

### Exclusion of Floor Areas for Recreational Use

Practice Note for Authorized Persons, Registered Structural Engineers and Registered Geotechnical Engineers (PNAP) APP-42 advises in its paragraph 32 that certain recreational facilities for residential developments aimed to benefit the owners and residents generally may be considered for exclusion from gross floor area (GFA) calculations by modification of regulation 23(3)(a) of the Building (Planning) Regulations (B(P)R) on a case-by-case basis. With the exception of covered landscaped and play areas as described in paragraph 8 below, the granting of GFA concessions set out in this PNAP is also subject to compliance with the pre-requisites and the overall cap on GFA concessions stipulated in PNAP APP-151 on Building Design to Foster a Quality and Sustainable Built Environment.

2. Reference may be made to Appendix A for those active recreational facilities which are commonly accepted for exclusion from GFA calculations. The passive and ancillary facilities in the said Appendix may also be accepted provided their sizes are commensurate with the use appropriate to the development.

3. This practice note gives guidance on the requirements and conditions for considering and granting of exemption from GFA calculations under section 42 of the Buildings Ordinance.

### Application

4. All applications for exclusion of floor areas for recreational use from GFA calculations must be accompanied by information substantiating the need for the areas with justification on overall size of the facilities, the headroom requirements and the mix of the various facilities as well as how the recreational facilities will be operated and controlled to ensure their exclusive use by the owners and residents including their bona fide visitors. The Building Authority (BA) would not, however, allow the GFA of such facilities including all voids, plant rooms (including filtration plant room for swimming pool), covered courts, etc. serving solely for the recreational facilities to exceed the limitation in a sliding scale as stated in Table 1 below.

Total Domestic GFA	Max. % of total Domestic GFA/Max. area for GFA concession (whichever is greater)
up to 25,000 m <sup>2</sup>	5 %
>25,000 to 50,000 m <sup>2</sup>	4.5 % / 1,250 m <sup>2</sup>
>50,000 to 75,000 m <sup>2</sup>	4.0 % / 2,250 m <sup>2</sup>
>75,000 to 100,000 m <sup>2</sup>	3.5 % / 3,000 m <sup>2</sup>
>100,000 to 125,000 m <sup>2</sup>	3.0 % / 3,500 m <sup>2</sup>
>125,000 m <sup>2</sup>	2.5 % / 3,750 m <sup>2</sup>

Table 1: Sliding scale of GFA concession for recreational facilities

5. To enhance the well-being of the elderly, at least one elderly-friendly toilet and elderly fitness equipment<sup>1</sup> in compliance with the relevant requirements under the Design Manual: Barrier Free Access should be provided at the recreational facilities to be excluded from GFA calculation. In case where the elderly-friendly toilet also serves as a required accessible toilet, another elderly-friendly facility in addition to the elderly fitness equipment<sup>1</sup> should be provided. Such elderly-friendly toilet, facilities and fitness equipment should be indicated on the plans.
6. This concession does not apply to substantially luxury clubs with restaurants and other facilities obviously meant for an exclusive membership and commercial undertakings rather than for the general benefit of owners and residents.
7. Commercial undertakings are not qualified for exclusion from GFA calculation. For the avoidance of doubt, a kitchen of reasonable size ancillary to the recreational activities at development sites without any commercial floor space may be considered for concession upon application.
8. Open-sided covered landscaped areas/children play areas provided under the footprint of the domestic tower would not be subject to the limitation in Table 1 above, but should be within 5% of the total domestic GFA, details as stated under PNAP APP-42 and subject to compliance with the pre-requisites stipulated in PNAP APP-151.
9. As a pre-requisite for giving approval of plans, the developer or owner of a proposed development is required to submit a letter of undertaking designating the recreational facilities as a common area in a Deed of Mutual Covenant with details of the use and location clearly indicated and binding and enforceable terms and conditions included for the control, operation, financial support and maintenance of the facilities. Any subsequent amendments affecting the recreational facilities must be accompanied with a revised undertaking and layout plan.

### **Exemption Conditions**

10. Exemption from GFA calculations will be effected by way of a modification of the relevant Building (Planning) Regulations. As a condition of the modification, the BA will require the undertaking letter of the developer or owner to be registered in the Land Registry before the submission of application for occupation permit. A further condition will be imposed to the effect that the recreational area should be for the exclusive use of the owners and residents and their bona fide visitors only as indicated on the approved plans and such area shall not be used for any purpose or by any other persons without the prior consent of the BA.
11. It is important for authorized persons to note that an occupation permit will not be issued unless there is evidence indicating that the relevant undertaking and layout plan are registered in the Land Registry, and information on GFA concession has been disseminated in the Approved Building Plans as stipulated in PNAP ADM-2. Developer or owner should also remind purchasers that the BA will prosecute for contravention of the conditions of exemption.

**/Implementation ...**

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<sup>1</sup> The provision should be commensurate with the design of the recreational facilities. Examples may be referred to Chapter 6 of the Design Manual: Barrier Free Access.

## **Implementation**

12. The requirements set out in paragraph 5 above are applicable to all new building plans or major revision of building plans for development proposals submitted to the BA for approval on or after 31 August 2025.

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Building Authority

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This PNAP is previously known as PNAP 229

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**Recreational Facilities Commonly Accepted  
for Exclusion from GFA Calculations**

<b><u>Facilities which are commonly accepted</u></b>	<b><u>Ancillary Facilities which may be accepted, depending on the size and relationship with main functions</u></b>
<p><u>Active facilities :</u></p> <p>Swimming pool Multi-purpose ball court/Squash court Basketball court/Football court Tennis court/Badminton court Children play area Games room Indoor golf room Table-tennis room Fitness room Gymnasium Weight training/Aerobic/Exercise room Bowling alley Skating rink Volleyball court Rock climbing room Dance/Yoga room</p> <p><u>Passive facilities :</u></p> <p>Sitting area/lounge Billiard room Sauna/Jacuzzi/Spa facilities Reading room/Study room/Library Function room Computer/video game room Music room/Karaoke room</p>	<p>Club house management office/ Club house reception counter Club house staff room Snack bar/mini-bar/pantry (total area not exceeding 10m<sup>2</sup>) First-aid room Kitchen (not exceeding 15 m<sup>2</sup>) for sites without any commercial floor space Changing room/shower facilities Lavatories/toilets Store rooms</p>