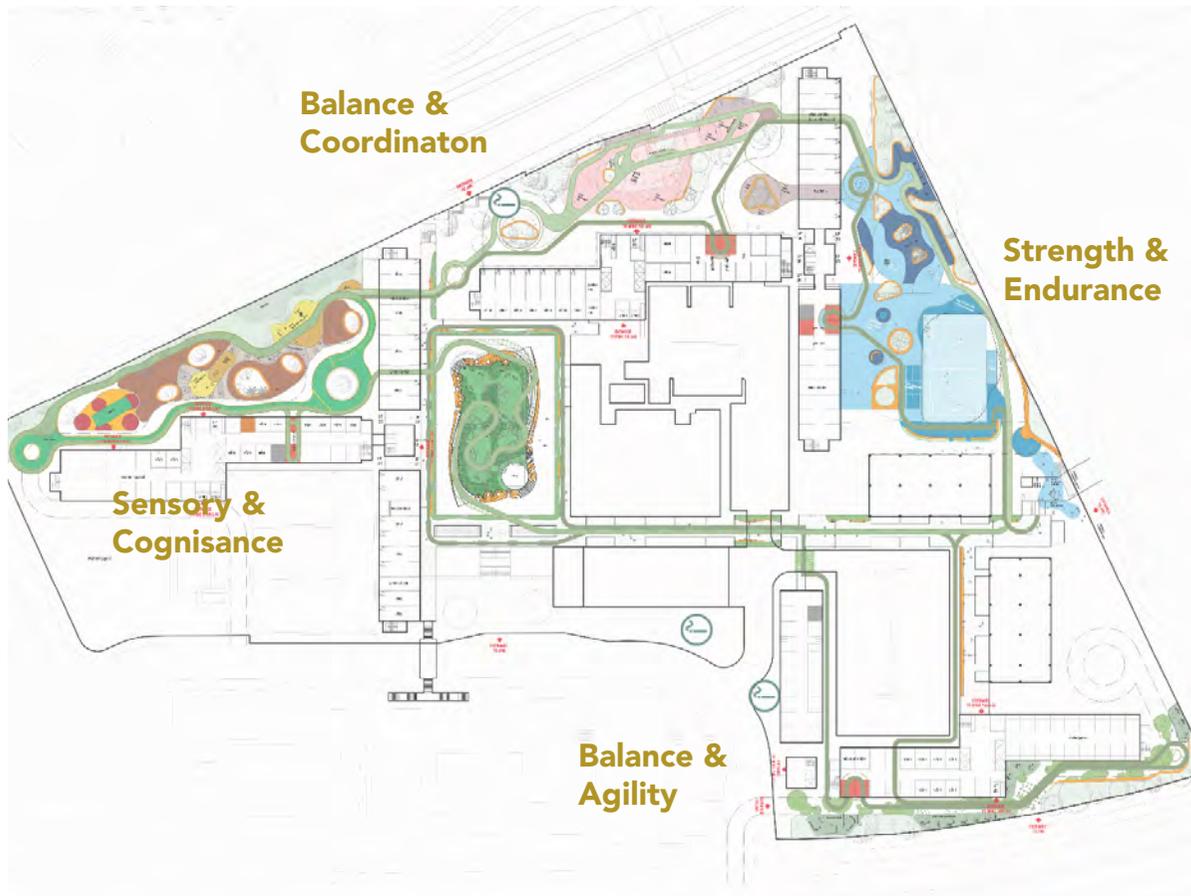


1 TRAINING FLEXIBILITY & STRETCHING
Alphabet Stretching Stations &
Floormarkings



2 TRAINING STRENGTH & ENDURANCE
Cycling Game Stations, Timer,
Floormarkings and Leadership Boards

6.10 IG PLAY SPACE MASTERPLAN FOR JMC



1) Walking Trail connecting the entire estate

- Riding on HKHS' existing Nordic Walk, use active design and choice architecture concept to determine where to activate underutilised spaces and introduce hardware and software to enhance the experience
- Enhancing connectivity and blend the walking trail into the daily route of residents to encourage active lifestyle
- Chance encounters to motivate go out in the morning and later in the day to achieve the recommended activity level of 8000 steps a day
- provide diverse play opportunities for residents to do at least 150 min of moderate intensity activities a week

2) Promoting doorstep play & sensory stimulation

- Age-integrated spatial design concept + play and exercise equipment for people of all ages and abilities
- Sensory integration and supporting cognitive training

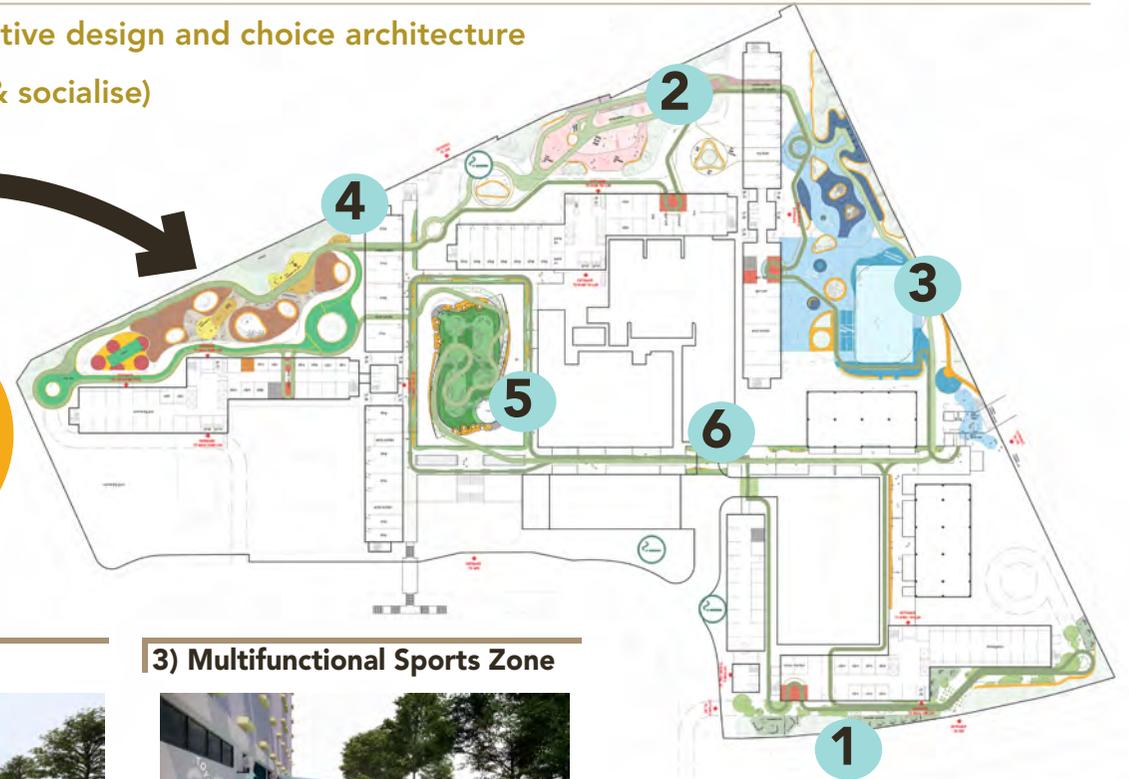
3) Activate Wind Corridors for "JM Gym"

- Add distinctive features in each zone to support simple exercise & training e.g. endurance & balance, strength
- Encouraging residents to gradually step out from indoor to semi-outdoor to outdoor spaces equipped with IG facilities, catering to the needs and abilities of different residents.

**Walking trail connecting the entire estate based on active design and choice architecture
(exercise + play + positive sensory stimulation + rest & socialise)**

50 minutes journey (3.4 km, 4,000 steps)

AM + PM stroll = 8000 steps a day



1) JMC Iconic Park



2) IG Playscape!



3) Multifunctional Sports Zone



4) IG Sensory Garden



5) Central Plaza



6) Elevated Walkway



1 MING YAN LAU – JMC ICONIC PARK

“The ground floor of Ming Yan House is an area that faces the outside, we residents hope it can be designed to look more attractive. This would not only give residents a higher quality public space, but also allow passersby to experience the beauty of our community.”

-- Participant Mei Fong and Wah



“ATTRACTIVE, PLAYFUL AND EXCITING” JMC INCLUSIVE LANDMARK

Participants in the co-creation workshops noted that the area adjacent to Sha Tin Wai MTR Station — particularly Ming Yan Lau — is highly visible to those travelling along Sha Kok Street. However, Ming Yan Lau currently lacks a dedicated play space. It is surrounded by a car park and Emergency Vehicular Access (EVA), with the existing open area being narrow, utilitarian, and lacking in distinctiveness. Seating is limited, offering few opportunities for residents to rest or play, resulting in an underutilised space.

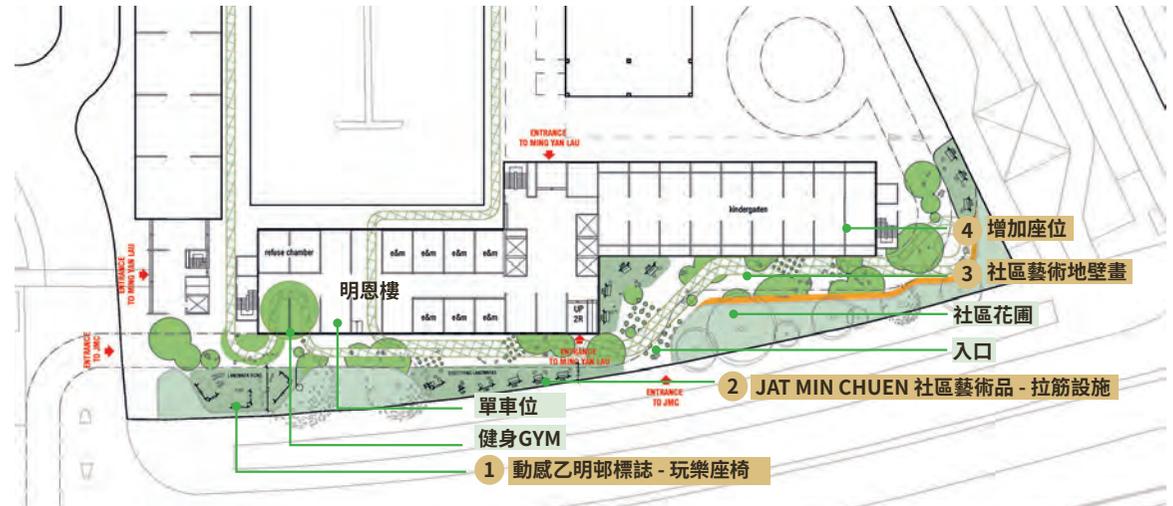
Although Ming Yan Lau serves as the main entrance linking JMC to neighbouring estates and the MTR station, many residents opt for a less prominent entrance opposite Sha Kok Estate for convenience.

To address these shortcomings, we propose using IG play as an active placemaking and placekeeping strategy to transform Ming Yan Lau into a vibrant community hub. These enhancements will foster a stronger sense of place, encouraging users to linger, play, and interact, while promoting greater integration with the surrounding neighbourhood.

Given the site's constraints — particularly its function as an EVA — the design team recommends the use of public art to strengthen the identity, enjoyment, and utility of this underused space.

By providing welcoming play areas and communal zones for relaxation and recreation, the design encourages residents of all ages to gather, socialise, and build stronger community ties. This transformation aims to establish Ming Yan Lau as a focal point for local life, deepening residents' connection to their neighbourhood and supporting overall community wellbeing.

Furthermore, the introduction of new play equipment and activities focused on flexibility and agility will inject life and vibrancy in this quarter, making it more dynamic and positioning Ming Yan Lau as a lively gateway to JMC. Collectively, these strategies will create a space that is both distinctive and familiar, genuinely reflecting and meeting the needs and aspirations of the community.



1

Dynamic JMC Logo – Play!



The proposed design for the IG Play Space seeks to transform the entrance of JMC into an iconic and welcoming gateway for all visitors. The primary aim is to revitalise this underused public area, giving it renewed purpose and a distinctive identity that encourages a vibrant atmosphere. Residents will be inspired to use the space for leisure, exercise, and relaxation.

As part of this transformation, the existing stone chairs will be replaced with bespoke public art installations, inspired by sketches from residents who participated in co-creation workshops. These art pieces will also function as play and exercise equipment, enhancing the play value of the space. Such distinctive features will become a new landmark for JMC, offering interactive opportunities for play and social interaction.

The multifunctional equipment will foster engagement and community spirit, providing seating and supporting cooperative play activities such as swinging, rocking, and balancing. The design will appeal to children, young adults, and older adults alike, promoting IG play and interactions throughout the neighbourhood.

2

JMC Art Piece – Stretching!



To enhance the area along the planters with low shrubs, our team proposes the installation of a series of art pieces that spell out "JAT MIN." This initiative aims to reinforce community identity and nurture a sense of belonging amongst residents.

The concept merges art with health-focused design, drawing inspiration from sketches contributed by local residents during our co-creation workshop. The design has been reviewed by medical experts, including physiotherapists and occupational therapists, to ensure that the spacing and height of the letters support gentle stretching, particularly for older adults, and help minimise joint strain.

Residents will be invited to perform stretching poses that complete each letter of "JAT MIN." Clear instructions and signage, provided by J.C.DISI and PolyU's Faculty of Health and Social Sciences, will guide users in safely using the pillars to achieve health benefits, including pain management and high-intensity interval training (HIIT) exercises.

3 | Floor and wall paint



The proposed plan for the walking trail includes synchronising the color of the EPDM wall paints with the themes and patterns of the surrounding materials. This initiative aims to enhance fall prevention measures while creating a cohesive visual experience along the trail.

To further engage the community and foster a sense of ownership, HKHS and HKFYG can collaborate on programs that invite residents to participate in decorating elements in the park. By involving the community in the design and maintenance of the trail, these spaces will become valued assets for local residents, enhancing the character of the area. This collaborative effort will not only instill a sense of pride among residents but also contribute to the iconic status of the JMC entrance through community partnership.

4 | Activation of wind corridor (Theme: Flexibility and Agility)



The Training Flexibility & Stretching Wind Corridor is reimagined as a vibrant, inclusive environment that encourages flexibility, mobility, and gentle movement for all ages. The corridor extends the benefits of playful movement into the corridor, ensuring that flexibility and agility are part of the overall active living experience to improve mobility, reduce injury risk, and foster a sense of relaxation and mindfulness.

Colorful floor graphics guide users to stretching areas and suggest movement routines, with markings for warm-ups, deeper stretches, and dynamic flexibility drills. Alphabet Stretching Stations feature illustrated poses for each letter, guiding users through a complete stretching circuit. Children and families can combine physical activity with letter recognition, making stretching playful and educational. The corridor transforms a simple walkway into an active zone for regular movement and stretching, making wellness accessible and engaging for everyone.

2 MING YIU LAU – IG PLAYScape!

"It's not that I don't want to take my grandchildren to the park, but there aren't any facilities that interest them. The equipment is outdated, limited, and lacks variety... in the past, there was a truly exciting play area here in JMC, which even attracted visitors from other neighbourhoods. (showing us the picture opposite)."

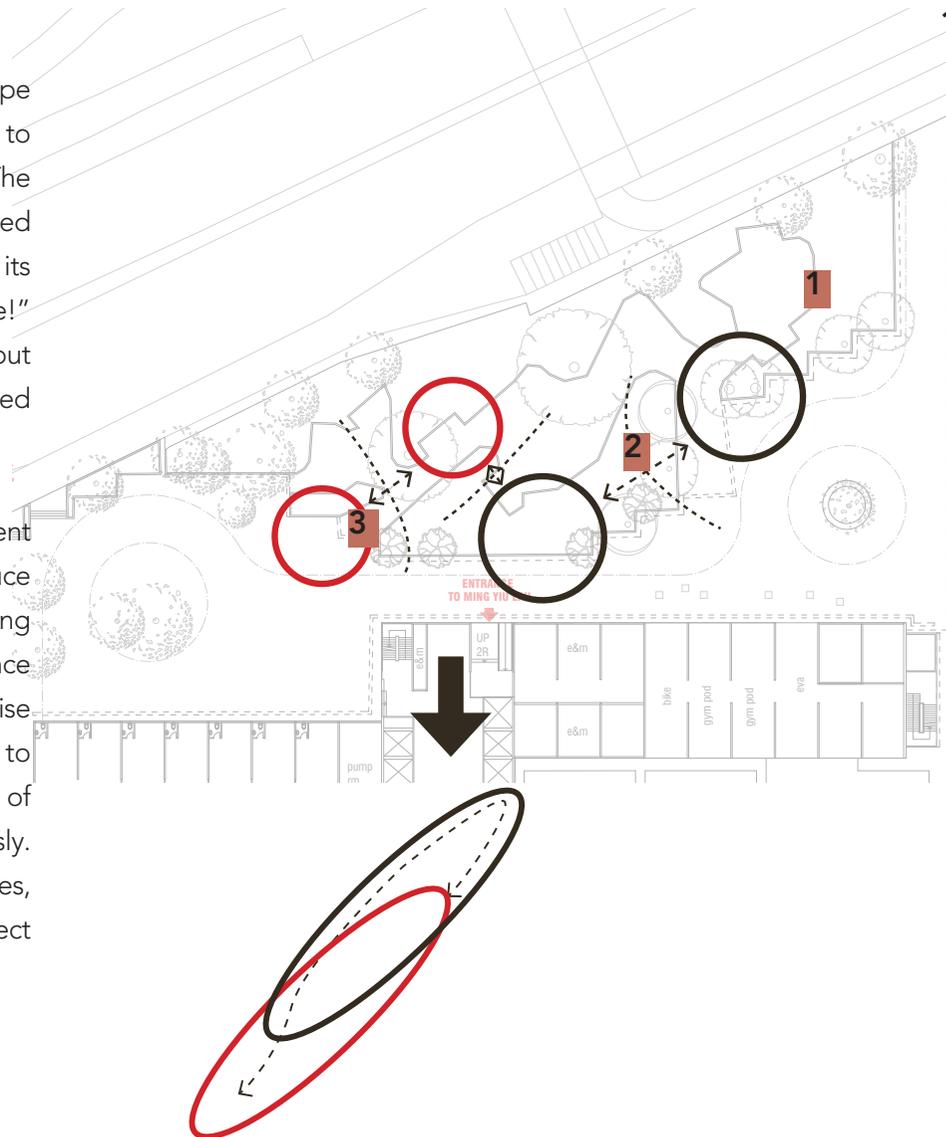
-- Granny Cheung



At present, there are two age-segregated, functionally-segregated zones near Ming Yiu Lau: one is a children’s playground, and the other is an elderly fitness zone.

The Design Team sets out to create a playscape for unstructured play, discovery and challenge to foster physical activity and social connection. The intention is to update the existing age-segregated playground by integrating and enhancing its current functions within the “IG Playscape!” play area, so that familiar spaces are not lost but reimagined as part of a holistic, age-integrated environment.

Instead of maintaining separate areas for different age groups, the new design will introduce blended routes and changes in level, creating varied physical challenges that support balance and coordination for everyone. Play and exercise zones will be interwoven, enabling activities to take place side by side and allowing people of different generations to interact spontaneously. This approach will foster shared experiences, build community, and promote mutual respect within the transformed playscape.



1

IG Playscape!

INTERFACE DESIGN

Central to the IG Playscape! design is the deliberate resolution of “interface conflicts” between age groups, achieved by addressing differences in pace, physical capacity, and play preferences through an expertly curated mix of equipment, intuitive circulation, and distinct colour zoning. Safety is not just a baseline requirement but a nuanced design driver: circulation routes are mapped out with high-contrast colour schemes to minimise collision risks, while floor markings and vibrant colours enhance wayfinding and cognitive engagement for users of all abilities. The selection of play and exercise equipment is balanced—offering developmental benefits for children and low-impact, accessible features for older adults—to create a genuinely interactive play experience. By weaving these considerations together, the IG Playscape! delivers a cohesive and vibrant network of play areas that are both secure and inviting, fostering spontaneous IG engagement and active play for all. This also helps to create a new distinctive play experience and feature in JMC.



CHILDREN AND ADULTS

The bright coloured zone marks a “fast movement zone”, prioritising safety while allowing children to run, explore, and play freely. Dedicated spaces is provided for adults to supervise, relax, or join in. This separation helps to prevent overcrowding and reduces the risk of accidents, making the environment safe and comfortable for everyone.

Equipment in the zone is chosen to encourage both individual and group activities. The climbing and slide structure, a familiar feature and collective memory for long-term residents, sits alongside multi-player swings and interactive games supported by floor markings. These elements invite people of all ages to play together, build friendships, and develop social skills through shared experiences.

The incorporation of interactive floor markings and multi-user equipment means that activities can be spontaneous and inclusive, allowing children, adults, and families to engage in imaginative play and physical challenges. The design ensures that the play area is not only vibrant and dynamic but also rooted in the community’s history and everyday life.



ADULTS AND ELDERLIES

The lighter coloured zone is seamlessly linked to the IG walking trail, which connects the entire estate. The trail’s lighter colours have been chosen to accommodate ageing eyesight, while the equipment along its length specifically enhances balance and coordination, supporting accessible, low-intensity exercise for residents of all ages.

A central focus of this area is fall prevention for older adults. Training stairs and textured surfaces are integrated throughout the space, allowing users to safely practise movements such as toe lifts and ankle control. These features help to train balance, gait, and reflexes through play, significantly reducing the risk of trips and falls through practice.

Beyond physical safety, these activities foster confidence, stability, knee strength, and flexibility — critical factors in preventing sarcopenia and supporting rehabilitation. The presence and energy of children using the space also serves as inspiration for older adults, encouraging them to participate in daily exercise and gradually build strength, helping them maintain independence and wellbeing.



1

IG Playscape!

PLAY WITHOUT BOUNDARIES: PLAYING WITH LEVEL DIFFERENCES, SPATIAL LAYERING AND CHOICE ARCHITECTURE

The IG Playscape! makes innovative use of level changes and varied routes to enable harmonious co-existence of IG play activities. This spatial layering allows children, adults, and older residents to enjoy the same area without disrupting one another's play or movement, while maintaining clear sightlines and safe circulation throughout.

Bridges and tunnels introduce multiple pathways and play levels, providing diverse play and exercise opportunities for energetic children and older adults. Children can explore, hide, and invent games using floor markings, while adults benefit from walking trails and observation points. Elevated features such as bridges add a sense of excitement and curiosity, motivating older adults to climb up and observe the play area from above. This transforms stair climbing into a stimulating activity, helping them build muscle strength and balance in a playful setting.

These vantage points also encourage IG interaction, as adults can watch and connect with children playing below, becoming active participants in their play experience. The design not only fosters independent and group play, but also strengthens connections across generations, making the IG Playscape! a welcoming and inclusive space for all.



DELIBERATIONS AND INSIGHTS

To address HKHS' concern about unattended corners under stairs and their potential for misuse, the design team has come up with an alternative approach that eliminates visually unsupervised areas. Adding lighting for security was considered; however, this could cause light pollution for lower-floor residents at night.

Instead, the team recommends the use of stairs with open risers, removing raised platforms and ensuring light permeability and clear sightlines throughout the IG play space. This design allows all users to be easily supervised, significantly reducing the risk of misuse or illegal activities, especially after dark.

The use of open riser stairs, however, presents specific safety challenges, particularly for younger children and older adults who may be less steady on their feet. To mitigate these risks, the design and construction process must pay close attention to:

1. **Stair Dimensions:** The height and depth of each step should be carefully calculated to minimise tripping hazards and ensure ease of use for all age groups.
2. **Materials:** Non-slip, durable materials should be used for treads, and all surfaces should be free from sharp edges.
3. **Railings:** Secure, continuous handrails must be installed on both sides, with heights suitable for children and adults.
4. **Visibility:** Contrasting colours or tactile strips can help users distinguish each step, further reducing the risk of falls.



2

Seating Arrangement



Planter integrated seating



* Seating immediately outside the Toy Bank

The design incorporates generous seating throughout the play areas, with particular emphasis on seating adjacent to the Toy Bank to support caregivers and facilitate social gatherings. EPDM soft flooring is recommended to minimise the risk of injury from falls, ensuring a safer environment for all users. The flexible layout enables play activities and HKHS soft programmes, which were previously limited to the Toy Bank area, to extend seamlessly into the neighbouring IG Playscape! zone. This integration encourages unstructured play and spontaneous IG interactions across the wider space.

This flexible arrangement transforms the area into a versatile, interactive environment that nurtures social connections and group play for people of all ages, fostering a stronger sense of community within JMC.

3

Activation of wind corridor (Theme: Balance and Coordination)



The Balance and Coordination Wind Corridor is designed as an engaging, inclusive pathway that encourages movement, play, and skill-building for all ages. This vibrant space nurtures agility, balance, and coordination — essential for lifelong wellbeing.

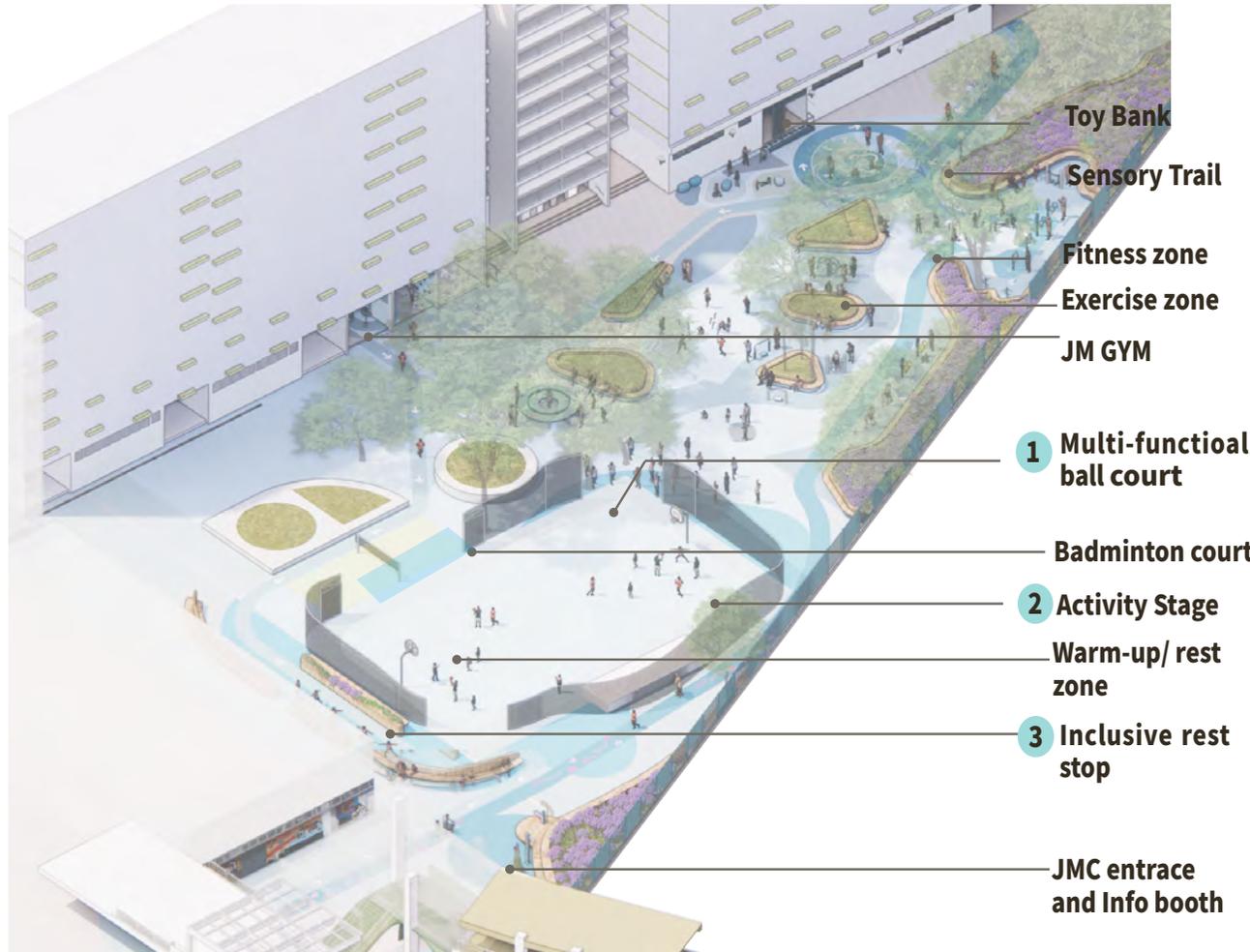
Interactive wall and floor markings guide users through activities like the Star Excursion Balance Test and Tic-tac-toe Grid Test, presenting mini-challenges to improve balance, coordination, and agility. Pathways with hopscotch patterns, zigzag routes, and stepping pods can be arranged to suit different skill levels and activities, supporting spontaneous family play, physical and cognitive training for older adults, and focused agility drills.

This flexible environment transforms a simple passageway into an opportunity for playful challenge, cognitive engagement, and gentle training, making the IG Playscape! area a lively destination for the entire community throughout the day.

3 MULTI-FUNCTIONAL SPORTS ZONE

“After the pandemic, we’ve visited JMC less often. Also, JMC doesn’t have suitable outdoor spaces for activities — there’s only the basketball court available for running.”

-- Participant Mrs Li



1 Multi-functional exercise zone and ball court



2 Activity stage



3 Inclusive rest stop



The open space in this area is a crucial gateway to JMC, linking the estate to the Shing Mun River, the MTR station, and Sha Kok Estate. It acts as a vibrant hub within JMC, offering amenities such as a basketball court, badminton court, and fitness zone. However, fencing has created both physical and visual barriers, separating these facilities and hindering their integration.

The community farming area, which has been unused for more than five years, also occupies valuable space that could otherwise serve the community. Despite being fenced off, incidents of trespassing have occurred, highlighting residents' strong interest in horticultural activities. This emphasises the need to reimagine and repurpose the area to better meet local needs.

The IG Play Space design scheme aims to revitalise this gateway, transforming it into an iconic entrance that welcomes residents and supports flexible use for emerging sports classes and larger events. By creating a multi-functional and inviting environment, the scheme aligns with the theme of Strength and Endurance, injecting fresh energy into the space and encouraging greater participation in interactive play and exercise. It is designed to cater to the diverse needs and interests of all users.

Consideration is also given to new residents from Chung Yuet Lau, the neighbouring elderly housing. These individuals need an inclusive and supportive environment to remain actively engaged in the community and to age in place with comfort. To balance these requirements, more intensive physical activities and events will be scheduled with time restrictions. A lighting strategy will gradually dim the area after 9 pm to discourage noisy activities, ensuring the space is used respectfully. LED foot lighting will be installed on street furniture to maintain sufficient illumination without causing light pollution for residents on the lower floors.



Existing basketball court area



Existing fitness zone



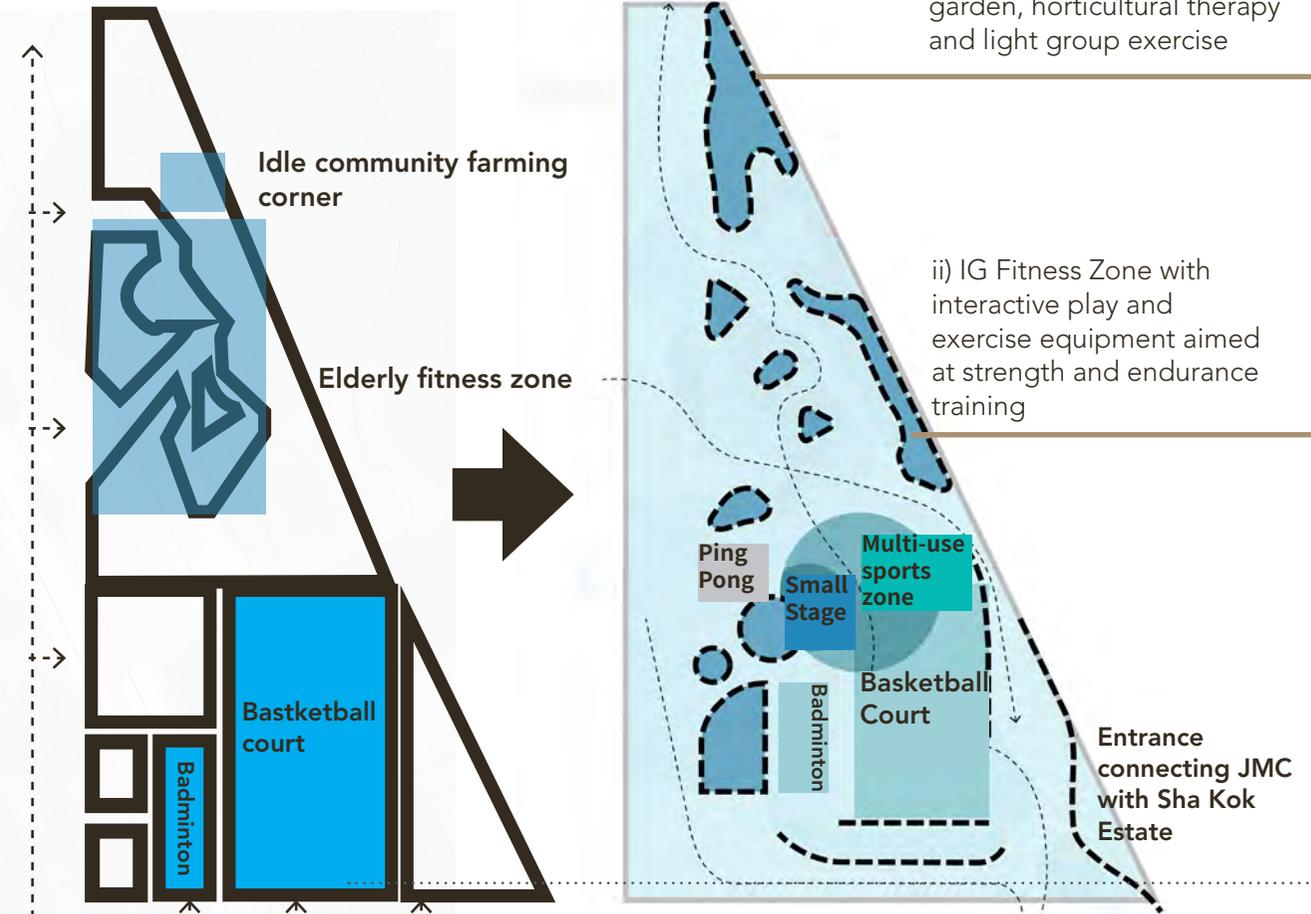
Idle community farming area (to be revitalised as sensory trail in conceptual design opposite)

1 | Age-integrated, functionally-integrated IG Play Space

The upgraded area offers distinct, flexible zones that are designed to enhance user experience and meet diverse needs. Building on the area's existing strengths, the new layout promotes physical activity, social interaction, and overall well-being for all.

Moving away from the previous age-segregated arrangement, the updated scheme encourages engagement across generations by providing multi-functional spaces for daily exercise, training, and community events. The idle community farming area is now transformed into a community-led sensory garden and horticultural therapy zone. With activities carefully curated according to the site's context, the public realm is now used more effectively, supporting inclusive play, exercise, socialising, and rest for all.

By activating the area—especially along the Sha Kok Estate interface—the design creates a welcoming atmosphere that encourages spontaneous interaction and strengthens neighbourhood connections. The software-led hardware approach ensures the environment remains adaptable, supporting both programmed activities and informal play.



Traditional age-segregated design with restricted access points into the playspace

Age-integrated, functionally-integrated play space - more open, fluid and interactive, and links up with the IG walking trail



i). Sensory Trail - Community-led Sensory Garden and Horticultural Therapy Zone

The Sensory Trail at JMC features a community-led sensory garden and horticultural therapy zone, which can be managed by HKHS and HKFYG as a joint IG programme. These activities provide valuable respite and play opportunities for families, particularly benefiting young children and those with MCI by supporting cognitive development, sensory integration, and overall wellbeing. Further collaboration with J.C.DISI, the Department of Rehabilitation Science, and the School of Nursing can help deliver social design programmes, cognitive training, and advance social prescribing with HKHS, broadening IG opportunities for residents. There is also scope to partner with PolyU's Department of Food Science and Nutrition to offer healthy eating workshops as part of the soft programme. These initiatives are particularly beneficial for family activities involving young children and those with MCI, helping to promote cognitive development and wellbeing for all ages.



ii) Fitness Zone and Interactive Play facilities for strength and endurance training

The IG Fitness Zone features interactive fitness equipment for strength and endurance training. The area also provides ample shaded seating and light exercise equipment, such as adjustable arm and pedal bikes and stair steps, which are especially well-suited to less active older adults. Residents are encouraged to exercise and play while observing children at play nearby.



This space is particularly beneficial for caregivers, enabling them to participate in a range of exercises and activities together, whilst maintaining visual contact with the person they are caring for. The design encourages shared activity and social interaction among adults, older adults, and children. Age-neutral interactive equipment, such as trampolines, seated leg presses and low-rise monkey bars, fosters engagement between residents and supports interactive play suitable for all ages, enhancing the family experience and overall user enjoyment.

2 | Increase permeability and visibility through the site

REPLACE THE EXISTING BULKY FENCING WITH FLEXIBLE GATES

To increase permeability and visibility across the site at JMC, it is proposed to remove the existing bulky fences and gate structures, replacing them with chain link fencing and sliding or foldable gates. The introduction of flexible fencing marks a transformative change in the IG play space. This intervention does more than simply improve access—it fundamentally redefines the character and potential of the area.

By eliminating physical barriers and opening up sightlines, the space becomes visually and socially connected to its surroundings. Residents are no longer separated from activity but are instead invited to observe, interact, and participate in community life. During events such as weekly exercise classes or festivals, the flexible gates can be opened to allow activities to extend beyond the basketball court, enabling the IG play space to spill into adjacent areas and welcome users of all ages and abilities.

This transformation allows the IG play space to evolve from a closed, single-purpose facility into a vibrant, multi-functional hub. The space now supports spontaneous play, informal gatherings, and IG interactions throughout the day. It encourages repeated visits, chance encounters, and shared experiences, fostering a strong sense of community belonging.

Furthermore, the design supports soft programming and adaptable use, enabling organisers to tailor activities without disrupting estate operations - a key pain point for HKHS and HKFYG in running soft programmes. This intervention exemplifies inclusive, active design—embedding play and physical activity into the daily life of residents, and positioning the IG play space as a dynamic, welcoming environment where healthy ageing, social connection, and community engagement flourish.

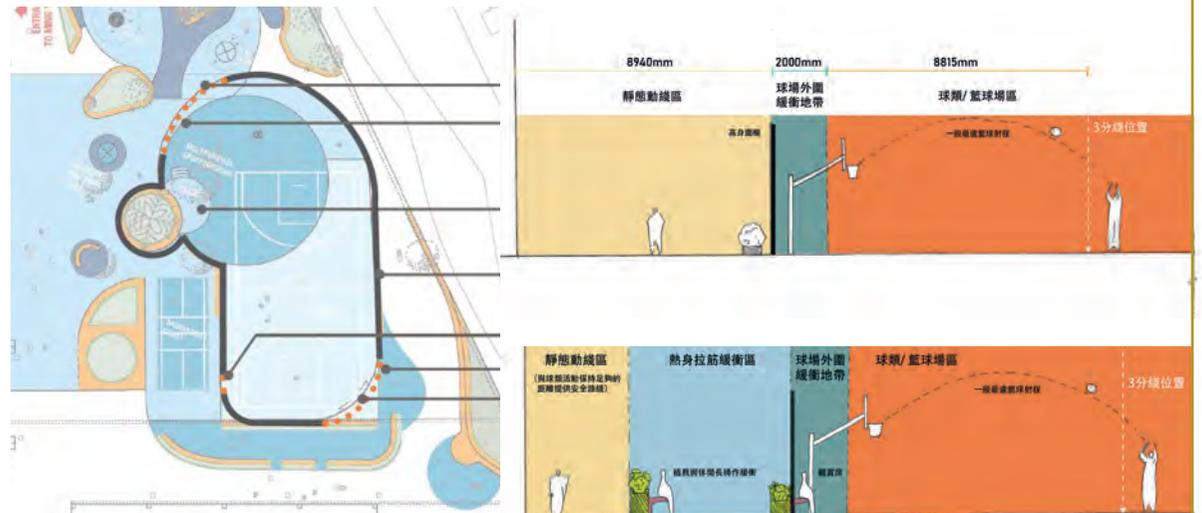


ADDRESSING HKHS OPERATIONAL CONCERNS

The optimal design for the Multi-functional Sports Zone focuses on creating an interactive and engaging environment by redesigning the basketball court without fences. This enables a diverse range of sports and soft programmes to take place throughout the day, enhancing permeability and visual connections while allowing flexibility for tailored events.

Instead of traditional 2–4m high fences, a 5m wide buffer zone has been introduced to minimise disturbance from stray basketballs to neighbouring residents. This innovative approach not only supports a multi-functional setting for organic IG activities, but also encourages residents to participate in various events.

However, in response to HKHS concerns regarding safety and night-time noise, the final design now features a basketball court enclosed with sliding or foldable gates. This solution strikes a balance between safety, operational efficiency, and the preservation of visual and physical connections within the community. The space remains adaptable, providing open access as needed, while maintaining a secure environment for all residents.



With gates closed for sports games or small scale events



With sliding gates closed



With sliding gates open to increase permeability and for large scale events

3

Activation of wind corridor (Theme: Strength and Endurance)



The Activation of the Wind Corridor transforms a simple passageway into an inspiring, multifunctional space that celebrates strength, endurance and movement. Bold floor markings guide users, define running lanes, and create challenge zones for activities such as sprints, endurance runs, and interval training. Distance markers and motivational phrases along the path encourage goal-setting and celebrate achievements. Floor graphics invite participation in mini-challenges like “Fastest 100m” or “Endurance Zone”, promoting friendly competition. Strategically placed gym bikes activate passive areas, allowing users to warm up, cool down, or join community challenges.

IoT-enabled infrastructure can also support health management and community challenges. Rotating leaderboards for different age groups and activities—such as running, cycling, and steps—offer inclusive recognition, tracking of performance and contributing to shared goals, such as “Total Distance This Month”. If this concept is replicated in other estates these “twinned estates” can engage in friendly competitions and boost the sense of identity of these residents. Through these active design elements, the corridor becomes a catalyst for personal growth, community engagement, and friendly competition, complementing the Multi-functional Sports Zone and energising the space for all.



4

Overall Schematic Design and Suggested Construction Phasing

BEFORE

AFTER

1

2

3

4

ENTRANCE TO MAIN PLAY AREA

** Play equipment already proposed to HKHS, not shown here as subject to HKHS' developing phasing.

4 MING SHUN LAU - IG SENSORY GARDEN

"I want more cool new things here. It's always the same old stuff, nothing exciting. Even my friends from outside don't really want to come and hang out at JMC."
- Wing Tung, 10



The Open Space next to Ming Shun Lau features the Nordic Walking Trail and the Newly Emerged Sports Zone, attracting people of all ages to participate in regular exercise. Beyond scheduled training sessions, the area is actively used by children cycling, adults jogging, and families visiting the nearby JMC Swimming Pool, which opens directly onto this space.

However, as the area is currently only painted, it requires regular maintenance and repainting. Investing in further upgrades would make the Sports Zone more lively and diverse, encouraging even more residents to use the space—especially given its proximity to the swimming pool.

It is important to note that some residents living above have raised concerns about noise from frequent training and group gatherings. To address this, the design team recommends introducing sensory-based activities to balance the atmosphere, making the area both active and supportive of nature play. This approach ensures the Sports Ground remains an inclusive and welcoming hub for IG play, while respecting the needs of all in the community.



1 | Create a nature-themed Open Space



Named the IG Sensory Garden, this IG playscape is designed to fully immerse users in nature play, encouraging exploration and interaction with the natural environment. The garden incorporates low impact, gentle motion play equipment inspired by nature, alongside fragrant planting and textured surfaces, inviting users to engage all five senses—sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell—through playful encounters with the landscape and the changing seasons.

The Sensory Garden also integrates dedicated spaces for Newly Emerged Sports, Mølky and Nordic walking, offering multi-purpose pathways and exercise zones that promote active lifestyles across generations. The garden's tranquil atmosphere will allow users to enjoy physical activity while staying connected to nature.



Through careful curation of natural materials, colour palettes, and outdoor furnishings, the Sensory Garden fosters a sense of renewal and peace for body and mind. By promoting nature play, sensory engagement, and mindfulness, alongside opportunities for low impact play activities and group exercises, the garden supports holistic well-being and encourages users to return, connect, and thrive in this welcoming IG space.

2 Reinstating community farming and the plant nursery

1. 視覺



設置小小的簡介木牌讓街坊可透過放大鏡欣賞社區園圃的農作物，一方面加強視覺專注力，另一方面亦可提升植物的認知。



2. 聽覺



營造一個安靜舒適的自然花園，令街坊可聚精會神地聆聽植物搖動的聲音，或以音響播放流水聲音，加強主題的同時亦可訓練聽覺。



3. 味覺



可鼓勵街坊於社區園圃收成期舉行共享餐桌，讓乙明邨居民分享收成的喜悅。



4. 嗅覺



可於互賞感知花園種植香草(如檸檬草、薰衣草等) 或香味較濃的植物，配合調香工作坊，藉此訓練嗅覺。



5. 觸覺



挑選質感較強的設施讓小朋友在玩耍時強化觸感外，社區園圃的種植體驗亦有助不同年齡的居民提升皮膚對環境的敏感度。



The reinstatement of the community farming and nursery zone within the IG Sensory Garden is designed to cultivate a peaceful setting, encouraging quieter, more calming activities. This uncurated approach is especially valuable for balancing the increased noise and energy from group activities at the Sports Corner and Nordic Walk areas. By providing a tranquil alternative, the garden minimises disturbance for residents living above and invites them to come down, participate, and enjoy shared moments in a relaxed environment.

To further enrich the IG Sensory Garden, dedicated youth and elderly programmes will be introduced to foster interaction and knowledge exchange. These may be jointly delivered by HKHS and HKFYG, with training support from HKFYG and J.C.DISI for youth leaders and local students to curate soft programmes and initiatives that engage all five senses — sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell. Such initiatives build young people’s capacity, sustain the IG programme, and keep the garden vibrant with fresh ideas, while supporting HKHS and HKFYG in delivering high-quality activities.

By equipping young people to lead soft programmes as part of leadership development and the STEAM curriculum, the project promotes healthy ageing, community contribution and IG solidarity, while nurturing the next generation of community leaders.

3 | Activation of wind corridor (Theme: Sensory and Cognisance)



The sensory, cognisance, and vestibular activity zone is a vibrant, nature-inspired extension of the IG Sensory Garden area, designed to enrich sensory experiences and promote holistic health. By introducing guided breathing, meditation, and RFID health management, and harmoniously integrating with Nordic walking, Mölkky and other Newly Emerged Sports, the zone nurtures playful exploration, IG engagement, and lifelong well-being in a safe, inclusive setting. Interactive panels and memory stations challenge attention and working memory, supporting cognitive health.

RFID-enabled stations allow users to book Nordic Walking, Mölkky sessions and Newly Emerged Sports activities, track their activity, and support self-management of wellness goals. This data-driven approach encourages regular participation and adaptive training, advancing HKHS' Caring Engaging Smart initiatives and supporting continuous soft programme development to boost IG interaction and health management.

4 Overall Design for the IG Sensory Garden



Instead of using wooden mulch or cork, EDPM surfacing in a wood-toned colour will be installed. This material is designed to evoke the look and feel of sand or woodland play, enhancing the sensory experience for children and older adults in particular by mimicking natural environments.

** Play equipment to be selected based on the finalized design scheme and surface treatment, equipment shown on the right is for reference only.



5 CENTRAL PLAZA

“My children love climbing the artificial hill at Nanshan Park (in Shenzhen). The Central Plaza has a grassy area, would be great if children can climb on it. It is safe for children to play without worrying about falling.”

-- Parents with children aged 5 and 7





The central plaza at JMC serves as a key gathering point for residents and students from nearby schools. Situated at the heart of the estate, close to bus stops, it is primarily used as a thoroughfare and perceived as part of the retail strip surrounded by residential buildings, rather than as a space for relaxation or social interaction. The plaza includes a raised planter with stone seating and tables, offering clear potential to strengthen its role and identity within the community.

At present, the central plaza serves as the main venue for large-scale events. However, outside these occasions, it functions mainly as a landscaped garden, with access to the raised planter restricted due to safety and loading concerns. Many residents and participants in IG Play Day and co-creation workshops have expressed a desire for more activities and play options to make better use of this local landmark.

To unlock the plaza's potential, the IG Play Space design scheme proposes converting the raised platform into an accessible landscaped garden suitable for low-impact activities. A built-in stage will be installed to facilitate festivities and events, reducing the need for temporary marquees and staging. Several design alternatives were explored, ranging from minor enhancements to more imaginative solutions that would improve the connectivity as well as the play value of the plaza and the elevated walkway, thereby creating additional IG play opportunities.

Following detailed co-design sessions with HKHS, a streamlined approach was agreed, involving alteration and addition works to reinforce the raised planter and ensure barrier-free access. This will create a mini-oasis at the centre of the plaza, transforming it into an inclusive 'third place' where people can gather, relax, and feel a sense of belonging—making it a vibrant hub for leisure, events, and IG social interaction.

1

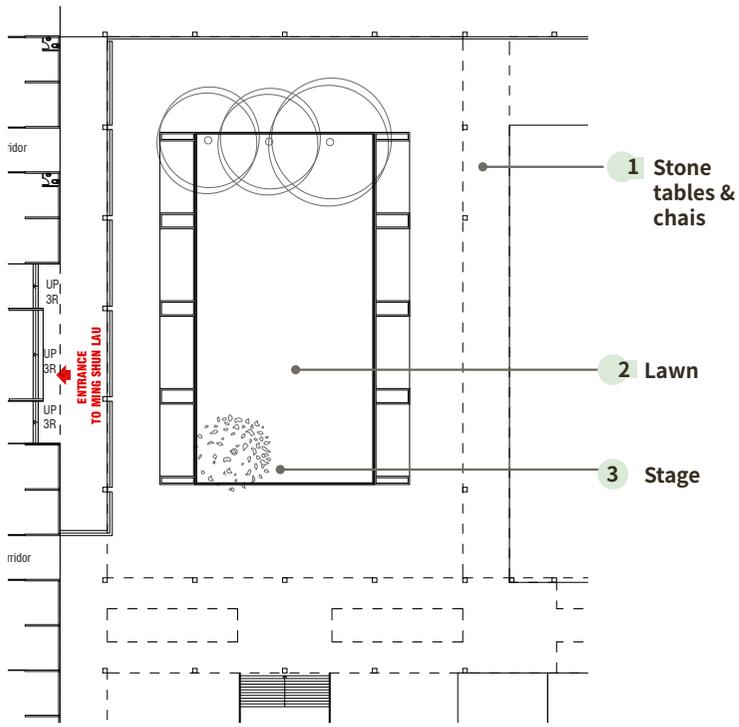
Reinforcing the Central Plaza's Role as the Heart of Community Life

Feedback from User Habit Studies, IG Fun Day, and co-creation workshops reveals strong resident support for converting the raised planter into a flexible lawn for community use and IG play, reaffirming its importance as a key asset for JMC.

Building on this, the central plaza upgrade aims to increase play value and reinforce its identity as a local landmark. The design prioritises inclusivity, safety, and practical amenities to bring residents together and foster a greater sense of belonging. A built-in event stage facing the wet market is introduced to attract users to join activities, while improved seating and table arrangements and accessible pathways will enhance comfort and movement.

These improvements will strengthen the plaza's role as a central gathering place, ideal for both daily use and special events. This transformation will not only enrich the central plaza's sense of place, but also establish it as a vibrant centre for connection and well-being, helping to build stronger social ties within the community.





2

From Barriers to Belonging: Upgrading Central Plaza for Universal Access and Social Connection

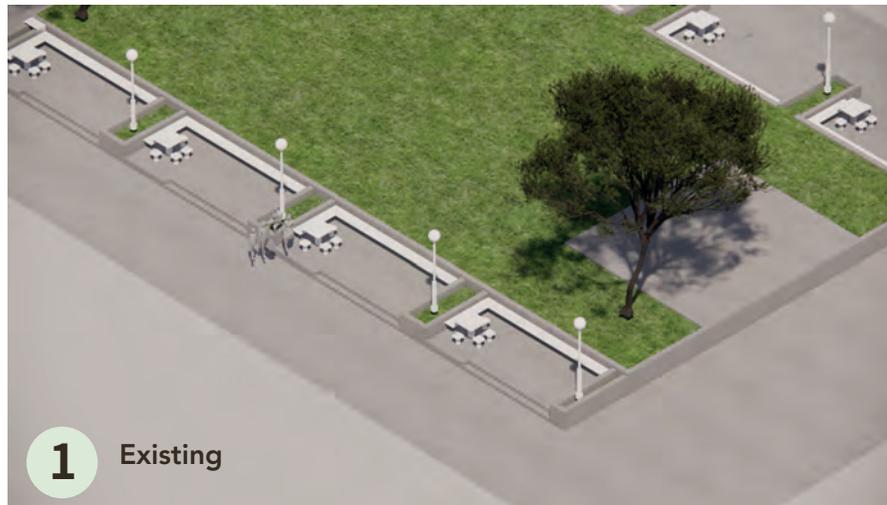


A key challenge is improving access to the elevated lawn, a popular spot for informal play and social gatherings. The current chairs and tables mainly accommodate quick stops, rather than encouraging group interaction. The new design introduces landscape steps that double as seating and pathways, providing flexible vantage points and inviting casual encounters. Crucially, a wheelchair-accessible, Barrier Free Access-compliant ramp ensures everyone — including wheelchair users and families with pushchairs — can easily reach and enjoy the garden for spontaneous play.

Barrier-free access is especially important for older adults, as it allows them to reach the garden independently. The gentle incline offers a chance for light exercise — a “mini-workout” — which supports physical health and motivates participation in community life and family activities. This autonomy reinforces dignity, self-efficacy, and confidence to stay active and engaged.

The landscape is organised to balance active and passive uses. Energetic events on the stage are carefully managed, while buffer zones with lush planting, shaded alcoves, and sensory gardens provide peaceful retreats. Soft programming — such as tai chi, storytelling, and picnic-friendly lawn mounds — encourages a relaxed, sociable atmosphere and helps minimise noise, reducing disturbance to nearby residents and strengthening community bonds.

Collectively, these measures transform the garden into a vibrant, inclusive hub — a place for connection, respite, and well-being at the heart of the community. This approach also enhances the “Can We Stay” and “Can We Play” experience, reinforcing the plaza’s role in community life and creating new opportunities for local retailers through thoughtful placemaking.



3 | Introduce measures to create quiet ambience

In response to HKHS’ concerns about potential noise disturbances from the plaza’s activation, the design scheme for the IG Play Space incorporates social design strategies and offers various solutions to address this issue. These measures aim to strike a balance by discouraging overly active and noisy activities while still allowing the lawn to be used for leisure and low-impact activities.

a. Trees and shrubs

By thoughtfully arranging trees and shrubs as natural noise barriers, pocket spaces are created that gently guide movement and activity, fostering a calm and restful atmosphere. These tranquil pockets offer groups secluded, sunlit corners to unwind and enjoy peaceful moments together. The result is a visually appealing landscape that enhances both privacy and well-being for all users.

b. Interest spots

By introducing a variety of engaging interest spots and mini games throughout the IG play space, children’s attention is naturally drawn to these focused areas. Activities such as puzzles, sensory stations, and quiet group challenges encourage concentration, discovery and imaginative play, helping to channel energy into purposeful, quieter activities.

c. White Noises

White noises possess a soothing quality that can mask background noise, fostering relaxation and contributing to a serene ambience, which may help create a calm ambience and minimise noises that cause disturbances to residents.



Strategy 2

Create a quiet play station for children that enhances focus while reducing the chances of making loud noises.



Dahurian Larch



Sabina chinensis



Hollies



Boxwood



Dogwood



magnolia



Plum



Cherry

Strategy 1

- Use trees and shrubs as sound barriers and for spatial degradation, seperating areas intended for more energetic activities from those reserved for quieter, low-impact uses.
- Doubles to improve privacy.

With these proposed interventions and mitigation measures, intimate and flexible spaces can be provided that optimise the function of an elevated lawn, where individuals can relax and appreciate the surroundings without disrupting the tranquillity of a green lawn.



Strategy 3

- Use natural sounds (such as flowing water and animal sounds) to mask noise and create a tranquil space.
- Can also play nature-based music or tunes

6 ELEVATED WALKWAY

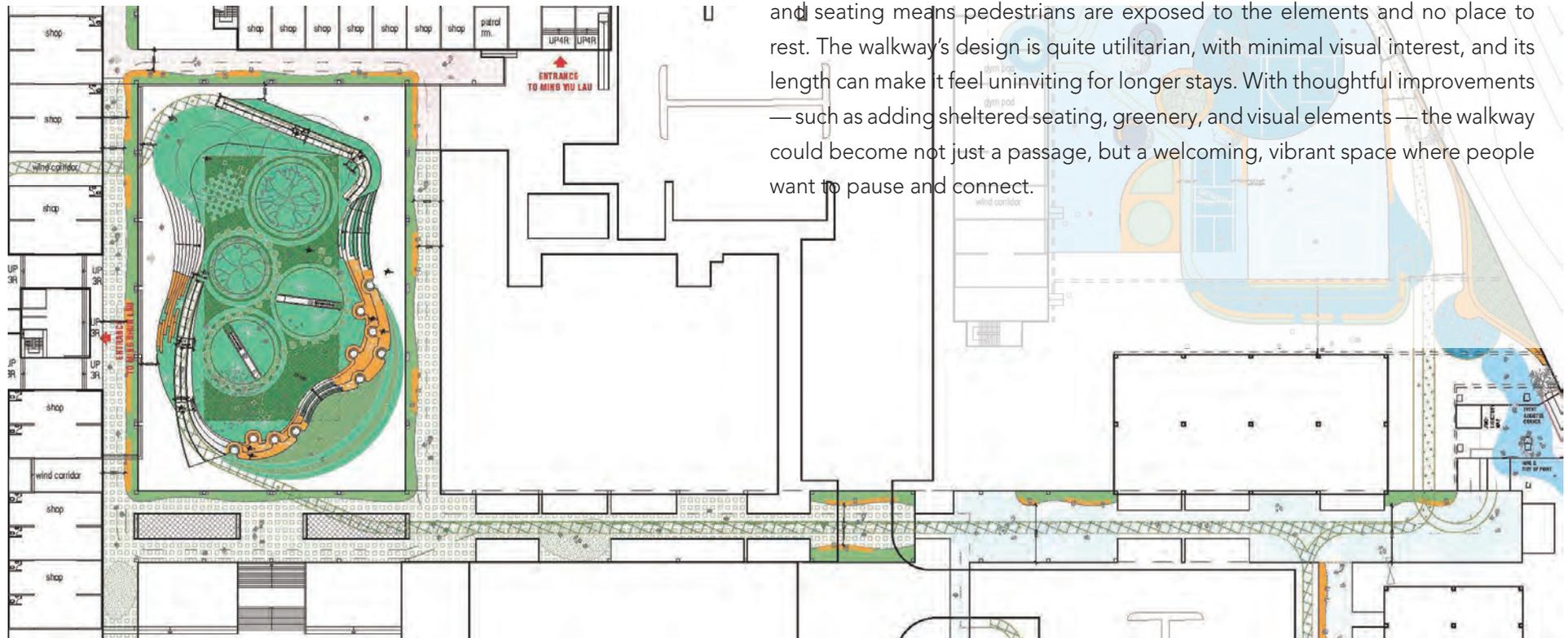
“Would be great if I could have a place to sit to wait for my kid.”

“I want to play spinning top with my friends on the walkway!”

-- Grandma and Grandson, 68 and 9

The elevated walkway at JMC is a valuable asset, providing an essential link between the residential blocks and the broader community, including local schools and the Sha Kok Shopping Mall. It is especially useful for Chung Yuet Lau, the elderly housing block constructed using MiC technology, and provides seamless, barrier-free access to Sha Kok Estate and the Sha Kok Commercial Centre. It also provides retail opportunities for food and beverage businesses and tutorial centres.

While the walkway excels as a connector and thoroughfare, there are still opportunities to enhance the user experience. Currently, the absence of shelters and seating means pedestrians are exposed to the elements and no place to rest. The walkway’s design is quite utilitarian, with minimal visual interest, and its length can make it feel uninviting for longer stays. With thoughtful improvements — such as adding sheltered seating, greenery, and visual elements — the walkway could become not just a passage, but a welcoming, vibrant space where people want to pause and connect.



1

Transforming Elevated Walkways and Window Views to Foster Place Identity and Connectedness

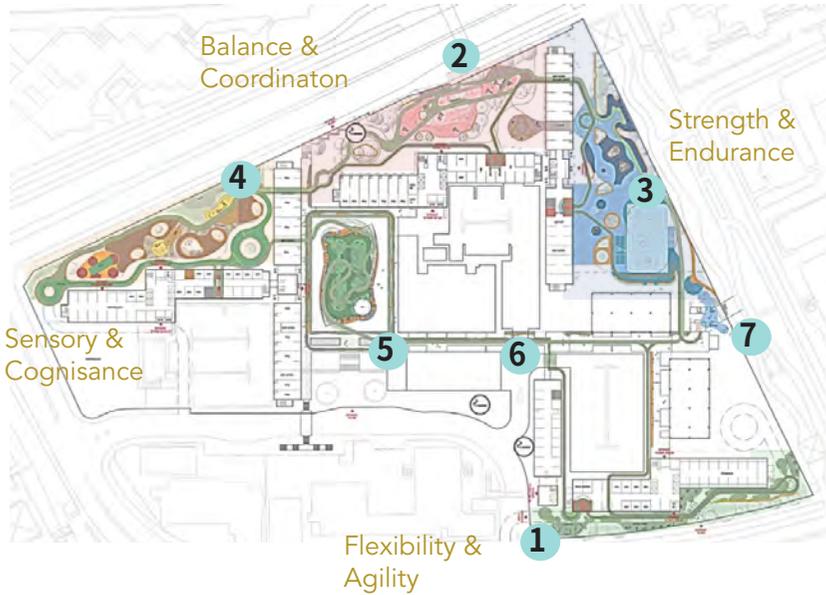
While adding shelter and seating to the elevated walkway is technically possible—especially with lightweight options—HKHS remains cautious about introducing new amenities before upgrading and reinforcing the structure, as these enhancements could increase foot traffic and encourage more active use.

To address these structural and operational concerns, the design team has proposed floor painting as a quick win to enhance the walkway's visual appeal ahead of further upgrades. This low-cost, high-impact initiative would immediately enliven the environment for commuters and parents waiting for children at tutorial classes, encouraging conversation and gentle play. Residents' feedback at the IG Inclusion Day in December 2022 (see pg 27) confirmed that this idea would be well received. Importantly, the vibrant designs are intended to uplift the mood of at-risk older adults and homebound residents by providing a lively view from their windows overlooking the central plaza, motivating them to come down, participate in community life, and maintain social connections. The improved image of the area will also help attract more visitors to the walkway, benefiting local retailers.

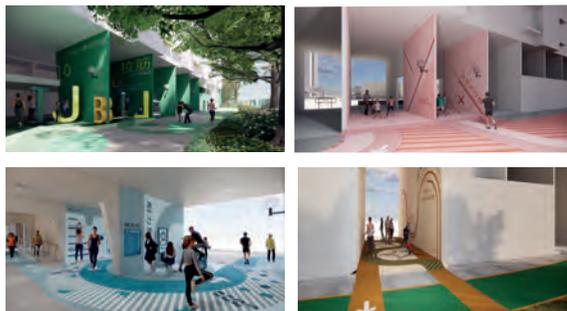
Overall, this initiative not only responds to practical constraints but also enhances visual appeal, fosters social connection, uplifts mood, and activates the space for all users—transforming the walkway into a vibrant, inclusive, and attractive community asset while paving the way for future improvements.



6.11 DESIGN SUMMARY FOR JC IG PLAY SPACE @ JMC SCHEME, AND REPLICABILITY OF THE CONCEPT



4 activated corridors as JM GYM



The JMC IG Play Space Conceptual Design Scheme demonstrates how a mature housing estate can be revitalised with sensitivity, retaining its character while making the public realm truly play-ready for all ages and abilities. Instead of simply replacing play equipments to promote IG play, the scheme reimagines everyday movement, resting, and gathering as shared opportunities for play, enjoyment and social connection.

Through modest, strategic interventions, the design advances five guiding principles — age integration, agency and inclusiveness, enabling environments for IG play, experience-led engagement, and software-led hardware design — ensuring that improvements are practical, sustainable, and easily managed over time. Central to the scheme is a legible, barrier-free IG walking trail, linking the upgraded

play areas, rest points and flexible activity zones, so that daily circulation becomes a platform for gentle exercise and spontaneous play. This encourages participation from all residents, including those with reduced mobility, MCI, neuro-diverse individuals and caregivers, fostering shared experiences and genuine inclusion.

The environment is intentionally designed to offer choice, supporting both independent and social activities, active and restorative experiences, without exclusion. Microclimate improvements, sensory cues, seating, clear wayfinding, and the activation of underused spaces all contribute to a welcoming doorstep play experience that encourages repeat visits and daily participation.

Health-enabling concepts drawn from play theory, physical therapy, occupational therapy and gerontology are seamlessly integrated in the spatial design and play experience curation to promote healthy ageing and slow functional decline. Play and exercise elements provide graded challenges — from light mobility support to more active training — and enable dual play, so caregivers and companions can engage together. The dedicated JM Gym offers opportunities for focused exercise, respite and informal social interaction, helping to reduce caregiver strain and strengthen community ties.

Most importantly, the JMC IG Play Space Scheme has been conceived as a scalable and replicable model. Initial improvements can begin with cost-

effective enhancements — such as upgraded pathways, seating, signage, wall art and floor markings — with modular play and exercise elements added over time to activate IG play. Diverse programmes are layered in through cross-sector partnerships, ensuring the sustainability of IG play and deepening community bonds to keep the IG play activities fresh and interesting. This phased delivery approach empowers the HKHS and its partners to co-design initiatives that respond to changing priorities and drive service innovation.

The scheme also serves as an enabling environment for social prescribing, supporting the expansion of HKHS' "Caring Engaging Smart" initiative and advancing proactive community health. By prioritising inclusive design, sustained engagement, and adaptability, the IG play space concept establishes a benchmark for healthy, connected living environments—one that can be readily replicated across other estates and public spaces in Hong Kong.

The subsequent chapter will outline best practices for designing and managing IG Play Space and provide practical guidance for implementing this approach in diverse contexts, ensuring its benefits can be realised widely and sustainably across Hong Kong to tackle the "Double Ageing" challenge.



IG Playscape! Transformation - Play Without Boundaries (1:250)

The IG Playground reimagines inclusive play through innovative spatial layering, level differences, and choice architecture. Distinct play levels and clear sightlines promote safe movement and interaction. Energetic children explore, invent games, and hide using playful floor markings, while adults benefit from walking trails and elevated observation points. Bridges and stairs turn climbing into a stimulating, strength-building activity for older adults, encouraging active participation and healthy ageing.



Multi-functional Sports Ground Transformation (1:250)

The upgraded sports ground is now a dynamic, multi-functional hub designed for all ages and abilities. The new design activates the Sha Kok Estate interface, creating a welcoming atmosphere that strengthens neighbourhood connections. The software-led hardware approach keeps the environment adaptable for both programmed activities and unstructured play, supporting organisers and residents without disrupting estate operations.



Scale Model showing the Flexibility and Agility Zone in Ming Yan Lau with the co-designed play equipment (1:250)

7

8

7

DESIGNING AND MANAGING IG PLAY SPACE

7.1

Joyful, safe and welcoming play environment for all

“Playgrounds are vital in providing spaces where children can express and challenge themselves, be active, experience risk and develop life skills to manage it - all the while being as safe as necessary, not as safe as possible.”

- The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, provides advice and information on playground management and the safety of indoor and outdoor play areas.

INTRODUCTION

While safety remains a fundamental consideration in the design of play spaces, it must be balanced with the equally important need for enjoyment, social interaction, and physical challenge. Overly cautious, risk-averse designs often result in uninspiring spaces that fail to capture the imagination or foster meaningful engagement. By drawing on comprehensive studies of user habits and applying sound social design principles, it is possible to strike the right balance—ensuring safety while also embracing elements of risky play that are essential for growth and discovery. This approach is central to creating IG play spaces that are not only safe and welcoming, but also genuinely enjoyable and conducive to repeated visits. Such spaces become vibrant settings for community connection, supporting a wide range of activities and interactions across generations.

This chapter sets out the best practice principles for designing and managing IG play spaces, with the aim of cultivating inclusive, lively, and sustainable environments that bring people together and support healthy, active community life.

7.2 BEST PRACTICE FOR DESIGNING AND MANAGING IG PLAY SPACE

1. Accessibility: Making the Space Reachable

Accessible design should extend from the point of arrival right through to the full engagement of users.



1. **Go beyond the minimum requirements for barrier-free access.** In addition to providing level surfaces and clear pathways to reach play areas, both designers and the facilities management team should smooth out uneven surfaces and remove pinch points that obstruct wheelchairs and pushchairs as part of the IG play strategy. Designers should also ensure that key pathways are sufficiently wide to allow at least one wheelchair or pushchair and their carer to walk side by side.
2. **Locate IG play spaces close to public transport, key amenities, and retail options** so that all users can reach the space easily as part of their daily routines, especially in combining play and exercise with other daily tasks, such as shopping or attending appointments. This integration into the everyday flow of community life removes barriers to participation, encourages spontaneous visits, and helps the IG play space to become a natural, well-used part of the neighbourhood.
3. **Use clear, intuitive pathways with short, direct routes between activity areas** to facilitate easy navigation for individuals of all ages and abilities.
4. **Provide wayfinding signage at eye level**, featuring symbols, high-contrast graphics, and descriptive text to support navigation for people of all ages and a range of cognitive abilities.

2. Legibility: Guiding Intuitive Navigation



Clear spatial organisation helps users – regardless of age, physical and cognitive abilities – to appreciate the function of the space and the opportunities available to confidently explore, participate and enjoy the space to the fullest.

1. **Intuitive layouts with logical activity zones:** Arranging the space into clear, easily recognisable zones means users can understand the function of each area at a glance, helping people of all ages and abilities to orient themselves quickly and make choices about where to go and what to do.
2. **High-contrast signage with symbols and simple text for intuitive wayfinding:** Using bold colours, universally recognised symbols, and straightforward language ensures that everyone—including those with limited literacy or visual impairments—can navigate the space independently and conveniently.
3. **Memorable features act as visual anchors within the IG play space:** These landmarks not only assist users in orienting themselves and remembering routes, but also make the environment more inviting and encourage repeated visits.
4. **Clear sight lines throughout the site:** Unobstructed views across the play space allow users to see where different activities are taking place, spot points of interest, and maintain visual contact with companions. This openness reduces anxiety, enhances safety, and motivates exploration.
5. **Subtle guidance through planting, ground textures, and visual anchors:** Using landscaping and surface changes to gently direct movement helps users intuitively follow paths and discover new areas. These cues support spontaneous play and interaction, contributing to a more inclusive and engaging environment.

7.2 BEST PRACTICE FOR DESIGNING AND MANAGING IG PLAY SPACE

3. Safety

Protecting Without Constraining Play



Effective safety design in IG play spaces balances hazard mitigation with enabling appropriate challenge.

1. **Acknowledge that eliminating all hazards is impossible.** Instead, design for risk awareness, empowering users—especially children and older adults—to assess and manage their own risks. This approach nurtures confidence and resilience, helping users to make informed decisions and develop essential life skills through play.
2. **Select materials and equipment that minimise injury risks,** such as soft, non-slip surfaces and rounded edges, ensuring suitability for users of all ages and abilities.
3. **Maintain clear sight lines and open layouts to support supervision and natural surveillance,** while secure boundaries near hazards, such as roads or water, keep sightlines open for easy monitoring.
4. **Avoid visual clutter; strategic seating, thoughtful planting, and good lighting** foster engagement between users and carers, reducing direct intervention and supporting independent, spontaneous play. This will also improve the sense of safety and sense of security of users to encourage dwelling and repeat visits.
5. **Provide clear, equipment-specific instructions with diagrams and QR codes** linking to instructional videos, developed in collaboration with designers, relevant health professionals, equipment suppliers and playground safety inspectors.
6. **Implement regular inspections and prompt maintenance using IoT solutions,** such as QR codes for easy reporting, to ensure that equipment is repaired promptly and that hazards are addressed before they cause harm to reduce downtime.

4. Comfort: Promoting Engagement and Extending Stay



Physical comfort is closely linked to how long people remain in the IG play space and the quality of their interactions.

1. **Provide a range of seating:** ergonomic benches near play and activity zones for carers and participants, clustered seating to encourage conversation, seats with backs and armrests for those needing extra support and design and planter with seating
2. **Use shading solutions:** prioritise mature trees with broad crowns to provide natural shade, and supplement with well-designed shelters for reliable protection from sun and rain in all seasons. Consider creative art installations, such as sculptural canopies or modular shading, to further increase coverage and enhance thermal comfort.
3. **Address thermal comfort:** conduct sun path analysis in designing the play space to strategically locate play and exercise equipment and facilities. Select cooler materials for surfaces, especially in subtropical climates. Add wind breaks where needed for exposed areas.
4. **Guarantee accessible amenities:** ensure public toilets are clean, open access (no keys required), and provide handwashing basins and water stations for user convenience and hygiene.
5. **Position IG play spaces close to retail and food/beverage outlets** to incentivise play, support longer visits and spontaneous social interaction.
6. **Adopt a planting strategy** to create subtle zones, reduce reliance on hard surfaces, and improve both the aesthetic appeal and comfort of the environment.

7.2 BEST PRACTICE FOR DESIGNING AND MANAGING IG PLAY SPACE

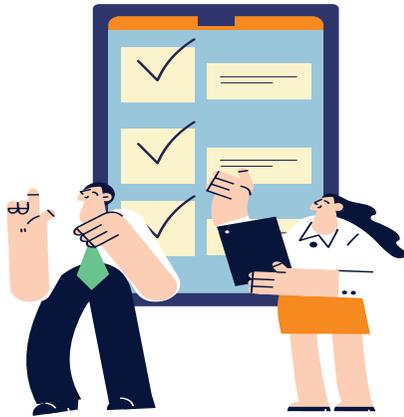
5. Convenience: Play Experiences at the Doorstep that Encourage Repeat Visits



Well-designed IG play spaces make it easy for users to decide “Can we go?”, “Can we stay?”, and “Can we play?”, ensuring that getting there, staying longer, and making use of the space is effortless for people of all ages and abilities.

1. **Locate IG play spaces along everyday paths and near key destinations** so they are naturally encountered during routine outings. Lay out the space with a clear hierarchy (public → semi-public → semi-private), allowing users to see at a glance where they can go, stay, and play.
2. **Position IG play spaces adjacent to everyday amenities** so individuals and families can combine play with shopping, health appointments, or social activities, making visits more convenient and appealing. This will also support local businesses and foster a sense of community,
3. **Experience design:** Position “short-stay play” near entrances enable families, carers, and older people to drop in for a brief visit, while introduce more secluded play and exercise areas for those wishing to enjoy longer, more immersive play or social interaction. This tiered arrangement not only encourages regular use, but also lowers barriers for those with limited time, ensuring the IG play space remains inviting and practical for everyone, regardless of their schedule.
4. **Introduce IoT health management stations with QR-code** to support signing up of exercise classes and group activities and support self-help health management, including instant instructions and short demonstration videos on how to use equipment and support health management.

6. Distinctiveness: Creating Memorable Places



Unique, recognisable features help IG spaces attract visitors and build a strong sense of community identity.

1. **Begin with user habit studies and deep engagement with local residents, schools, and organisations to uncover what is meaningful in the area.** This ensures the IG space responds to genuine local needs and aspirations.
2. **Integrate local cultural elements**, such as heritage materials, shared memories, and community art, to reflect the character and value of the neighbourhood.
3. **Use co-design workshops and the SCAMPER approach** (Substitute, Combine, Adapt, Modify, Put to Other Uses, Eliminate, Rearrange) to generate new ideas and encourage the creation of shared memories.
4. **Go beyond visual appeal** to introduce varied textures, interesting sounds, aromatic planting, and tactile surfaces to create richer experiences and support sensory integration. This will also bring positive effects on mental wellness for all.
5. **Ensure visual distinctiveness** through thoughtful material choices, colour palettes with softer, muted tones to support older adults and neuro-diverse users, and artistic interventions.

7.2 BEST PRACTICE FOR DESIGNING AND MANAGING IG PLAY SPACE

7. Familiarity:

Sense of Place, Sense of Attachment and supporting orientation



Creating familiar IG spaces strengthens community bonds and helps users feel at home, while supporting orientation and independence—especially for older adults and neuro-diverse individuals:

1. **Preserve and enhance key landmarks and shared memories identified through habit studies and participatory design**, ensuring the IG space feels recognisable and meaningful.
2. **Use local materials and motifs** that reflect community identity, making the environment relatable and distinctive.
3. **Maintain the space to a high standard**; a well-kept environment signals care and respect, making the area predictable, reducing stress, and encouraging regular use.
4. **Simplify layouts and use consistent design elements to support cognitive integration** for neuro-diverse users and those with MCI or dementia. Clear pathways and familiar features make navigation easier and foster independence.
5. **Provide semi-private quiet corners within public areas, allowing users who feel overwhelmed to retreat and recharge, while remaining safely visible.** This supports emotional wellbeing and ensures inclusivity for all.

8. Visual and Sensory Design for Inclusivity: Designs that Boosts the Play Experience for all



Thoughtful sensory design in IG spaces enhances the play experience for everyone, with particular benefits for older adults and neuro-diverse users.

1. **Use softer, muted colour palettes** to reduce visual strain for ageing eyes and prevent sensory overload for neuro-diverse individuals.
2. **Employ simplified design**, avoiding complex patterns that could cause confusion or overstimulation.
3. **Incorporate a variety of tactile surfaces** — such as recycled wood, upcycled biochar, terrazzo, and fibreglass — to provide rich sensory engagement and interest.
4. **Balance sensory stimulation** by carefully selecting materials and organising spaces to avoid both under- and over-stimulation.
5. **Integrate LED accent lighting into street furniture** for improved visibility and aesthetic appeal, while minimising light pollution for nearby residents.



8

五福臨門

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8

CONCLUSION

8.1



賽馬會
跨代共融遊樂空間
@啟德1E1 JC IG PLAY SPACE
@KT1E1



賽馬會
跨代共融遊樂空間
@乙明邨 JC IG PLAY SPACE
@JMC

IG PLAY SPACE - TOWARDS INCLUSIVE, HEALTHY, AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

The JC IG Play Space initiative has fundamentally redefined the relationship between public space, ageing, and social participation in Hong Kong. This project shows that spaces designed with both evidence and community input can become engines of social innovation—improving wellbeing, strengthening IG connections, and enhancing the liveability of housing estates. It demonstrates that age-friendliness and playfulness can coexist within a unified urban health framework, positioning public space as essential social infrastructure, rather than a recreational amenity.

From Segregation to Integration

At its core, the initiative moves beyond age-segregated provision towards an age-integrated and functionally inclusive model. By combining play, fitness, rest, and opportunities for social interaction within shared zones, the JC IG Play Space transforms everyday areas into welcoming social hubs for people of all ages and abilities through active design, choice architecture and experience design. This challenges the conventional separation between “children’s playgrounds” and “elderly activity areas”, establishing a shared setting that supports healthy ageing, IG understanding, emotional wellbeing, and community resilience.

8.1 IG PLAY SPACE - TOWARDS INCLUSIVE, HEALTHY, AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES



Grounded in Community and Evidence

The success of the initiative is anchored in a software-led hardware approach, combining user habit studies with participatory co-design. Behavioural insights have been translated into practical spatial layouts, equipment choices, and programming, with ongoing input from residents, estate managers, NGOs, health specialists, and practitioners. Implementation across both new and established estates demonstrated the model's adaptability to varied spatial, demographic and operational contexts, ensuring its relevance across Hong Kong's diverse urban fabric.

A Platform for Preventive Health and Social Prescribing

The JC IG Play Space establishes a new typology of preventive health infrastructure, embedding active living and cognitive engagement into daily environments. Purposeful spatial configuration and inclusive design support a wide spectrum of activities—from free play and exercise to sensory exploration, cognitive training and guided community workshops—making the spaces suitable for social prescribing and NGO-led programming. This alignment between design, behaviour and health demonstrates how public spaces can counter isolation, promote social cohesion and advance wellbeing through a human-centred and evidence-based design approach.

Bridging Research and Practice

A key contribution of the initiative is its integration of research within design practice. By drawing on expertise from spatial design, rehabilitation sciences, nursing, child play and gerontology, the project showcases how multidisciplinary collaboration and translational research can produce measurable improvements in accessibility, usability

and social value. Through this action research model, J.C.DISI has developed a framework linking environmental design to movement, play, social participation, IG solidarity and community resilience—addressing the “Double Ageing” challenge through cross-sector, data-driven innovation. The lessons and best practices distilled from the pilot offer a clear roadmap for scaling up IG play spaces across public areas, to elevate health and wellbeing outcomes for all citizens.

Policy Alignment and International Contribution

The initiative advances SDG 3, SDG 9, SDG 10, and SDG 11 by demonstrating how health promotion, social inclusion, creating of sustainable cities and service innovation can be embedded within public space upgrades, housing management and NGO service innovation. Its relevance is reflected in professional and policy discussions, including the Housing Bureau’s Well-being Design Guide (2024) and ongoing dialogues on elderly-friendly building design.

Significantly, the project contributes to international dialogue on child-friendly cities and healthy ageing. J.C.DISI shared the model and its early findings at the Child in the City Conference in Rotterdam (December 2024), which gathered 175 international delegates, and at the Healthy Ageing Conference in Hong Kong (May 2025), attended by more than 200 experts from 15 countries and regions. These exchanges have positioned the Hong Kong experience as a credible international reference for integrating play, public health and inclusive design in advancing healthy ageing and sustainable communities and cities.



Child in the City Conference in Rotterdam (Dec 2024)



Healthy Ageing Conference in HK (May 2025) - Best Oral Presentation Award

8.1 IG PLAY SPACE - TOWARDS INCLUSIVE, HEALTHY, AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES



Scalability and Continuing Impact

The JC IG Play Space Pilot Project establishes a new standard for public space innovation, proving that inclusive, health-promoting environments can be both scalable and sustainable. Its robust, evidence-based approach—drawing on user behaviour studies, participatory design, iterative prototyping, and operational review—ensures that the model is highly adaptable. This flexibility enables application across a wide range of public spaces, from doorstep play areas to estate parks and district networks. The ongoing collaboration between HKHS and PolyU will further strengthen this foundation, supporting continuous monitoring, refinement, and the use of translational research to enhance implementation and future replication to other developments and public spaces in HK, and other parts of the world.

Key Recommendations

1. **Mainstream IG Play Space Design:** Integrate the IG play space concept into new estate planning, redevelopment, park upgrades, and district-level strategies to expand access to age-integrated, inclusive spaces. This will improve health, wellbeing, and reduce social isolation through inclusive planning.
2. **Incentivise Adoption:** Create incentives for developers who successfully implement IG play spaces, aligning with recognised schemes such as BEAM Plus Neighbourhood and Elderly-Friendly Building Certification, to support age-friendly community planning and wider adoption.
3. **Recognise IG Play Space as a New Typology:** Apply J.C.DISI's design checklists, equipment selection criteria, and programming templates to ensure consistent quality and safety across projects.
4. **Build Capacity and Share Knowledge:** Promote professional training, practitioner exchanges, and community learning to embed IG design and





soft programme-led hardware as core strategies for inclusive planning, public health, and social cohesion.

5. **Expand Evaluation:** Use J.C.DISI's living lab methodologies to track behavioural, social, and health outcomes—such as physical activity, play patterns, social engagement, mental wellbeing, and prevention of age-related decline—to deepen understanding of how IG play space design drives solidarity and delivers measurable social return on investment (SROI).

Looking Ahead

The IG Play Space project stands out as a pioneering model for transforming Hong Kong's public spaces into vibrant, inclusive environments that actively foster IG bonds and healthy ageing. More than a local template, it demonstrates how software-led hardware design, co-created with residents and stakeholders, can revitalise underused areas and embed play, movement, and connection into everyday life. Crucially, the project is grounded in evidence-based practice, with active design, choice architecture, and programming at its core—moving beyond stakeholder response to establish a replicable framework for sustainable change.

The successful pilots show that IG Play Spaces are not only scalable and adaptable across neighbourhoods and housing estates, but also nurture social capital, support ageing in place, and address the challenges of Double Ageing. The IG Play Space project thus offers a valuable reference for cities worldwide seeking to build healthy, resilient, and inclusive communities through proven, innovative design. With continued commitment to research-led design and sustained community programming, IG Play Spaces will help future-proof urban environments—empowering generations to thrive together, strengthening IG solidarity, and ensuring healthy, active living for all.



9

STRATEGIC PARTNERS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



ABOUT J.C.DISI

The Jockey Club Design Institute for Social Innovation (J.C.DISI), established in 2012 by The Hong Kong Polytechnic University and the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, is Asia's first design institute dedicated to social innovation. J.C.DISI's vision is to spark social innovation across all aspects of society, improving community well-being through a human-centred, creative platform that inspires better living, connects passionate changemakers, and nurtures innovators of all ages for real impact.

One of J.C.DISI's key strategic focuses is "Double Ageing"—addressing both the ageing population and ageing infrastructure in Hong Kong. We actively explore ways to future-proof housing and social infrastructure to support ageing in place and foster social connectedness and harmony.

J.C.DISI has pioneered the concept of IG Play Space since 2019 to reimagine public open spaces in Hong Kong, aiming to create environments where older adults can be more physically active and benefit from IG interaction. Through a rigorous co-design process, J.C.DISI partnered closely with HKHS to develop a software-led hardware scheme for the JC IG Play Space @ KT 1E1 and JC IG Play Space @ JMC (HKHS and HKFYG). Our partners contributed valuable insights on play space aspirations, site and programme needs, and user experience, ensuring the design truly fits community needs. This collaborative approach resulted in a tender-ready design, prepared for implementation and scaling, and a programme-ready environment that can activate soft programmes immediately upon completion.

STRATEGIC PARTNERS



Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS)

The Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS) was established in 1948 as the first independent, non-government and not-for profit housing development organisation in Hong Kong. With the designation of "Housing Laboratory," their continuous progress aligns with the current trends as they strive to discover new solutions for addressing diverse housing needs. In light of Hong Kong's ageing population, HKHS has initiated a range of housing projects on "ageing in place" since the 1990s, bringing upon better quality of life to elderly people across the different socio-economic backgrounds, as well as promoting IG harmony and community inclusion.



Caring, Engaging and Smart (CES)

Leveraging the success of previous services, including the Aging in Place Scheme and the Housing Society Community and Service Coordinators, HKHS formed the CES team in January 2021. By providing more comprehensive services, the team facilitates the establishment of mutual support networks among tenants of rental estates, aiming to expand their social capital. The team works towards the following three objectives:

- Create spaces for gathering to enable contact and establish familiarity among different generations
- Activate Spaces by organising activities to facilitate interactions between neighbours, families and generations to build and foster trust and mutual support
- Build mutual support networks to strengthen neighbourhood bonding to develop sustainable IG community



香港青年協會
the hongkong federation of youth groups

賽馬會乙明青年空間
Jockey Club Jat Min Youth S.P.O.T.

Hong Kong Federations of Youth Groups (HKFYG)

HKFYG was founded in 1960 and is now the city's largest youth service organisation. For six decades, it has been committed to serving the youth of Hong Kong through the provision of a variety of services, activities and programmes which have an annual attendance of nearly six million. We encourage youth to reach their fullest potential. With community support, we now have over 80 service units. We also have 12 core services, which include the Youth S.P.O.Ts, M21 Multimedia Services, Employment Services, Youth at Risk Services, Counselling Services, Parenting Services, Leadership Training, Volunteer Services, Education Services, Creativity Education and Youth Exchange, Leisure, Cultural and Sports Services, and Research and Publications. We encourage young people to grow into responsible and dutiful citizens. At present, we have over 250,000 registered volunteers and over 450,000 registered members. We believe that our motto HKFYG • Here for You reaffirms our commitment and dedication to the young people of Hong Kong.



Jockey Club Intergenerational H.E.Y. Hub Project

The project aims to connect neighbors through play, activate the community with joy, foster a spirit of neighborliness, and create an inclusive environment for all. This initiative was conceived in response to the completion of the Songyue Building for elderly modular housing in Yi Ming Village in late 2023, where over 60% of households are single- or double-elderly. The plan is driven by four major goals: cultivating a joyful atmosphere, promoting neighborly spirit, enhancing overall well-being, and building an inclusive community. To achieve these, three main tasks are set out—nurturing youth and IG volunteerism by developing community creators, health promoters, and recreation promoters.

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J.C.DISI would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the following persons, parties and organisations for their knowledge, opinion and time in the project.

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KT IE1 site (August 2021 – January 2024)

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Jat Min Chuen site (April 2022 – July 2024)

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Ms. Fay Ho, Unit in charge, RSW (HK)
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Mr. Cheung Tsz Chung, Youth Work Officer
張梓聰 青年工作員
Ms. Natalie Or, Youth Worker
柯雪堯 青年工作員
Ms. Chou On Yi, Youth Worker
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GLOSSARY

Active Design

A planning and design approach that incorporates opportunities for movement and exercise into everyday settings. It promotes health and well-being by making physical activity both accessible and attractive, through features such as walking routes, exercise equipment, and playful landscapes.

Activities of Daily Living (ADL)

Essential self-care actions—such as bathing, dressing, eating, using the toilet, transferring, and mobility—required for independent living.

Ageing in Place

A policy and design principle that enables older adults to continue living safely, independently, and with dignity in their own homes and local communities, rather than moving into institutional care.

Age-Integrated Design

The creation of environments suitable for people of all ages, ensuring accessibility, safety, and relevance for children, adults, and older people. Age-integrated design encourages IG interaction and social cohesion.

Choice Architecture

The deliberate structuring of environments and options to guide people's choices and behaviours in subtle, beneficial ways. In play space design, choice architecture is embedded in both physical features and programming to promote physical activity and social engagement.

Community Ownership

The involvement of residents in the design, programming, and ongoing management of a space, fostering a sense of agency, belonging, and sustained use, and ensuring that spaces genuinely reflect users' needs and aspirations.

Community Making

The purposeful process of building social capital, trust, and shared identity within a neighbourhood or district. Community making involves engaging residents, stakeholders, and local leaders in collaborative activities, decision-making, and stewardship to strengthen bonds, increase agency, and nurture vibrant, resilient communities.

Community Resilience	The ability of communities to adapt to and withstand the challenges of demographic and infrastructure ageing, maintaining safety, inclusivity, and well-being.
Double Ageing	A situation where a society faces the simultaneous challenges of a rapidly ageing population and ageing physical infrastructure. This dual pressure creates complex demands on communities, social services, and the urban environment.
Design for Well-Being	An approach to planning, architecture, and placemaking that prioritises the physical, mental, and social health of all users. The aim is to create environments that foster happiness, health, inclusion, and resilience throughout people's lives.
Enabling Environment	An enabling environment is a physical, social, and policy setting that actively supports individuals to live healthy, independent, and meaningful lives. It removes barriers and provides opportunities for participation, safety, and well-being for people of all ages and abilities.
Experience Design	The practice of shaping environments or services with a deliberate focus on the user's overall experience and its impact.
Functional Capacity	An individual's ability to undertake daily tasks and activities, reflecting both physical and cognitive health. It is influenced by personal abilities and the surrounding environment, and is crucial for independence and healthy ageing.
Gerontology	The multidisciplinary study of the ageing process and the challenges faced by older people, covering biological, psychological, social, and environmental aspects.
Gentle Activation	Low-intensity, user-led interventions that encourage spontaneous use of space without overwhelming it. Gentle activation supports inclusivity and everyday engagement, especially for older people and multi-generational users.

Healthy Ageing	Healthy ageing refers to the process of maintaining and improving physical, mental, and social well-being as people grow older. It enables older adults to live active, independent, and fulfilling lives, and is shaped by individual choices, social connections, supportive environments, and access to health and community services.
Hardware	The tangible, physical elements—such as playground equipment, seating, signage, lighting, and planters—that form the foundational infrastructure for activities and interactions..
Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADL)	More complex daily tasks—such as managing finances, shopping, cooking, housekeeping, medication management, communications, and transport—that support independent living.
Intergenerational (IG)	Describes programmes, spaces, or interactions intentionally designed to foster engagement and solidarity between different age groups. ‘Intergenerational’ is distinct from ‘multigenerational’, which simply refers to the presence of multiple generations.
Intergenerational Play (IG Play)	Activities and spaces designed to encourage playful interaction and shared experiences between people of different ages, fostering social connection, mutual understanding, and physical and cognitive benefits.
Intergenerational Play Space (IG Play Space)	A play space intentionally designed for users of all ages and abilities to engage, interact, and play together in the same place, at the same time.
Intergenerational Solidarity (IG Solidarity)	The strengthening of social bonds and mutual support between generations, often achieved through shared activities and inclusive environments.
Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI)	A condition marked by a noticeable decline in cognitive abilities (such as memory and thinking skills) greater than expected for age, but not severe enough to significantly disrupt daily life. MCI increases the risk of developing dementia.

**Neuro-diverse Individuals /
Neuro-diversity**

People whose neurological development and functioning differ from typical norms; includes those with autism, ADHD, dyslexia, and other cognitive differences. Neuro-diversity emphasises the importance of recognising and accommodating a wide range of cognitive profiles in society and design.

**Occupational Therapy
(OT)**

Occupational therapy is a professional rehabilitation service that uses purposeful activities and training to help individuals whose ability to perform daily tasks has been affected by illness, injury, disability or ageing. The aim is to restore, maintain and enhance independence and quality of life in areas such as self-care, work, learning, cognitive interpretation and social participation. Occupational therapists assess each person's needs and design suitable activities and environmental adaptations to help them achieve their maximum functional potential.

**Participatory Design
(Co-design)**

An inclusive, iterative, and collaborative approach that actively engages community members, stakeholders, and end-users in the design and ongoing refinement of spaces and programmes. Participatory design empowers participants as co-creators, integrating their insights and lived experiences into every stage of the process—from ideation to implementation and evaluation—to foster shared ownership, relevance, and lasting sustainability.

**Physiotherapy
(PT)**

Physiotherapy is a professional healthcare service that uses physical methods (such as exercise, manual therapy, heat and cold applications, electrotherapy, and traction) to prevent, treat, and promote the recovery of bodily functions. Physiotherapists assess each patient's condition and design personalised treatment plans to help improve pain, mobility, balance, muscle strength, and flexibility.

Playscape

A purposefully designed outdoor environment that encourages play, exploration, and social interaction for people of all ages and abilities. Playscapes go beyond traditional playgrounds by integrating natural features, creative structures, and flexible spaces that support imaginative, physical, and sensory experiences.

Placemaking	A collaborative approach to planning, designing, and managing public spaces that prioritises the needs, aspirations, and cultural identity of the community. Placemaking transforms underused or generic areas into lively, meaningful places through creative programming, design interventions, and ongoing community participation.
Placekeeping	The long-term stewardship and management of public spaces to ensure their continued relevance, vibrancy, and inclusivity. Placekeeping focuses on sustaining the social, cultural, and physical qualities of a place through maintenance, adaptation, programming, and active community involvement.
Play Theory	A framework that explores the role and benefits of play in human development, learning, and social interaction.
Play Value	The quality, richness, and diversity of experiences that a play space or play equipment offers to its users. High play value means the environment stimulates physical, social, cognitive, and emotional development, encourages creativity and imagination, and supports inclusive, meaningful engagement for people of all ages and abilities.
Smart Ageing	The use of technology, data analytics, and innovative design to support older adults in leading healthier, safer, and more engaged lives.
Social Capital	The networks, trust, and shared values that enable communities to work together and support one another. Social capital is built through regular interaction, shared experiences, and inclusive community activities. High levels of social capital contribute to improved wellbeing, resilience in times of crisis, and greater civic participation. Play spaces, community hubs, and IG programmes are effective ways to strengthen social capital by encouraging social interaction and collective engagement.
Social Design (IG Play Space Context)	Social design is an approach to planning and creating environments, products, and services that intentionally foster social interaction, inclusion, and community well-being. In IG play space design,

social design means shaping physical spaces and programming to encourage people of all ages and backgrounds to connect, collaborate, and build relationships.

Social Innovation

The development and implementation of new ideas, strategies, or models that address complex social challenges—such as double ageing—by improving well-being, inclusion, and sustainability.

Social Prescribing

Social prescribing is a holistic approach in healthcare and community practice that enables health professionals or social workers to refer individuals to non-clinical services and activities that support their health and well-being. Instead of—or alongside—medical treatments, people are “prescribed” opportunities for social connection, physical activity, learning, volunteering, arts, or community engagement.

**Soft Programme
(Software)**

Non-physical interventions—such as guided exercise, play sessions, or community events—that activate and sustain the use of a space, driving engagement and building community beyond the initial physical design. Soft programmes complement the physical design by bringing the space to life, promoting active use, inclusivity, and social cohesion. They help embed healthy habits and IG interaction into daily community life.

**Soft Programme-Led
Hardware Design**

An approach where the physical design of a space is shaped by intended ongoing programming, ensuring flexibility, adaptability, and community relevance. This method prioritises user experience and social sustainability, allowing spaces to evolve with community needs.

Third Place

An informal gathering space outside the home (‘first place’) and work (‘second place’), such as a park, café, or community garden. Third places are essential for building social capital, fostering interaction, and supporting community well-being.

