



# Evidence Base

City of York

# LDF

Local  
Development  
Framework

Open Space,  
Sport and  
Recreation Study  
Main report

December 2007

**CITY OF YORK COUNCIL**

**OPEN SPACE, SPORT & RECREATION STUDY**



**A**

**FINAL REPORT**

**BY**

**PMP**

**DECEMBER 2007**

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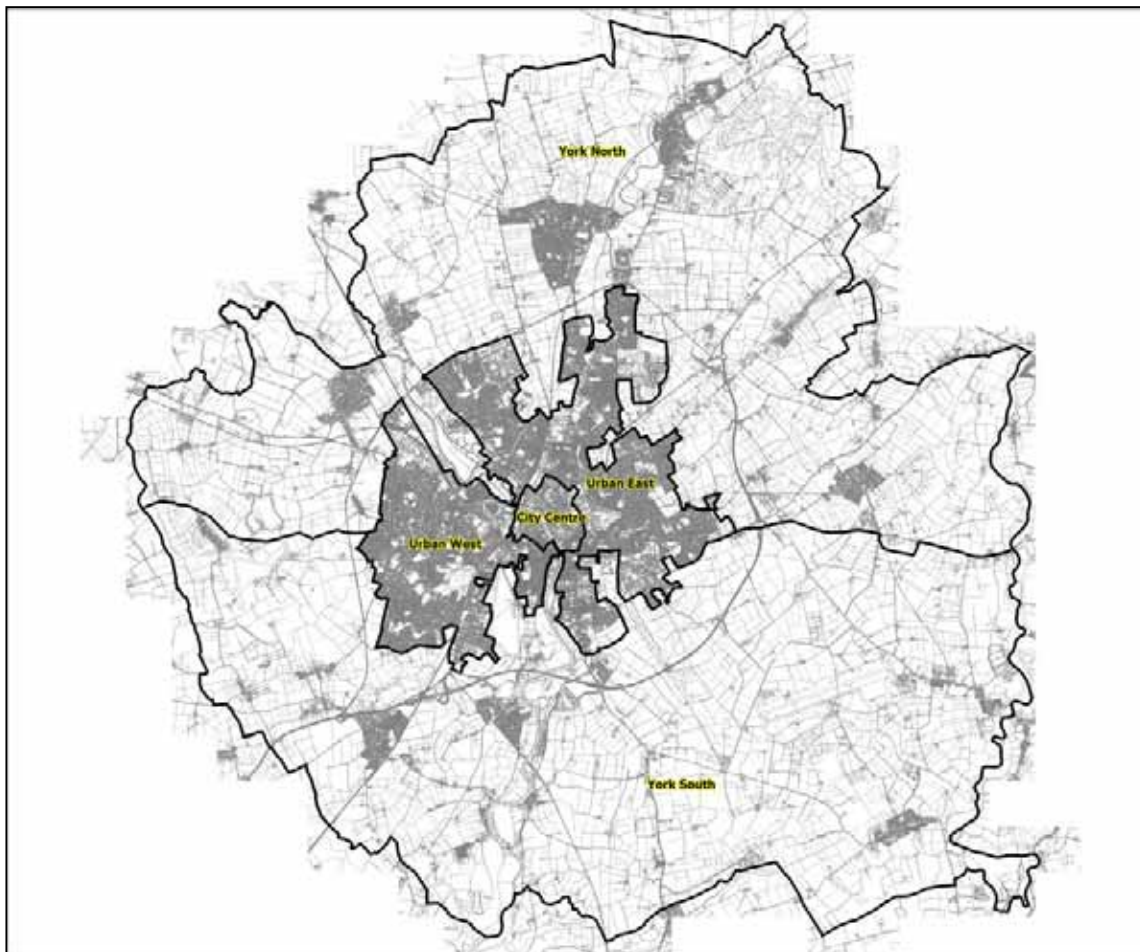
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### **Background**

- i. During November 2006, City of York Council (the Council) appointed PMP to undertake an assessment of the City's open space, sport and recreation facilities. This study highlights priorities for the future delivery of open space, sport and recreation facilities across City of York based on an assessment of local needs.
- ii. In addition to forming a key part of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework, the report will also inform the preparation of a green spaces strategy outlining priorities for the management and maintenance of open spaces across the City.
- iii. The study was undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the latest Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 (Planning for Open Space Sport and Recreation, July 2002) and its Companion Guide (September 2002).
- iv. The Companion Guide sets out a five step logical process for undertaking a local assessment of open space. Although presented as a linear process below, in reality, many stages were undertaken in parallel.
- v. The five step process is as follows:
  - Step 1 – Identifying Local Needs
  - Step 2 – Auditing Local Provision
  - Step 3 – Setting Provision Standards
  - Step 4 – Applying Provision Standards
  - Step 5 – Drafting Policies – recommendations and strategic priorities.
- vi. The study considers nine typologies of open space, namely:
  - parks and gardens
  - natural and semi natural open space
  - amenity greenspace
  - provision for children
  - provision for teenagers
  - outdoor sports facilities
  - allotments and community gardens
  - green corridors
  - churchyards and cemeteries
- vii. In order to analyse how the views of residents living in different areas of the City differ, natural boundaries were used to divide the authority into five areas. This is in line with the approach identified in PPG17, which suggests the use of boundaries such as rivers and main roads to identify specific geographic areas.

viii. Map 1 below illustrates the areas used referenced within this study.

**Map 1 – Analysis areas of City of York Council**



ix. The key outputs of the study include:

- a full audit of all accessible open spaces across the City categorised according to the primary purpose of the site (in line with the typologies highlighted previously). This audit is stored on a GIS layer and linked Access database.
- an assessment of the open space, sport and recreational needs of people living, working and visiting the City of York derived from a series of consultations
- production of local provision standards (quantity, quality and accessibility) for each type of open space where appropriate, in accordance with local needs
- application of local standards to the existing open space provision, enabling the identification of surpluses and deficiencies based on the quantity, quality and accessibility
- recommendations to address the key findings and drive future policy.

- x. Full details of the methodology can be found in Section 2 of the report and the standard setting process can be found in appendices F, G and H. A full programme of consultation and site assessments were carried out and the findings of this work feeds directly into the local standards. The key issues arising from this phase of work are summarised below:

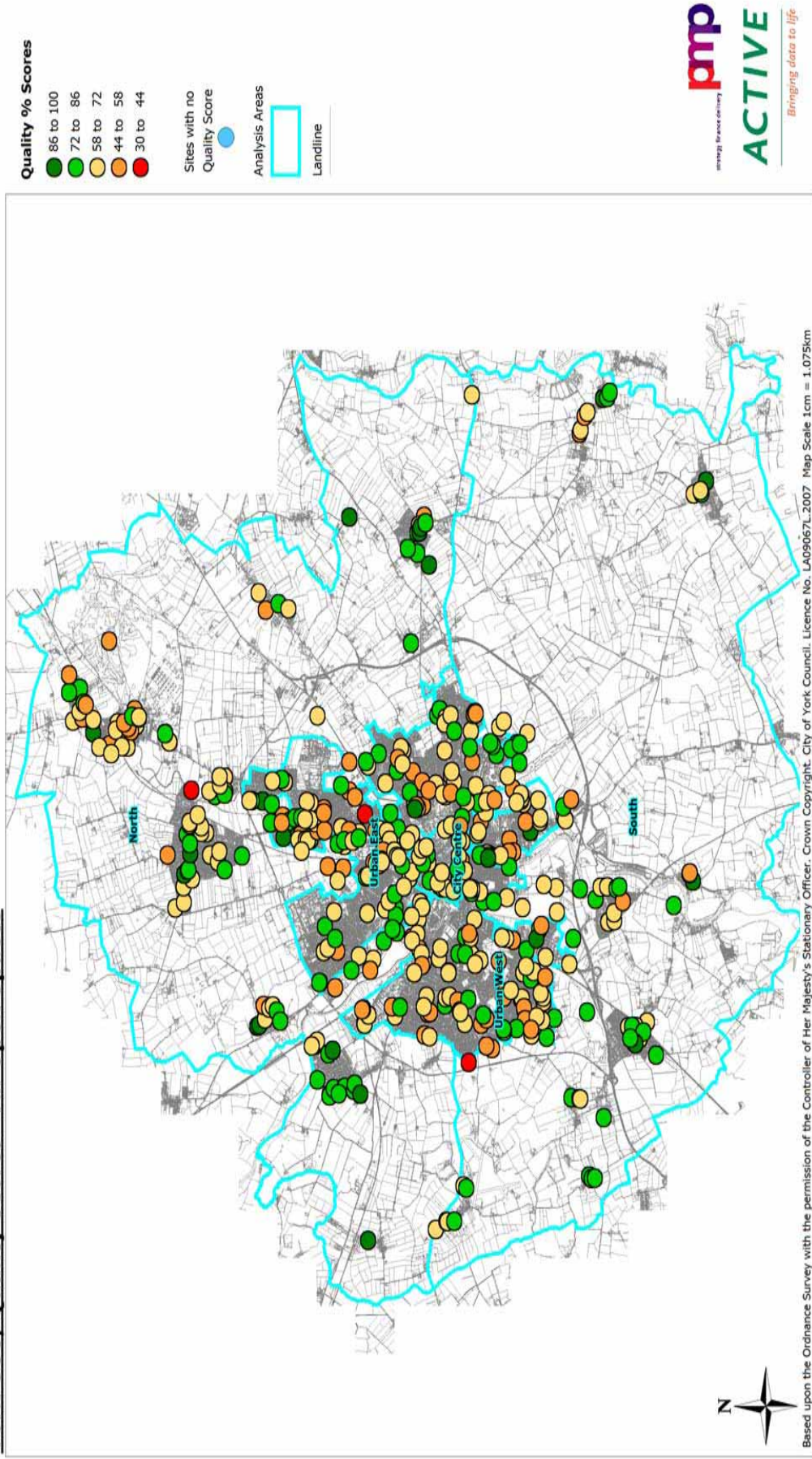
### **Current position**

- xi. Consultation and site visits regarding the quantity of different types of open space in York highlights that:
- there is a general perception that the quantity of City parks is about right. Residents in the more urban areas of the City have higher expectations in terms of provision and are more likely to suggest that there are insufficient parks in their locality. The quality of parks is perceived to have improved over recent years, reinforced the by the achievement of several green flag awards across the City. Residents highlighted that improvements to the ancillary provision within parks would further enhance their quality. Maintaining and enhancing the quality of the parks was of greater importance than increasing the overall quantity of facilities.
  - there are variations in the perceptions of the quantity of natural and semi natural open space across the City. The quality of natural sites is important to residents and the wider benefits of these sites were recognised. Natural sites were perceived to have a particularly important role in enhancing biodiversity and developing habitats.
  - Amenity green spaces were perceived to be particularly important for the qualities that they bring to the landscape and character of the local area. The quality of provision was perceived to be as important as the quantity and there is a greater variation in the current quality of these open spaces than in any other type.
  - the quantity of provision for children and young people was the overriding theme of the consultation with the majority of residents highlighting that the quantity of provision is poor. Several issues regarding the quality of existing provision also emerged. The majority of comments focused around the need for provision to be more challenging and innovative.
  - analysis of demand for allotments highlights that some sites are nearing capacity and that there are waiting lists at some existing facilities. The quality of allotments is also varying
  - there is high demand for outdoor sports facilities across York and the existing facilities are perceived to be of varying quality. An increase in the level of provision will be required over the LDF period to 2029 to facilitate higher levels of participation in sports. There is potential for this to be delivered to an extent through community use at school sites.
- xii. The quality and distribution of sites in York is illustrated in Map 2 overleaf.

**SECTION 12 – STRATEGY, KEY PRIORITIES AND PLANNING IMPLEMENTATION**

**Map 2 - Quality of all open space sites across York**

**York OSS, Quality Scores - All Open Spaces**





**Setting local standards**

- xiii. In line with PPG17 guidance, local standards were set for quality, quantity and accessibility for each type of open space. The standards set are summarised in table 1 below. The application of these standards highlights the key issues across the City.

**Table 1 – Locally derived standards**

<b>Typology</b>	<b>Quantity standard (ha per 1000)</b>	<b>Accessibility standard</b>	<b>% Score achieved</b>
Parks and Gardens	0.18	20 minute walk (960m) (City Park)  15 minute walk (720m) (Local Park)	84%
Natural and Semi Natural	1.79	15 minutes walk (720m)	66%
Amenity Green Space	1.07	5 minutes walk (240m)	74%
Provision for Children	0.07	10 minutes walk (480m)	72%
Provision for Teenagers	0.01	15 minutes walk (720m)	69.95%
Outdoor Sports	1.92	15 minutes walk (720m – local facilities (pitches / tennis / bowls)  20 minute drive time – synthetic pitches and golf courses	70%
Allotments	0.28	15 minutes walk (720m)	72%

- xiv. The application of the above standards is discussed in full within sections 4 – 11 of the report. The key issues arising for each typology are summarised in brief below:
- on the whole there is a good level of access to the parks within the urban areas of the City (City Centre, Urban East and Urban West), with City and local parks equitably distributed across all areas. There are greater access issues for residents in the outlying settlements, who are unable to reach a park on foot.
  - access to natural and semi natural open space is high across both the urban area and the rural settlements. In addition to smaller sites, there are numerous larger sites such as Bootham Stray in close proximity to residential areas. The urban area (Urban East and Urban West) is surrounded by

smaller settlements and green belt, ensuring access for residents to areas of nearby countryside.

- the distribution of amenity space is uneven across the City. While there is good provision in the City centre, there are deficiencies across both the East and West Urban analysis areas. Despite this, many residents devoid of amenity space have access to a park. Provision of amenity space in smaller settlements is good, with the majority of settlements containing at least one site.
- despite the emphasis placed on the lack of local facilities for children, the distribution of sites is even across the City although some deficiencies were identified. While play areas are more sporadically distributed in the York North and York South settlements, many residents have access to facilities.
- analysis of access to facilities for young people highlights that there are few residents within the recommended catchment of a facility. This is unsurprising, given that there are few facilities across the City. The achievement of this standard will represent a significant challenge for the Council.
- while the distribution of both local and strategic sports facilities is good, access to facilities at school sites presents the greatest issues to residents, with many schools permitting no community use at the current time. Enhanced access to existing facilities would reduce pressure on existing sites and ensure that all residents have genuine access to local facilities.
- the distribution of allotments is sporadic and there are many residents outside of the catchment area for facilities. This is compounded by the waiting lists that are evident at existing sites.

### **Priorities**

- xv. The application of standards has highlighted a number of issues and priorities relating to the current and future provision through the LDF period to 2029 for each area of the City. These are discussed in detail in sections 4 – 11 and are briefly discussed below.

#### **City centre area**

- xvi. Overall there is a small shortfall of open space in the City Centre (-15.27 ha). This area of York is lacking the provision for children and young people, allotments, natural and semi natural open space and outdoor sports facilities. Shortage of space in the city centre will mean that enhancement of existing facilities will be a key priority in future years. Opportunities for new open spaces should be seized. The future provision of open space for each typology is outlined below.

### **Parks**

- the application of the quantity standards highlights the City Centre is sufficient in the provision of parks, now and in the future. However, residents in the north of the area have limited access to a local park. Future priorities should focus on enhancing the quality of existing provision.

### ***Natural and semi natural spaces***

- the current deficiency of natural and semi natural open spaces will increase to –11.32 ha by 2029. Application of the accessibility standard indicates the majority of residents are within the recommended threshold of this typology. However, residents located close to the northern boundary of this area do not have access to a natural or semi natural open space. There is however, scope to open up access to the riverside.

### ***Amenity green space***

- the City Centre has sufficient provision of amenity green space to meet current and future demand. Nearly all residents have access to an amenity green space within the recommended accessibility standard. Efforts should therefore focus on the enhancement of existing facilities.

### ***Provision for children***

- the increase in population up to 2029 highlights an overall shortfall of provision for children (-0.38 ha). Residents located in the north of this area have limited access to a children's play area and this is further compounded by a lack of local amenity green space in the same area.

### ***Facilities for young people***

- measured against the local standard, there will be a deficiency of –0.37ha over the LDF period. Furthermore, not all residents within this area have access to a teenage facility within the recommended local accessibility standard.

### ***Outdoor sports facilities***

- there is a lack of provision of outdoor sports facilities within the City Centre. This is highlighted by the application of the quantity standard that shows this area will have a deficiency by 2029 (-13.27ha). Access to outdoor facilities is good with all residents able to access a facility within the recommended travel time. Opportunities for new provision within the city centre are likely to be limited and the focus should be enhancing the quality of provision.

### ***Allotments***

- there are a number of deficiencies within the City Centre. Application of the recommended standards reinforces this, specifically highlighting a lack of provision in the Guildhall ward. In light of the anticipated density of the housing in the central area, provision of allotments should be considered.

### **Urban East**

- xvii. Overall, the current provision of open space in the Urban East analysis area is insufficient. The typologies with a significant lack of provision are natural and semi natural open space, amenity green space, provision for children and young people, allotments and outdoor sports facilities. There are several lower quality sites located immediately east of the city centre and like the other urban areas, provision of new spaces can often be challenging, although opportunities may arise from the identification of additional development areas through the LDF core strategy.

Enhancement of existing sites should therefore be a key priority going forward. The future provision of open space for each typology is outlined below.

### ***Parks***

- based on 2029 population projections the Urban East analysis area will have the largest shortfall of parks in York (-5.62 ha). Despite this, access to parks is reasonable and the majority of local parks are distributed around the south eastern area of the city. The provision of amenity green space in this area will be particularly important to residents who do not have access to a park.

### ***Natural and semi natural spaces***

- the current large shortfall in provision is accentuated by future population growth, highlighting a significant deficiency in the Urban East analysis area by 2029 (-120.25ha). Despite insufficient provision, the majority of residents in this area have access to a natural or semi natural open space, highlighting an even distribution of sites. Provision of new natural and semi natural open space will be largely opportunity led, and enhancement to existing sites and better access to surrounding countryside should be prioritised where new provision is not appropriate.

### ***Amenity green space***

- a shortfall of -52.20ha is expected by 2029. This is further highlighted through the application of the accessibility standard that shows a large number of residents in the Urban East analysis area do not have access to an amenity green space. The key area of deficiency is located to the east of the city centre. Many residents in this area are within the appropriate catchment of a park.

### ***Provision for children***

- future population increases suggest the Urban East analysis area will have a lack of children's provision by 2029 (-2.66ha). This is the largest deficiency of all areas of York and is reinforced by the application of the accessibility standards, which highlights several areas where residents are outside of the appropriate catchment.

### ***Provision for young people***

- Consistent with provision for children, the Urban East analysis area has the greatest current and future shortfall of teenage provision. The majority of residents cannot access a teenage facility in this area and furthermore it is within this area where the two poorest quality facilities in the City are located. Existing facilities would therefore benefit from investment and opportunities should be taken to provide new facilities.

### ***Outdoor sports facilities***

- the largest deficiency is found within the Urban East analysis area (-70.36ha). However, facilities in this area are well distributed, meaning the majority of residents have access to an outdoor sports facility within their locality. Opportunities for new provision should therefore be taken and access to existing facilities, particularly at school sites, should be maximised.

### **Allotments**

- the largest quantitative deficiency is found in the Urban East analysis area (-13.35ha). Despite this, the existing sites in this area are evenly distributed and there are few areas where residents are outside of the recommended catchment area for allotments.

### **Urban West**

- xviii. The Urban West analysis area has the second greatest shortfall of open space in York (-128.49ha), as shown in table 13.1, with all typologies (when measured against the quantity standards) having a significant lack of provision. The future provision of open space is discussed below.

### **Parks**

- the current and future provision of parks in the Urban West analysis area has the greatest shortfall of all areas of York. It is calculated that by 2029 there will be a deficiency of -6.75ha of parks. Application of the accessibility standards indicates that the majority of residents in this area of York do not have access to a park. Specifically no residents are within the recommended catchment of a local park. The redesignation of amenity spaces could provide more formal parks in this area of the City.

### **Natural and semi natural spaces**

- taking into account future population growth, there will be a shortfall of -40.72ha by 2029. This is the second greatest deficiency in the City, however regardless of this all residents have access to a natural or semi natural open space within the 15 minute walk time. This highlights that while the focus should be on enhancing the quality of existing natural and semi natural open spaces, new opportunities should be taken where appropriate. Enhancing access to existing natural sites may also improve the existing levels of provision.

### **Amenity green space**

- the provision of amenity green space is insufficient to meet current and future demand in quantitative terms. Population projections indicate there will be a large shortfall of amenity green space by 2029 (-41.83ha). These deficiencies are highlighted by the application of the accessibility standard that shows residents in a number of areas are unable to access amenity green space. Amenity spaces to the far west of the Urban West analysis area are particularly important as residents are outside of the appropriate catchment area for a park.

### **Provision for children**

- within the Urban West analysis area there will be a shortfall of -2.21ha of provision for children by 2029. Accessibility to children's facilities in this area is good, with the majority of residents able to access a children's play area. However, there remain residents located outside of the accessibility catchment and shortfalls have been identified.

### ***Provision for young people***

- the estimated population growth coupled with existing shortfalls is likely to generate a future shortfall of teenage provision (-0.54ha). Access to teenage facilities is limited with only a small number of residents located in the east of the Urban West analysis area within the recommended catchment. The amenity spaces are therefore of particular value to local residents.

### ***Outdoor sports facilities***

- application of the quantity standard shows a lack of provision in the Urban West analysis area (-59.97ha). The distribution of facilities is even and all residents have access to a local pitch. However, access to larger dual use sites is poor, with only one facility located to the east of the area. In addition to seizing opportunities for new and improved provision, existing resources should be maximised through the negotiation of community use agreements at school sites.

### ***Allotments***

- application of the quantity standard highlights a large deficiency in the Urban West analysis area by 2029 (-7.49ha). Analysis of the existing distribution of sites highlights that in addition to the quantitative shortfalls there are large sectors of the community outside of the catchment area for local allotment provision, particularly in Dringhouses and the eastern edge of Westfield.

### **York South**

- xix. The current overall provision of open space in the York South analysis area is sufficient to meet demand. Teenage facilities are the only typology where there is a shortfall in supply. Enhancements to existing provision may need to be delivered in partnership with other providers. Future open space provision is discussed below.

### ***Parks***

- the future provision of parks is sufficient to meet demand. However, the application of the accessibility standard shows the majority of residents are outside the recommended catchment. It would be unrealistic to provide formal parks and gardens within every small settlement and it is therefore essential to enhance the links between existing parks and the smaller settlements. Consideration should also be given to the development of pocket parks within more rural settlements.

### ***Natural and semi natural open space***

- the application of the quantity standard indicates there is sufficient current and future provision to meet demand. Accessibility to natural and semi natural open space is poor, with a number of large settlements unable to access this typology within the 15 minute walk time. Despite this, the majority of residents in this area have good access to areas of nearby countryside. Enhancing access to sites in close proximity to the settlements and facilitating access through the development of green corridors and linkages will be essential in this area.

### ***Amenity green space***

- the current provision of amenity green space is sufficient to meet current and future demand. Nearly all residents in the York South analysis area are able to access an amenity green space within the recommended local standard. In addition to the provision of amenity space within the urban area, smaller settlements may also benefit from local amenity spaces. In particular, residents of Wheldrake cannot access this typology.

### ***Provision for children***

- population projections indicate by 2029 there will be a small shortfall of children's provision (-0.03ha). Within the York South analysis area there is a good distribution of facilities, resulting in the majority of residents being able to access a children's play area within the recommended accessibility threshold.

### ***Provision for young people***

- current provision is insufficient to meet future demand (-0.20ha). This is further reflected through the application of the accessibility standard, which highlights all residents are outside the recommended accessibility catchment of a teenage facility.

### ***Outdoor sports facilities***

- the York South analysis area is the only area of the City where there is sufficient provision of outdoor sports facilities. Facilities in this area are well distributed with all residents in the larger settlements having access to a facility within the recommended 15 minute walk time. However, residents do not have access to a tennis or bowls facility. In light of the demand led nature of outdoor sports facilities it will still be essential to consider specific demand for each type of facility. The Playing pitch strategy identified some specific deficiencies in this area and these opportunities to meet these should be taken.

### ***Allotments***

- the York South analysis area is the only area in the City sufficient in the provision of allotments based on the application of the quantity standards. Despite a surplus of provision some residents are outside the recommended accessibility standard, specifically those residents located in Wheldrake.

### **York North**

- xx. Current provision in the York North analysis area is sufficient to meet demand. The typologies that this area is deficient in are parks, children and young people and allotments. Like the southern area, provision of open spaces in smaller settlements can be challenging and should be delivered in partnership with other providers. Future open space provision is detailed below.

### ***Parks***

- the current provision of parks is insufficient to meet demand and this is further extended by 2029, resulting in a shortfall of -4.57ha. Access to parks in the York North analysis area is limited. Like the York South analysis area which is

characterised in particular by smaller settlements, it would be unrealistic to provide formal parks and gardens within every small settlement and it is therefore essential to enhance the links between existing parks and the smaller settlements. Consideration should also be given to the development of pocket parks within more rural settlements. This may be of particular importance in light of the distribution of the existing gap in provision of parks to the north of the city.

### ***Natural and semi natural spaces***

- the current supply of natural and semi natural open spaces is sufficient to meet future demand. All residents located in the York North analysis area are able to access this typology within the recommended local standard. The majority of residents in this area also have good access to areas of nearby countryside. Enhancing access to sites in close proximity to the settlements and facilitating access through the development of green corridors and linkages should be prioritised, as well as enhancing existing natural and semi natural open spaces.

### ***Amenity green space***

- within the York North analysis area provision is sufficient to meet the demand generated by future population growth. Application of the accessibility standard indicates nearly all residents can access an amenity green space within the recommended 5 minute walk time.

### ***Provision for children***

- the provision for children is insufficient to meet current and future demand. Despite this, the majority of residents do have access to a children's play area within the recommended accessibility catchment. Opportunities for new provision should be taken and all settlements containing over 1700 residents should have a facility for children. A partnership approach may be required to deliver these facilities.

### ***Provision for teenagers***

- similar to provision for children, the current supply of teenage facilities is insufficient to meet future demand. Accessibility to teenage facilities is also poor with no residents in the York North analysis area able to access a teenage facility within the recommended 15 minute walk time. While it may be inappropriate to provide facilities in all small settlements, effort should be made to enhance and maximise transport links to existing and future sites.

### ***Outdoor sports facilities***

- a small lack of provision is located in the York North analysis area (-5.52ha). Despite this lack of provision, nearly all residents have access to an outdoor sports facility within the recommended accessibility standard. However, residents in this area of York do not have access to a tennis or bowls facility. The Playing pitch strategy identified some specific deficiencies in this area and opportunities to meet these should be taken.



### **Allotments**

- within the York North analysis area there are quantitative shortfalls in provision (-2.39ha). Application of the accessibility standard further highlights this shortfall, with residents in Haxby and Wigginton only having limited access to allotments.

### **Linking green spaces**

- xxi. The provision of appropriate high quality green space results in an array of benefits that far exceed the recreational value that these sites offer to residents. Linkages between green spaces further enhance the benefits that can be achieved.
- xxii. Green Infrastructure (GI) comprises a network of multi-functional greenspace set within, and contributing to a high quality natural and built environment. Green Infrastructure is widely considered to be an essential requirement for the enhancement of quality of life, for existing and future generations, and to be an integral element in the delivery of 'liveability' for sustainable communities. Its provision, and importantly, its connectivity is relevant at every level from county wide rural landscapes down to a local level both within larger urban areas as well as small rural settlements. It also provides the framework for supporting a wide range of 'environmental processes'. This PPG17 study provides a starting point for understanding the wider green infrastructure across York and the benefits that this can bring to the local community.

### **The Plan Led System**

- xxiii. The open space, sport and recreation study is also an invaluable tool in the formulation and implementation of planning policies. This relates to both the protection and enhancement of existing open space and the framework for developing planning obligations.
- xxiv. The study provides the tools in which the value of an open space can be assessed on a site-by-site basis, as and when a development proposal is submitted for an existing piece of open space. Similarly, this approach can be the basis for determining what type of open space provision is appropriate to be provided within a housing development and for pre-empting growth implications as part of the LDF. The study will be essential in maximising the effect of the regeneration opportunities in the City centre and York Northwest areas of the authority.

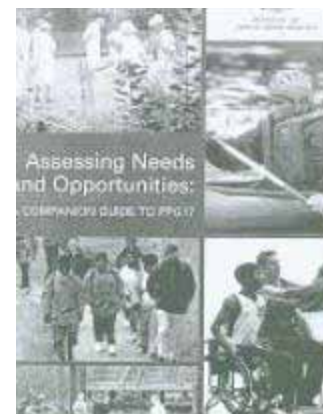
## **Introduction and background**

### **The study**

- 1.1 During November 2006, City of York Council (the Council) appointed PMP to undertake an assessment of the City's open space, sport and recreation facilities. This report sets out the findings of the assessment and highlights priorities for the future delivery of open space, sport and recreation facilities.
- 1.2 The study will form part of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework (LDF) and will help to shape the strategic direction of the core strategy for the City of York and will also inform the Allocations DPD. The report will also inform the preparation of a green spaces strategy outlining priorities for the management and maintenance of open spaces across the city.
- 1.3 This assessment will ensure that priorities for the future and resource allocation are based on local need and aspirations and that a strategic approach to the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities is adopted.
- 1.4 The study is underpinned by several key objectives, specifically:
  - to enable the establishment of an effective approach to planning open space, sport and recreation facilities
  - to set robust local standards based on assessments of local needs
  - to facilitate improved decision making as part of the Development Control process
  - to guide/steer/influence S106 negotiations
- 1.5 The study is undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the updated PPG17, and its Companion Guide published in September 2002.

### **National Policy Context: Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG) 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation & Assessing Needs and Opportunities - PPG17 Companion Guide**

- 1.6 PPG17 states that local authorities should undertake robust assessments of the existing and future needs of their communities for open space, sport and recreational facilities (paragraph 1).
- 1.7 The document also states that local authorities should undertake audits of existing open space, sports and recreational facilities. The information gained from the assessment of needs and opportunities should be used to set locally derived standards for the provision of open space, sport and recreational facilities in their areas" (paragraph 7). The Government believes that national standards are inappropriate, as they do not take into account the demographics of an area, the specific needs of residents and the extent of built development.
- 1.8 The policy guidance sets out priorities for local authorities in terms of:



## **SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

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- assessing needs and opportunities – undertaking audits of open space, sport and recreational facilities
  - setting local standards
  - maintaining an adequate supply of open space
  - planning for new open space.
- 1.9 The companion guide sets out the process for undertaking local assessments of needs and audits of provision. It also:
- indicates how councils can establish the needs of local communities and apply provision standards
  - promotes a consistent approach across varying types of open space.
- 1.10 PMP and the Council have followed the recommendations of PPG17 throughout the study and the full methodology used is set out in Section 2.

### ***Why public open space?***

- 1.11 PPG 17 states that well designed and implemented planning policies for open space, sport and recreation are fundamental to delivering broader Government objectives, which include:

- supporting an urban renaissance
- supporting a rural renewal
- promotion of social inclusion and community cohesion
- health and well being
- promoting more sustainable development.



- 1.12 Open space, sport and recreation provision in City of York has an important role to play in supporting the implementation of these objectives.

### ***Function and benefits of open space***

- 1.13 Open spaces provide a number of functions within the urban fabric of cities, towns and villages, for example, the provision for play and informal recreation, a landscaping buffer within and between the built environment and/or a habitat for the promotion of biodiversity.
- 1.14 Each type of open space has different benefits, which depend on the type of open space, for example allotments for the growing of own produce, play areas for children's play and playing pitches for formal sports events. Open space can additionally perform a secondary function, for example outdoor sports facilities have an amenity value in addition to facilitating sport and recreation.
- 1.15 There is a need to provide a balance between different types of open space in order to meet local aspirations. An understanding of local expectations and aspirations is therefore central to the effective provision of open space.

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- 1.16 Changing social and economic circumstances, changed work and leisure practices, more sophisticated consumer tastes and higher public expectations have placed new demands on open spaces. Open spaces can also promote community cohesion, encourage community development and stimulate partnerships between the public and private sector. The provision of open spaces and recreation provision is key to an ideal, sustainable and thriving community.
- 1.17 It is widely recognised that the provision of high quality ‘public realm’ facilities such as parks and open spaces can assist in the promotion of an area as an attractive place to live, and can result in a number of wider benefits. These wider benefits are highlighted in Appendix A.

### **Local features and demographics**

- 1.18 The City of York is one of 21 authorities making up the Yorkshire and Humber region. While the majority of the population reside within the urban area surrounding the historic City centre, there are many small rural and semi rural settlements providing a diverse variety of green space.
- 1.19 The City is a central destination for residents living in outlying villages as well as for people living in surrounding districts. As one of the UK’s most frequently visited tourist destinations, provision of green space is important not only to local residents, but to the many visitors that flock to the City.
- 1.20 As a consequence of the location of York in close proximity to Leeds, the pressures on land for development, traffic and other activity are high. Protection of greenspace (to ensure there is sufficient to meet local needs) is consequently of high importance.
- 1.21 The changing demographics of the City of York will further enhance the development pressures on land, with the current population of almost 183,000 expected to increase by 21% by 2029. This additional population will not only increase the pressure on land for development, but will also ensure that demand for various open space, sport and recreation facilities increases. This population increase is significantly higher than the anticipated national average.
- 1.22 Analysis of the profile of the population in York highlights a greater proportion of residents over 65, and lower proportions of residents under 14 than the national average. There is also a higher proportion of young adults aged 20 – 24, reflective of the student population and a lower proportion of households with children in comparison to the national average. This suggests that local aspirations may differ from other areas, and it is essential to ensure that the open space, sport and recreation facility stock meets the needs of residents across the age spectrum.
- 1.23 The Index of Multiple Deprivation (ODPM, 2004) is a measure of multiple deprivation and enables the comparison of deprivation from authority to authority. When looking at the overall rank of each Local Authority in the country, the City of York is ranked 219th out of 354 areas where a rank of 1 is the most deprived in the country and a rank of 354 is the least deprived.

### **Structure of the report**

- 1.24 This report is split into 12 sections. Section 2 sets out the methodology for undertaking the study and Section 3 sets out the strategic context to provide the background and context to the study.

## **SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

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- 1.25 Sections 4 -11 relate to each of the typologies identified within the scope of the report. Each typology chapter sets out the strategic context to that particular typology, key issues emerging from consultations relating to that particular typology and the recommended quantity, quality and accessibility standards. These standards are then applied to determine the priorities for that type of open space across the different geographical areas of the city.
- 1.26 Section 12 summarises the key issues for each type of open space and identifies the strategic priorities for each area of the city. An overview outlining the planning policy context and the future application of the study is also provided.
- 1.27 A number of appendices are referenced throughout the report. These appendices supplement the information provided within the main body of the text and provide further detail of work undertaken.

### Undertaking the study

#### Introduction

- 2.1 As highlighted in Section one, this study was undertaken in accordance with PPG17 and its Companion Guide. This companion guide suggests ways and means of undertaking such a study and emphasises the importance of undertaking a local needs assessment, as opposed to following national trends and guidelines. The four guiding principles in undertaking a local assessment are:
- (i) local needs will vary even within local authority areas according to socio-demographic and cultural characteristics
  - (ii) the provision of good quality and effective open space relies on effective planning but also on creative design, landscape management and maintenance
  - (iii) delivering high quality and sustainable open spaces may depend much more on improving and enhancing existing open space rather than new provision
  - (iv) the value of open space depends primarily on meeting identified local needs and the wider benefits they generate for people, wildlife and the environment.
- 2.2 PPG17 recognises that individual approaches appropriate to each local authority will need to be adopted as each area has different structures and characteristics.
- 2.3 The findings of this report and the methodology used to reach these conclusions are therefore specific to the aspirations and expectations of residents of City of York Council.

#### Types of open space

- 2.4 The overall definition of open space within the government planning guidance is:  
*“all open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can also act as a visual amenity”.*
- 2.5 PPG17 identifies ten typologies of open space including nine types of open space and one category of urban open space. It states that assessments of needs and audits of existing open space and recreation facilities should include all of these typologies, or variations of it.
- 2.6 Table 2.1 overleaf sets out the types of open space that have been included within this study and provides a brief definition of each typology.
- 2.7 In line with guidance set out in PPG17, all accessible open space, sport and recreation facilities across the city have been included within the study, regardless of their ownership or specific management arrangements. To the effect that open space is provided by a variety of parties, investment to raise standards will have to come from various sources and not just the City of York Council.
- 2.8 The typologies set out in PPG17 (and therefore used in this study) primarily focus on open spaces used for recreational purposes. There are many other sites across the city that do not directly fit within these typologies but are of high significance and importance in terms of biodiversity and conservation of habitats. Although not directly

## SECTION 2 – UNDERTAKING THE STUDY

included or referenced within this study the importance of these sites should not be ignored.

- 2.9 Within the City of York boundaries, there are four large areas of land amounting to over 320 hectares in total, which are today known as the ‘Strays’. The Strays are the remains of much greater areas of common land which the hereditary Freemen of the City had, since time immemorial, the right to graze cattle. Originally, each Stray was controlled and managed for the exclusive benefit of the Freemen resident in their Ward. However, by 1858, the Freemen of all the Strays agreed that, in exchange for a small annual payment to them, the City should in future administer their Stray ‘as an open space for the benefit and enjoyment of the citizens of York for all time’. For the purposes of this study, the strays have been classified into the typology of open space into which they most appropriately fit according to their primary purpose. The importance of these sites and the restrictions placed on their use will however be considered specifically during the application and interpretation of the local standards.

**Table 2.1 – Typologies of Open Space**

Type	Definition	Primary Purpose
<b>City Parks</b>	<p>Includes urban parks, formal gardens and country parks. PPG17 states that large or high quality spaces or facilities tend to attract users from a wider area than small or poor quality ones and tend to have a higher local profile. This gives rise to the concept of a hierarchy of provision. For this reason parks and gardens in York have been split into “City Parks” and “Local Parks” in order to discover whether there are different local aspirations in relation to higher and lower tier parks.</p> <p>City Parks are therefore defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strategically significant</li> <li>• large effective catchment</li> <li>• accessed by public transport or car</li> <li>• large and more expensive</li> <li>• planning using national data and strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• informal recreation</li> <li>• community events.</li> </ul>

## SECTION 2 – UNDERTAKING THE STUDY

<b>Local Parks</b>	<p>As with City Parks, the local parks category includes urban parks, formal gardens and country parks. In comparison to city parks, local parks are defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• locally significant</li> <li>• smaller effective catchment</li> <li>• accessed on foot or bicycle</li> <li>• smaller/cheaper</li> <li>• planned using local data/views</li> <li>• local objectives</li> <li>• voluntarily managed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• informal recreation</li> </ul>
<b>Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspaces</b>	<p>Includes publicly accessible woodlands, urban forestry, scrub, grasslands (eg downlands, commons, meadows), wetlands and wastelands.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• wildlife conservation,</li> <li>• biodiversity</li> <li>• environmental education and awareness.</li> </ul>
<b>Amenity Greenspace</b>	<p>Most commonly but not exclusively found in housing areas. Includes informal recreation green spaces and village greens.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• informal activities close to home or work</li> <li>• children's play</li> <li>• enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas</li> </ul>
<b>Provision for Children</b>	<p>Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving children below aged 12. While it is recognised that a wide variety of opportunities for children exist (including play schemes and open spaces not specifically designed for this purpose), as per PPG17, this typology considers only those spaces specifically designed as equipped play facilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children's play</li> </ul>
<b>Provision for young people</b>	<p>Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving young people aged 12 and above. While it is recognised that a wide variety of opportunities for young people exist (including youth clubs and open spaces not specifically designed for this purpose, as per PPG17, this typology considers only those spaces specifically designed for use by young people eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• teenage shelters</li> <li>• skateboard Parks</li> <li>• BMX tracks</li> <li>• Multi Use Games Areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• activities or meeting places for young people</li> </ul>
<b>Outdoor Sports</b>	<p>Natural or artificial surfaces either</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• facilities for formal sports</li> </ul>



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<b>Facilities</b>	publicly or privately owned used for sport and recreation. Includes school playing fields. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• outdoor sports pitches</li> <li>• tennis and bowls</li> <li>• golf courses</li> <li>• athletics</li> <li>• playing fields (including school playing fields)</li> <li>• water sports.</li> </ul>	participation
<b>Allotments</b>	Opportunities for those people who wish to do so to grow their own produce as part of the long-term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion. May also include urban farms. This typology does not include private gardens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• growing vegetable, fruit and flowers (drop root crops)</li> </ul>
<b>Cemeteries &amp; Churchyards</b>	Cemeteries and churchyards including disused churchyards and other burial grounds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• burial of the dead</li> <li>• quiet contemplation</li> </ul>
<b>Green Corridors</b>	Includes towpaths along canals and riverbanks, cycleways, rights of way and disused railway lines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• walking, cycling or horse riding</li> <li>• leisure purposes or travel</li> <li>• opportunities for wildlife migration.</li> </ul>

### The geographical area

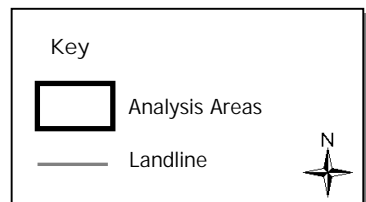
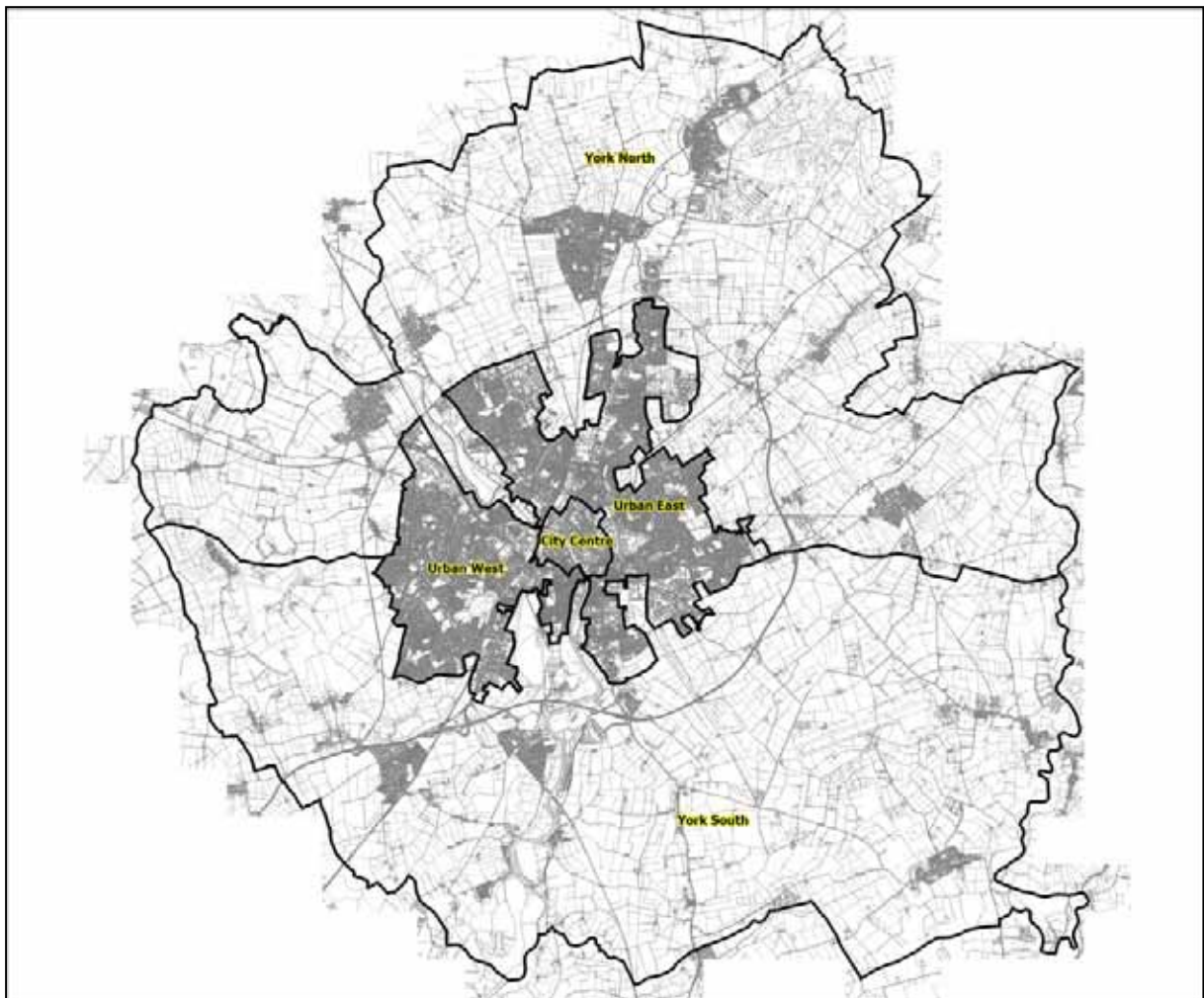
- 2.10 In order to analyse how the views of residents living in different areas of the City differ natural boundaries were used to divide the authority into five areas. This is in line with the approach identified in PPG17, which suggests the use of boundaries such as rivers and main roads to identify specific geographic areas.
- 2.11 This approach ensures that the findings of the local needs assessment can be analysed spatially and also provides a broad indication of the distribution of open spaces across the authority boundaries. Although these areas were used as a basis for the consultation programme and standard setting only, they nevertheless provide a useful starting point for understanding the provision of open space within the City of York. The areas (and the boundaries used to define these areas) are (See Figure 2.2):
- City Centre (as defined by the City centre boundary on the local plan map)
  - Urban East
  - Urban West
  - York North
  - York South.
- 2.12 Following adoption of the local standards, the application of the accessibility standard will enable analysis and interpretation of the distribution of open spaces for different

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geographical areas (eg at village or ward level) without reference to the analysis area in which the site is located.

**Figure 2.1 - Analysis Areas**



### **PPG 17 – 5 step process**

- 2.13 The PPG17 Companion Guide sets out a five step logical process for undertaking a local assessment of open space. This process was followed throughout this study and the findings are therefore compliant with the guidance set out within PPG17.
- 2.14 Although presented as a linear process below, in reality, steps 1 and 2 were undertaken in parallel.
- 2.15 The 5 step process is as follows:
- Step 1 – Identifying Local Needs
  - Step 2 – Auditing Local Provision
  - Step 3 – Setting Provision Standards
  - Step 4 – Applying Provision Standards
  - Step 5 – Drafting Policies – recommendations and strategic priorities.

### **Our process**

- 2.16 The following steps detail how the study has been undertaken in accordance with PPG17.

#### **Step 1 - Identifying local needs**

- 2.17 In order to identify local needs, a series of consultations were carried out including:
- household questionnaires
  - ward committee meetings
  - neighbourhood drop in sessions
  - interest group workshops
  - IT Young People Survey
  - consultation with external agencies
  - internal one-to-one consultations with Council officers.
- 2.18 Background is provided on each of the key elements of the consultation in the paragraphs that follow.

#### **Household survey**

- 2.19 The household survey provides an opportunity for a number of randomly selected households to comment on provision, quality and accessibility of open space, sport and recreation facilities as well as being given the opportunity to comment on any site-specific issues.
- 2.20 5000 questionnaires were distributed to households across City of York to capture the views of both users and non-users of open spaces. Officers at the Council provided a database of addresses from the electoral register and PMP then randomly selected 5,000 addresses across the five analysis areas. Residents who responded were included in a prize draw.

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- 2.21 Random distribution of questionnaires to a geographically representative sample (based on the populations living in each of the identified analysis areas) of households across the authority ensures that representatives from all age groups, ethnic groups and gender were given the opportunity to participate. In order to promote an even response rate across ages and gender, residents with the next birthday were asked to complete the questionnaire. A copy of the household survey and accompanying covering letter can be found in Appendix B.
- 2.22 735 postal surveys were returned, providing a statistically sound sample that can be used to assume responses for the remaining population within City of York. Obtaining more than 400 responses means that the results are accurate to +/- 5% at the 95% confidence interval. This means that if 70% of the survey sample said that they think that the quality of parks and gardens is good, we can be 95% confident that had we interviewed the entire population of City of York the results would have been between 65% and 75%.
- 2.23 Specific questions in the household questionnaire directly input into the standard setting process, for example, whether residents consider there to be sufficient provision of each typology of open space and the reason for their views. The responses therefore provide a statistically sound basis for the setting standards process, enabling full justification and robust evidence to reinforce decisions taken.

### **Ward Committee Meetings**

- 2.24 A poster display and information leaflet was provided at all ward committee meetings during February 2007. The leaflet provided information regarding the project and included contact details for attendees at sessions to provide feedback. Several questionnaires were returned from attendees at ward committees and many residents provided feedback via email, postal letter or telephone call.
- 2.25 Some ward committee meetings were attended by a Council Officer who provided more detailed background on the study verbally.

### **Neighbourhood drop in sessions**

- 2.26 Neighbourhood drop in sessions were held in three locations across City of York, specifically:
- Mobile Exhibition Unit, Parliament Street, City Centre
  - Tesco, Stirling Road, Clifton Moor Centre
  - Tesco, Tadcaster Road, Askham Bar.
- 2.27 These sessions were advertised to the public via the local press and intended to provide an informal opportunity to residents of the local area to give their views on open space, sport and recreation issues across the City. Local interest groups were also formally invited to the sessions. The drop in sessions were well attended by both residents and tourists and the key issues arising from discussions feed directly into the recommended local standards.

### **Workshops**

- 2.28 Workshops provide key stakeholders with the opportunity to become involved in the study, resulting in information and views on the quality, quantity and accessibility of open space, sport and recreation facilities from an informed viewpoint.

2.29 Three workshop sessions/discussion forums were held with key stakeholders identified by the Council in the Statement of Community Involvement. All workshops involved a variety of stakeholders. Following an introduction and presentation from PMP, these sessions were interactive, enabling and encouraging people to give their opinions on the quality, quantity and accessibility of open space sites across the City. Groups invited to the workshops included:

- Friends Groups
- Sports Clubs
- External Agencies
- Allotment Society Secretaries
- Providers of existing open spaces
- Representatives of older residents of York.

2.30 A full list of invited groups can be found within Appendix C. The key findings and themes emerging from the workshops contribute both to the recommended local standards and provide an overview and understanding of community views and perceptions.

### **IT Young People Survey**

2.31 Consultation with young people and children is traditionally difficult, however it is important to understand the views of this large sector of the community.

2.32 Two questionnaires were therefore posted on the internet and all schools within the City of York boundaries were notified of the website address and asked to encourage their pupils to complete the questionnaires. One questionnaire was intended for pupils of a primary school age and one was designed for young people of secondary school age.

2.33 The level of response to the surveys was pleasing; with 300 responses received from primary school aged children and 239 from young people attending secondary schools.

2.34 The information obtained through the distribution of these questionnaires is instrumental in the development of the local standards.

### **External Agencies Questionnaire**

2.35 Questionnaires were distributed to key regional and local external agencies with the primary purpose of obtaining the viewpoint of key stakeholders and ensuring that the recommended local standards dovetail with local and regional priorities.

2.36 Many external agencies also attended the workshops, which provided further opportunities for discussion.

### **Internal officers**

2.37 Internal consultations with Council officers were undertaken in order to understand the work, focus and key priorities of the Council and to provide a detailed strategic and practical overview.

### **Step 2 - Auditing local provision**

- 2.38 A comprehensive audit of local provision was undertaken, building on information already held by the Council and using a variety of other sources including:
- existing GIS information
  - Local Plan maps and proposals maps
  - existing documents, strategies and reviews
  - aerial photography
  - landline/Mastermap data
  - local knowledge
  - site visits.
- 2.39 A total of 589 sites were identified across the City of York during the audit process. Each site was classified into the relevant typology according to its primary purpose.
- 2.40 Site assessments were then carried out to all sites identified at this stage. Site assessments provided an opportunity to cross check the audit database and the classifications of sites, as well as enabling an assessment of the quality, quantity and accessibility of each site.
- 2.41 A meeting was held with Council officers to discuss the audit and ensure that it was complete and accurate.
- 2.42 Site assessments were undertaken using a matrix enabling comparisons between sites in the same typology and across typologies. For consistency purposes, all sites were assessed by the same person. Sites were rated against the following categories:
- (i) accessibility
  - (ii) quality
  - (iii) wider benefits.
- 2.43 The site assessment process resulted in an overall quality and accessibility score for each site in addition to ratings for each individual factor. A full list of sites and their scores can be found in Appendix D. The site assessment matrix can be found in Appendix E.

### **Step 3 - Setting provision standards**

- 2.44 PPG17 advocates that planning policies for open space, sport and recreation facilities should be based upon local standards derived from a robust assessment of local need.
- 2.45 Key themes emerging from consultations in addition to the findings of the open space audit and site assessments were therefore used as a basis to determine provision standards for each type of open space in terms of quality, quantity and accessibility. The local standards therefore directly represent the local needs and aspirations of residents of City of York Council.

## **SECTION 2 – UNDERTAKING THE STUDY**

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- 2.46 The methods used to determine standards are outlined in brief below. The full justification for each recommended standard for City of York Council, following this process can be found in Appendices F and G and H.
- 2.47 The application of these robust local standards based on assessments of need and existing provision will form the basis for addressing quantitative and qualitative needs through the planning process.
- 2.48 The application of local standards should consider the future requirement for open space (based on future population projections) as well as the current level of provision. Population projections have been taken from the revised 2004 sub national population projections (It has however been noted that the 2004 household projections may exceed current proposed build rates as identified in the latest Regional Spatial Strategy). Future demand is projected up to 2029 in line with the core strategy and population projects have been derived from the Regional Spatial Strategy. Future provision for different types of open space will be guided by areas of deficiency identified in this Study (quantity and accessibility), and where significant new housing will be located as determined by the LDF Core Strategy and subsequent Allocations DPD and/or Area Action Plans.

### ***Quantity***

- 2.49 The open space audit enables an understanding of the quantity of provision of each type of open space in each area of the city. The collection of this level of detail enables the calculation of the provision of each type of open space per 1000 population. This information is provided within typology specific Sections 4 –11, and is also summarised within Appendix I.
- 2.50 In order to ensure that any standards set are reflective of local community needs and opinions, key themes emerging from consultations in each geographical area relating to the quantity of each type are analysed. The key issues for each type of open space are summarised within Sections 4 – 11 and further detail is provided within Appendices F, G and H. Local standards are subsequently set taking into account the current level of provision compared to the communities perceived need.
- 2.51 The overall aim of the quantity assessment is to:
- provide an understanding of the adequacy of existing provision for each type of open space
  - establish areas suffering from deficiency of provision of each type of open space; and
  - provide a guide to developers as to the amount of open space expected in conjunction with new development.
- 2.52 Provision standards are then applied, in conjunction with accessibility and quality standards to determine shortfalls, surpluses and priority areas for investment and improvement.
- 2.53 Table 2.2 overleaf summarises the process undertaken to set local quantity standards.



**Table 2.2 – The key stages of setting local quantity standards**

<b>Process Stage</b>	<b>Methodology</b>
National Standards	Analysis of any existing national standards for each typology. These are usually provided by national organisations eg National Playing Fields Association for playing pitches. It is important to ensure that national standards are taken into account as part of determination of local standards.
Existing Local Standards	Consideration of existing local standards for each typology that are currently applied by City of York Council. These include standards set out in the Local Plan and in other strategies and documents.
Current Provision (per 1,000 population)	Assessment of the current quantity of provision.
Benchmarking	Figures detailing actual provision and subsequent local standards set by PMP within other green space and open space projects to provide a comparison benchmark when setting local standards.
Consultation (household survey)	Consideration of the findings of the household survey with regards the quantity of provision for each type of open space. This analysis provides a robust indication (at an authority wide 95% confidence level) of public perception of the existing level of provision of all different types of open spaces.
Consultation Comments (Quantity)	PPG17 indicates that where local provision is regarded as inadequate it is important to establish why this is the case. A feeling of deficiency can sometimes be due to qualitative issues of existing open space sites rather than actual quantity issues.  It is therefore important to assess findings of both the household survey, and the more subjective consultations including workshops, IT young people survey and neighbourhood drop in sessions in order to gain a thorough understanding of local community need and perception.
PMP Recommendation	PMP recommendation of a local standard. The standard is based on an assessment of the local community need and perceptions of the adequacy of existing levels of provision.
PMP Justification	Full justification for the recommended local standard based on qualitative and quantitative consultations are provided for each typology.

### ***Accessibility***

- 2.54 Accessibility is a key assessment of open space sites. Without accessibility for the public the provision of good quality or good quantity of open space sites would be of very limited value. The overall aim of accessibility standards should be to identify:
- how accessible sites are
  - how far people are willing to travel to reach open space; and
  - areas that are deficient in provision (identified through the application of local standards).
- 2.55 Similar to quantity standards, accessibility standards should be derived from an understanding of the community views, particularly with regards to the maximum distance that members of the public are willing to travel.
- 2.56 Distance thresholds (ie the maximum distance that typical users can reasonably be expected to travel to each type of provision using different modes of transport) are a very useful planning tool especially when used in association with a Geographical Information System (GIS). PPG17 encourages any new open space sites or enhancement of existing sites to be accessible by environmentally friendly forms of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport. There is a real desire to move away from reliability on the car.
- 2.57 Accessibility standards are set in the form of a distance in metres where walking is considered to be the most appropriate mode of travel, and a drive time where driving to the open space site would be more appropriate. Accessibility standards do not take into account the physical access to the site. This is considered as part of the site assessments.
- 2.58 Table 2.3 overleaf outlines the key stages in setting local accessibility standards.
- 2.59 The site assessments also provide an indication of accessibility at each specific site, taking into account the entrance to the site, transport to the site and information and signage.

**Table 2.3 – Key stages in setting accessibility standards**

<b>Process Stage</b>	<b>Methodology</b>
National Standards	Analysis of any existing accessibility standards for each typology.
Existing Local Standards	Consideration of existing local standards for each typology that are currently applied. These include standards set out in the Local Plan and in other strategies and documents.
Benchmarking	Figures detailing local standards set by PMP within other green space and open space projects to provide a comparison benchmark when setting local standards.
Consultation (household survey)	Consideration of the findings of the household survey with regards the distance expected to travel to each type of open space and the 75% threshold level. The use of the 75% threshold level is consistent with recommendations in PPG17– it represents the distance that 75% of the population is willing to travel and is used to ensure that extreme responses are discounted.
Consultation Comments (Accessibility)	Findings of qualitative consultations regarding access to open space sites and the distances people expect to travel to reach open space sites.
PMP Recommendation	PMP recommendation for a local accessibility standard. The standard is based on an assessment of the local community need and perceptions of the adequacy of existing levels of provision.
PMP Justification	Full justification for the recommended local standard based on consultations and local expectations are provided for each typology.

**Quality**

2.60 Quality and value of open space are fundamentally different and can sometimes be completely unrelated. An example of this could be:

- a high quality open space is provided but is completely inaccessible. Its usage is therefore restricted and its value to the public limited; or
- a low quality open space may be used every day by the public or have some significant wider benefit such as biodiversity or educational use and therefore has a relatively high value to the public.

2.61 The overall aim of a quality assessment should be to identify deficiencies in quality and key quality factors that need to be improved within:

- the geographical areas of the city
- specific types of open space.

## SECTION 2 – UNDERTAKING THE STUDY

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- 2.62 All sites assessed were given a score for a range of factors including:
- cleanliness and maintenance
  - security and safety
  - vegetation
  - ancillary accommodation.
- 2.63 These scores are then weighted (multiplied either by 3, 2 or 1) to reflect the perceived importance of the factors. Factors which are given higher weightings (eg cleanliness and maintenance – 3) are perceived to be the most important and to have the largest impact on the quality of the site. Factors with a higher weighting will therefore influence the total score more than factors with lower weightings.
- 2.64 Scores for each factor, taking into account the weighting, can then be translated into a percentage or quality index. Where the site assessor considered a particular factor to be “not applicable”, the percentage does not take account of this factor and the overall score is therefore not biased by these factors.
- 2.65 The quality standards set as part of the study are intended as an aspirational vision that reflects what the community want. The vision should be applied to existing open spaces in addition to providing a benchmark when designing and creating new areas of open space. These visions are reflective of the aspirations and expectations of the community derived from local consultations.
- 2.66 The key steps to setting a quality vision are set out in Table 2.4 below:

**Table 2.4 – Setting a quality vision**

<b>Process Stage</b>	<b>Methodology</b>
National Standards	Analysis of any existing qualitative standards for each typology.
Existing Local Standards	Consideration of existing local standards for each typology that are currently applied. These include standards set out in the Local Plan and in other strategies and documents.
Consultation (household survey)	Consideration of the findings of the household survey with regards the key quality features expected in each type of open space and consideration of the key issues experienced at existing open space sites
Consultation Comments (Quality)	Findings of qualitative consultations regarding the importance of different quality features at each site, in addition to problems experienced at current sites used
PMP Recommendation	PMP recommendation for a local quality vision. The standard is based on an assessment of the local community need and the key features that people like to see for each different type of open space.
PMP Justification	Full justification for the recommended local standard based on consultations and local expectations are provided for each typology.

- 2.67 The site assessment matrices (which can be found in Appendix E) completed for the open spaces across the City provide a score for quality, site access and an assessment of any wider benefits such as educational benefits.
- 2.68 PPG17 states that it is inappropriate to set standards for green corridors due to the linear nature of sites of this typology. The role of green corridors in linking sites together and promoting sustainable transport will be discussed during the application of local standards.

### **Steps 4 and 5 – Applying local standards and identifying priorities**

- 2.69 The application of the local standards enables the identification of deficiencies in terms of accessibility, quality and quantity and also enables spatial distribution of unmet need. Application of the recommended local standards enables:

#### **1) the identification of areas deficient in accessibility**

- deficiencies in accessibility are defined by applying the local derived accessibility standards to give an indication of those areas served and not served by existing provision. Those areas that are outside the distance threshold of existing open spaces or sport and recreation facilities will be prioritised for new provision.

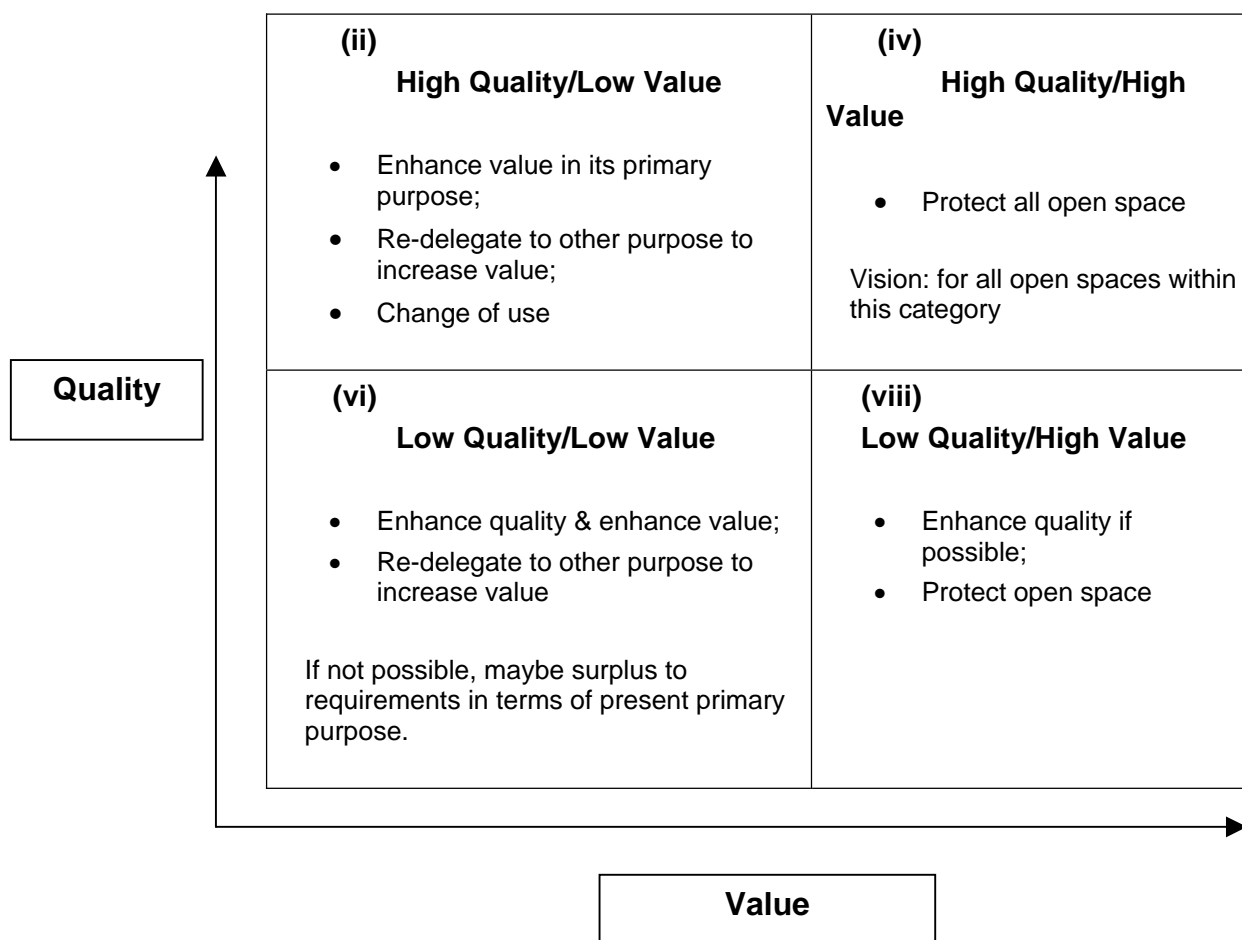
#### **2) identify areas of quantitative deficiency or surplus**

- areas of quantitative deficiency or surplus can be identified through the application of the quantity standard, either to a large geographical area, or more specifically to the population within the effective catchment of each different type of open space or sport or recreation facility for each form of provision.

#### **3) identify quality deficiencies and value of site**

- the site assessment data produced as part of stage 3 will be plotted on the same maps as the accessibility assessment by coding spaces or facilities in terms of their quality and **value**. This will spatially identify those open spaces or sport and recreation facilities most in need of enhancement and also put them in the context of overall accessibility.
- when taking decisions about specific sites, consideration should be given to both the value of the individual site and the quality of the site. Without combining these two factors, it is impossible to identify those spaces or facilities which should be given the highest level of protection by the planning system, those which require enhancement in some way and those which may no longer be needed for their present purpose. Figure 2.2 overleaf below illustrates the various outcomes of combining value and quality and their implications that will be investigated as part of the development of open space strategy.

**Figure 2.2 – Assessing the value of open space sites**



**4) identify the spatial distribution of unmet needs**

- unmet need can be summarised as:
  - areas outside the distance threshold of existing facilities or spaces
  - areas within the distance threshold of existing provision where there is a quantitative deficiency in provision
  - existing facilities or spaces that do not meet the relevant quality standard
- it is important however that the appropriate weight is afforded to identified deficiencies. For example, where a significant quantitative and accessibility deficiency is identified, it is a priority to identify sites to meet this deficiency. However, where there is a lower level of deficiency or there is either a quantitative or accessibility deficiency but not both, if sites can be identified to meet this deficiency, they should be considered, but not prioritised to the same degree.

**5) forecast future needs**

- some assumptions have been made regarding the future population in order to estimate the amount of future provision required over the new plan period (up to 2029). This is essential to ensure proactive planning.

**Step 5 - drafting policies**

- 2.70 In accordance with the PPG17 Companion Guide, a strategic framework for the planning, delivery, management and monitoring of open space, sport and recreation facilities should have four basic components, specifically:
- existing provision to be protected
    - where the existing level of provision is below or the same as the recommended quantity standard sites should be protected to ensure that the situation is not made worse over time whilst remedial action is planned
  - existing provision to be enhanced
    - there are two discrete instances where existing provision may be in need of enhancement. In areas where there is a quantitative deficiency of provision but no accessibility issues the Council may wish to increase the capacity of existing provision. Alternatively, in areas where facilities or spaces do not meet the relevant quality standards, enhancements will be required. Site assessments will inform qualitative improvements.
  - existing provision to be relocated
    - in order to meet local needs more effectively or make better overall use of land it may be necessary to relocate existing sites
  - areas where new provision should be considered
    - new sites should be located either in areas within the accessibility catchments of existing provision but where there is a quantitative deficiency or in areas outside of catchments. More generally, the Council should deliver a plan led approach to significant housing growth and open space and test potential housing locations against the findings of the open space, sport and recreation study.
- 2.71 The recommendations contained within the report are based on the findings of the application of the local standards for each typology. These recommendations highlight key issues for consideration by the Council. An example is provided below:

<b>P&amp;G1</b>	Given the low number of sites within the City, all park and gardens should be afforded protection.
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### Strategic context

- 3.1 This strategic review summarises the strategic context for open space, sport and recreation facilities on a national, regional and local scale.
- 3.2 As indicated, Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 and the Companion Guide, Assessing Needs and Opportunities are the key overarching documents (see Section 1) to shape this study. They reflect a recognition from the Government of the wider benefits derived from the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities, including;
- supporting an urban renaissance
  - supporting a rural renewal
  - promotion of social inclusion and community cohesion
  - health and well being
  - promoting sustainable development.
- 3.3 In addition to PPG17, there are numerous other national documents and agencies that shape the strategic context to open spaces, sport and recreation facilities across the country and as such influence the provision of facilities and the findings of this report.
- 3.4 Appendix J sets out the national strategic context, including Living Spaces: Cleaner, Safer Greener which was produced by the ODPM in 2002 and led to the creation of CABI Space, a national government agency which has the overall aim *“to bring excellence to the design, management and maintenance of parks and public space in towns and cities”*.
- 3.5 The following sets out the regional and local strategic context for City of York considering overarching documents and their relationship to this study only. Documents specific to one type of open space will be reviewed within typology specific Sections 4 – 11.



## SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Document reviewed	Summary	Links to Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study
<p><b><i>The Yorkshire and Humber Plan - The Draft Revised Regional Spatial Strategy Incorporating the Secretary of State's Proposed Changes (Public Consultation Document - 2007)</i></b></p>	<p>The RSS sets out a vision for the future of the Yorkshire and Humber Region, the key objectives to aim for and strategic themes to indicate how the objectives will be achieved.</p> <p>The importance of open spaces is identified within the core approach of the strategy. Specific references include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “open spaces have a vital role to play. Parks, squares, greens and wildlife areas can all help create a stronger and more attractive identity – with more opportunities for leisure and recreation, increased biodiversity and healthier lifestyles”</li> <li>• “open spaces within settlements, all have a strong influence on the character and distinctiveness of many of the Region’s towns” and</li> <li>• “it is important that valuable habitats and open spaces are retained within settlements and that a vibrant mix of land uses is maintained”.</li> </ul> <p>Policy ENV11 within the RSS focuses on Health and Recreation and further supports the importance of sport and recreation with references to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing, safeguarding and enhancing facilities for sports and recreation</li> <li>• increasing activity rates and opportunities to participate in sport and recreation. Measured by increasing participation by 1% per year.</li> </ul>	<p>The City of York LDF must be in general conformity with the RSS – and must also help to deliver the regional strategy.</p> <p>This open space, sport and recreation study will provide strategic direction for the City of York Council in the delivery of improvements in the greenspace infrastructure, linking with both the aims and objectives of the LDF and the RSS.</p> <p>Policies relating to green space in the City of York LDF will be supported by this Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study.</p>

## SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Document reviewed	Summary	Links to Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study
<p><b><i>Our Region, Our Health (2004)</i></b></p>	<p>The report aims to support the Yorkshire and Humber regional framework for health, providing recommendations and suggestions for action both to improve health and to reduce inequalities.</p> <p>The report highlights the comparatively poor quality of health of people living within the Yorkshire and Humber region, noting particularly the high levels of preventable ill health, long term illness and premature deaths.</p> <p>Key areas contributing to this poor health including alcohol abuse, smoking, poor diet, sedentary lifestyle and stress are highlighted, and specific recommendations relating to each area are discussed. Links between housing, education, community safety, economic generation and health are also explored.</p> <p>The report and associated recommendations reinforce the importance of physical activity. Recommendations of particular relevance to this open space, sport and recreation study include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promote the benefits of physical activity on a regional basis</li> <li>• create a regional strategic partnership to ensure a co-ordinated approach to attract and retain more public and private sector investment in physical activity</li> <li>• implement regular monitoring including levels of smoking, diet and physical activity</li> <li>• focus investment on increasing physical activity in the region</li> <li>• develop a coordinated approach to attract and retain more public and private investment in physical activity.</li> </ul>	<p>Priorities emerging from this open space report, and subsequent improvements to the quality and quantity of facilities may have a significant impact on levels of activity, and therefore consequently on demand for open space, sport and recreation facilities in future years.</p>
<p><b><i>Yorkshire Plan for Sport</i></b></p>	<p>The Yorkshire Plan for Sport sets out the regional context based on the key objectives formulated through Game Plan. The main regional priorities outlined in the plan are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improve health and wellbeing</li> <li>• increase participation</li> <li>• improve levels of performance</li> <li>• widen access</li> <li>• create stronger and safer communities</li> <li>• improve education.</li> </ul> <p>As a consequence of this adopted plan, the Council has the responsibility of becoming a partner agency in the delivery of these priorities ensuring that the framework of the Yorkshire Plan for Sport filters through into local sport and leisure strategy planning.</p> <p>Good quality pitch provision will be essential in implementing the plan. The apparent national and regional 'bottom up' approach to sports development requires a general improvement in grass roots and community facilities. It helps young people to succeed in life and develop close links between schools and sports clubs, creating a better and more positive local community.</p>	<p>The Open space, Sport and Recreation Study will provide a detailed understanding of existing provision and the needs and aspirations of local residents. This understanding, alongside the development of key priorities will help the Council to deliver improved sporting infrastructure and meet the aims and objectives of the Yorkshire Plan for sport locally.</p>

<b>Document reviewed</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Links to Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study</b>
<p><b>City of York Development Control Local Plan (2005)</b></p>	<p>The Local Plan provides a clear local framework to guide and promote development where it is needed, and protect the quality of York's unique historic, natural and built environment.</p> <p>The Local Plan aims to ensure there is a balance between development, conservation and other concerns such as sustainability and the environment. Achieving sustainable development is at the forefront of the planning agenda and is the key vision of the Plan.</p> <p>Although the Local Plan will be superceded by the Local Development Framework, it remains the document against which all developments will be assessed at the current time.</p> <p>Several policies relate specifically to open space, sport and recreation within the plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policies NE1 to NE7 consider the protection and enhancement of biodiversity across the City and ensure that there is balanced consideration given to nature conservation against the need for development. The plan states that considerable weight will be given to the protection of designated sites.</li> <li>• Policy NE2 prevents development where it is deemed that it would be harmful to river corridors or wetlands. Likewise, policy NE5a prevents development which would be harmful to designated local nature reserves. Policy NE8 specifically protects green corridors from development</li> <li>• Policies L1 to L4 consider the provision and protection of leisure and recreation facilities within the City, with policy L1a setting out sites allocated for new leisure provision and policy L1d allocating new sites for parks. Existing sites are protected from development through policy L1b.</li> <li>• Policy L1c considers that the provision of open space in all housing sites, and commercial developments above 2500m<sup>2</sup> will be expected to include contributions towards open spaces in line with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 0.9ha per 1000 population amenity greenspace</li> <li>- 1.7ha per 1000 population sports pitches</li> <li>- 0.7ha per 1000 population provision for children.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Policy L2 prevents against the loss of allotment sites unless it can be proven that they are surplus to requirements.</li> </ul>	<p>The Local Plan guides and controls development of the City of York and the local area as whole. The protection of existing open spaces, and the designation of sites as potential new open space sites highlights the importance of green spaces within York.</p> <p>This study will inform and support the revision of policies and the future policy direction for green spaces across the city.</p> <p>The study will also enable the prioritisation of areas where new open spaces are required and highlight open spaces which are of high value to the local community and/or wildlife and should be protected.</p>
<p><b>Local Development Framework</b></p>	<p>Alongside the Regional Spatial Strategy, the Local Development Framework will form the "development plan" for the City of York and as highlighted, will supersede the policies in the Local Plan.</p>	<p>In order for a Local Development Framework to be considered well founded, the strategies / policies / allocations must</p>

### **SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

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<b>Document reviewed</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Links to Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study</b>
	The Core Strategy is currently at the Issues and Options stage. Following this, preferred options will be identified and formulated into policies to guide future development.	be based on a robust and credible evidence base. This study represents an up-to-date local audit and needs assessment of open space, sport and recreation facilities on which to base associated planning policies in the LDF.

<b>Document reviewed</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Links to Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study</b>
<p><b><i>Without Walls – York Community Strategy 2004 - 2024</i></b></p>	<p>The City of York Community Strategy outlines how the quality of life can be improved across the City covering a wide range of economic, social and environmental issues.</p> <p>The strategy identifies seven key themes specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Safer City – to be a safe city with a low crime rate, and to be perceived as such by residents and visitors</li> <li>• The Healthy City – to ensure that residents enjoy healthy lifestyles through the promotion of healthy living and easy access to health care services</li> <li>• A City of Culture – to build a culture that welcomes and inspires visitors and presents opportunities for all</li> <li>• The Thriving City – to support the progress of existing businesses and encourage development of new business to ensure a flourishing economy and low unemployment rate</li> <li>• The inclusive City – to ensure that all residents and visitors can take part in life in the city</li> <li>• The Learning City – to ensure that all those that live and work in the city have the skills to play an active role in society</li> <li>• The Sustainable City – ensure that the city has a quality built and natural environment with a modern and integrated transport scheme.</li> </ul> <p>The strategy outlines a range of actions required to achieve each of the above objectives. Those of particular relevance to this open space, sport and recreation study include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing alternative social and recreational activities for young people to enjoy</li> <li>• develop a healthy lifestyle strategy</li> <li>• increase participation in sport, play and active lifestyles</li> <li>• maximise the opportunities created by the presence of the river through the inauguration of the annual Festival of the Rivers</li> <li>• ensure the appraisal of open space informs future priorities for the development of green spaces and the policies set out within the Local Development Framework.</li> </ul>	<p>Open space, sport and recreation facilities will be essential in the delivery of several of the key objectives and actions within this strategy, in particular with regards to the creation of a safer, healthy and sustainable city. This study will ensure that facilities of the right type, quality and in the right location will be provided.</p>

Document reviewed	Summary	Links to Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study
<p><b>Corporate Strategy – 2006 - 2009</b></p>	<p>The Corporate Strategy sets out 13 priorities, which will be delivered between 2006 and 2009. The priorities focus on key areas which are important locally and nationally and link with those priorities set out in the Community Strategy.</p> <p>Priorities which are particularly relevant to the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improving the actual and perceived condition of the cities' streets and open spaces</li> <li>• improving the health and lifestyles of residents in York.</li> </ul>	<p>The open space, sport and recreation study will be essential in the delivery of several of the key objectives and actions within this strategy.</p> <p>The study will provide detailed baseline information regarding open spaces which should be prioritised for quality improvement and will also analyse the adequacy of the existing provision of sport and recreation facilities as well as informal recreation opportunities, identifying areas for improvement.</p>
<p><b>Local Transport Plan 2006 - 2011</b></p>	<p>The Local Transport Plan targets reduced congestion and improved accessibility, air quality and safety. The plan highlights that if no action is taken to address these issues, traffic levels in the city will increase by 27 per cent in the next 15 years alone. The strategy reflects the direction of, and is integrated with, the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and Regional Economic Strategy (RES).</p> <p>The delivery of a revolutionary public transport service is central to the aims and objectives of the plan. Increasing the levels of walking and cycling is also one of the key targets of the plan, and the provision of new off road cycling and walking routes is designated as a priority for funding during the first five years of implementation of the plan.</p> <p>The plan builds upon the key successes of the previous plan, which include achieving the status of the UK's top cycling city in 2004 and achieving walking targets four years ahead of schedule. The promotion of healthy living, and a reduction on the reliance of cars are key themes throughout the transport plan.</p> <p>The overriding themes of the plan include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tackling congestion</li> <li>• improving accessibility for all</li> <li>• safer roads</li> <li>• improving air quality</li> <li>• improving culture, health and well-being</li> <li>• enhancing education and the local economy.</li> </ul> <p>The plan sets out a series of key actions intended to deliver these themes. Those of particular relevance to this open space, sport and recreation study include:</p>	<p>The Local Transport Plan highlights the key priorities for improvement of transport and travel within York over the next 5 years. It is essential that open space, sport and recreation facilities are accessible to the local community by public transport, cycleway and foot in order to ensure the effective delivery of the Local Transport Plan.</p> <p>Provision of an effective green corridor network should help to reduce the reliance on cars and ensure more residents travel on foot.</p> <p>This study will provide detailed information regarding the current accessibility of open spaces, and identify areas where residents are outside of an appropriate distance threshold.</p>

### SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

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Document reviewed	Summary	Links to Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• development of new cycle and pedestrian routes which link to the local public transport network</li><li>• improvements to the perceived and actual safety of cycle and pedestrian routes</li><li>• improving public spaces through better maintenance of physical and cultural assets, such as footpaths, cycle routes, and public transport infrastructure</li><li>• encouraging more physical activity by improving the walking and cycling networks</li><li>• the plan targets a 15% increase on the number of residents walking into the city centre, and a 1% increase in those cycling to work and 3% on those cycling into the City for recreation.</li></ul>	

### **Summary and conclusions**

- 3.6 The provision of open spaces, sport and recreation facilities contributes to the achievement of wider governmental objectives such as social and community cohesion, urban renaissance and promoting a healthy and enjoyable life.
- 3.7 Many organisations are willing to work in partnership together to manage and develop existing open spaces and share similar aims and objectives eg protecting, enhancing and maximising usage and nature conservation value of open spaces.
- 3.8 Points emerging from the strategic review that are integral to the development of this green space assessment in York include:
- increasing participation in sport and active recreation is a key component of national policies. This is highlighted through the regional delivery plan and is also a focal point of the community plan and corporate strategy. This assessment will enable future priorities to achieve this objective.
  - improvements to the perception of the safety and quality of open spaces will ensure that the community continue to value the spaces provided and that they contribute positively to the culture of the City of York as a whole. This study will guide future improvements and ensure that open space sites effectively meet local need.
  - increasing access to local open space, sport and recreation sites is inherent in the achievement of the objectives of the local transport plan where there is a focus on increasing walking and cycling. Increased access will also ensure that residents are able to lead healthier lifestyles. This study will provide a detailed insight into areas outside of acceptable distance thresholds to different open space types.
- 3.9 In summary, this review of strategic documents highlights the regional and local importance of open space within York and how the delivery of open space, sport and recreation facilities can meet wider aims and objectives. This local needs study and resulting strategy will also contribute to the delivery of aims and objectives of national and regional agencies.
- 3.10 The context of specific local documents, policies and strategies will be highlighted within the individual typology sections where the relevant policies apply.



### Parks and gardens

#### Definition

- 4.1 This type of open space includes urban parks, formal gardens and country parks that provide opportunities for various informal recreation and community events, within settlement boundaries.
- 4.2 Parks are often a mix of facilities with different types of open space, eg children's play facilities, sport pitches and wildlife areas. For classification purposes and within the scope of this study, the different open spaces have been separated by the PPG17 typology. Large green areas, footpaths, lakes and less dense woodland will provide the park area (total hectares) and the other facilities will be calculated separately under their own classification.
- 4.3 Parks provide a sense of place for the local community, help to address social inclusion issues within wider society and also provide some form of structural and landscaping benefits to the surrounding local area. They also frequently offer ecological benefits, particularly in more urban areas. Many parks also provide local pitches and facilities providing a further opportunity to increase participation
- 4.4 The provision of high quality Local Parks can be instrumental in the achievement of increased participation targets, ensuring that all residents are able to access local facilities for informal recreation – particularly walking. The Survey reveals that walking is the most popular recreational activity for people in England. Over 8 million adults aged 16 and over (20%) did a recreational walk for at least 30 minutes in the last 4 weeks. Local Park facilities provide key opportunities for residents to participate in informal physical activity.
- 4.5 Larger facilities tend to attract users from a wider catchment than the smaller parks and tend to have a higher local profile. The main strategic and publicly free to access park within York is Rowntree Park located in the centre of York. The household survey reveals that this park is extremely well used.

**Figure 4.1 – Rowntree Park**



### **Strategic context and consultation**

#### **Strategic context - national**

4.6 A national survey commissioned by Sport England, the Countryside Agency and English Heritage was undertaken during 2003, studying the provision of parks within England. The aims of the survey were to establish:

- how many adults in England use parks?
- what activities people take part in when visiting parks?
- the reasons why people visit particular parks
- the levels of satisfaction with the amenities on offer
- why non-users do not use parks?

4.7 The definition of a park used in the survey was very broad and included both formal provision such as town parks, country parks, recreation grounds and also less formal provision such as village greens and common land.

4.8 The findings of the study were:

- just under two thirds of adults in England had visited a public park during the previous 12 months
- there is a distinct bias in the use of parks by social groups, with almost three quarters of adults from the higher social group visiting a park compared with only half of those from the lower social group
- people from black and ethnic minority communities also have relatively low participation as well as those adults with a disability
- over 8 in 10 adults who had used a park in the previous 12 months did so at least once a month during the spring and summer with almost two thirds visiting a park at least once a week, and women tended to visit parks more often than men
- it is estimated that the 24.3 million adults who use parks make approximately 1.2 billion visits to parks during the spring and summer months and 600 million visits during the autumn and winter months – a total of 1.8 billion visits a year
- the most popular type of park visited was an urban or City Park.

4.9 There are a number of regional and local documents that refer to the importance of parks and garden – see Table 4.1 overleaf.

## SECTION 4 – PARKS AND GARDENS

Table 4.1 – Strategic context – regional and local

Document reviewed	Summary of key strategic drivers	Links to open space, sport and recreation study
<p>Yorkshire and Humber Plan – Regional Spatial Strategy (Consultation Draft December 2005)</p>	<p>Given the planning background to this study, of utmost importance is the Yorkshire and Humber Plan. Policy ENV10 states that development plans will maintain and enhance a range of landscapes and related assets of regional, sub-regional and local importance including historic landscapes, parks and gardens. The achievement of this objective will be monitored against the area of local authority managed parks and open spaces areas with a current Green Flag Award.</p> <p>The City of York currently has three awards for Glen Gardens, Rowntree Park and West Bank Park.</p>	<p>The site assessments undertaken as part of this Open Space, Sport and Recreation Assessment should be used by the Council when targeting further improvements to existing parks and gardens.</p>
<p>City of York Council – Development Control Local Plan</p>	<p>Local Plan policy L1D: New Public Parks, Green Spaces, Woodlands and Wetlands. This policy identifies a number of locations as areas for recreation opportunity as part of comprehensive developments to improve the quality of the local environment.</p>	<p>This study will form an important evidence base for emerging development plan policies in the LDF. Areas for new provision should be identified through the application of the local quantity and accessibility standards together.</p>

### Consultation

4.10 Consultation undertaken as part of the study highlighted the following key issues:

- the responses from the household questionnaire suggest people believe provision of parks and gardens is about right or more than enough (62.6%), however 33.3% believe there is nearly or not enough
- the highest level of satisfaction can be found in York South – where 67% of residents feel that the overall level of provision is about right. Rowntree Park is located in this area and hence this level of satisfaction is perhaps unsurprising. Consultations across the City indicated that Rowntree Park is the most highly regarded of all the parks in York.
- the level of dissatisfaction was highest in the Urban West – where 38.7% of residents feel that the level of provision is nearly enough or not enough. This correlates with the findings of the audit – as the West Urban area is the area exhibiting the lowest levels of provision.
- 54% of respondents to the household survey think that the quality of parks and gardens in York is good, as opposed to only 8% who feel the quality is poor
- the levels of satisfaction are relatively consistent across all of the analysis areas, with only a 4% difference between the highest and lowest ratings
- the household survey reveals that 56% of people would **expect** to walk to parks and gardens in York, as opposed to 23% who would expect to drive and 10% who would expect to cycle. Of those users (who visit parks and gardens more often than any other typology in the study) 57% **currently** walk and 30% use cars.
- other consultations indicated that parks and gardens are particularly highly valued, with residents and visitors to the City alike using them frequently. There was a particular emphasis on a desire for the provision of Local Parks and gardens. The IT young people survey revealed that parks and gardens are particularly valued by young people and children.

### Setting provision standards – quantity

4.11 The recommended local quantity standard for parks and gardens has been summarised overleaf. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix F.

**Quantity Standard (see Appendices F and I – standards and justification, worksheet and calculator)**

Existing level of provision	Recommended standard – City and Local Parks
35.15 hectares, equivalent to 0.18 ha per 1000 population	0.18 ha per 1000 population
Justification	
<p>Parks are very important to residents in York, with a large number of respondents to the household survey using them more than once a month (City Parks 31%, Local Parks 37%). Whilst the consultation has split parks and gardens into two separate tiers, it is recommended that the Council adopt a quantity standard based on the overall level of provision. This will provide a greater degree of flexibility in terms of providing parks that are suitable for that locality rather than strict adherence to separate standards for City and Local Parks.</p> <p>The current level of provision of parks and gardens is equivalent to 0.18 ha per 1,000 population in York. The clear message from respondents to the household survey is that the level of provision is currently about right (60% for City Parks and 46% for Local Parks). This suggests that there are limited expectations in terms of further provision. As a consequence, it is recommended that the Council adopt a standard equivalent to the current level of provision in York. This will enable the Council to focus on improvements to the quality of parks and gardens but also address locational deficiencies in provision. The recommended standard (which should be viewed as a minimum level of provision across all areas) is lower than levels of provision in the City Centre and York South, but provides scope for new provision in other areas). This indicates that any new park provision should focus in the other areas of the City. The application of the quantity and accessibility standards should be undertaken alongside natural and semi natural provision and amenity green space (given their similar “informal open space function”). This will help with the prioritisation of quantitative increases.</p> <p>Moreover, given the population growth that will be experienced up to 2029, in addition to the provision of additional parks, it is important for the local authority to seek to enhance accessibility to existing parks – for example by improving routes to them.</p>	

**Current quantity provision**

4.12 The provision of parks and gardens in the City is summarised in Table 4.2 below:

**Table 4.2 – Provision of Parks and Gardens in York**

Analysis Areas	Current Population	Current Provision (Hectares)	Provision per 1000 population	Current Balance Against Local Standard (0.18 hectares per 1000 population)	LDF Population (2029)	Provision per 1000 population (2029)	Future Balanced Against Local Standard (0.18 hectares per 1000 population)
City Centre	5,930	5.01	0.84	3.93	6,911	0.72	3.75
Urban East	72,045	9.63	0.13	-3.45	83,954	0.11	-5.62
Urban West	52,995	4.46	0.08	-5.16	61,755	0.07	-6.75
York South	22,132	12.05	0.54	8.03	25,790	0.47	7.37
York North	40,497	4	0.09	-3.35	47,190	0.08	-4.57
Overall	193,599	35.15	0.18	-0.01	225,600	0.16	-5.82

4.13 The key issues emerging from Table 4.2 include:

- the local quantity standard has been set at the existing level of provision, meaning that when taking into account the amount of parks and gardens and the population, the level of provision is sufficient at the current time
- the highest level of provision can be found in York South with 12.05 hectares equating to 8.03 hectares per 1000 population
- leading into 2029, as population figures rise, the overall position moves to an undersupply of -5.82 hectares, unless there is further provision made to meet to local standard of 0.18 hectares per 1000 population.

**Setting provision standards – quality**

4.14 The recommended local quality vision for parks and gardens has been summarised overleaf. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix G.

4.15 Given the distinctly different nature of City Parks and Local Parks it is recommended that separate quality visions be supported as proposed above.

**Quality Standard (see Appendix G)**

<b>Recommended standard – CITY PARKS</b>
<b><i>“A welcoming, clean and litter free site providing a one-stop community facility which is safe and accessible to all and has a range of facilities and other types of open space within it. City Parks should be attractive, well designed and maintained, providing well-kept grass, flowers and trees, adequate lighting and other appropriate safety features, as well as suitable ancillary accommodation (including seating, toilets, litter bins and play facilities). Sites should promote the conservation of wildlife and the built heritage and provide links to the surrounding green infrastructure”</i></b>
<p>A quality standard has been devised which reflects both aspirations and concerns expressed through local consultations (as demanded by PPG17) and also the Green Flag Award criteria (the national benchmark). The quality vision makes reference to other types of open space within it, recognising the multifunctionality of parks.</p> <p>In order to improve the quality of parks across the City it is important that the Council implement and strive to achieve a quality standard that will ensure consistency and high quality provision. Attractive, well-designed and well-maintained parks are key elements of good urban design and are fundamentally important in delivering places in which people want to live. The standard has been formulated to ensure that park provision is sustainable, balanced and ultimately achievable. The improvement of quality and accessibility to parks and the promotion of best practice sites such as Museum Gardens should increase local aspirations and encourage usage of parks. Many consultees highlighted the importance of good quality park provision in encouraging residents and visitors to use parks in the City.</p> <p>One of the most significant issues regarding the quality of City Parks appears to be the mis-use of sites, with 25% of respondents to the household survey stating it was a “significant problem”. Therefore the achievement of the quality vision will be galvanised by the provision of bespoke sites for children and young people.</p>

<b>Recommended standard – LOCAL PARKS</b>
<b><i>“All Local Parks should be a facility serving the immediate needs of local people for active recreation. They should provide a welcoming, clean and litter free environment. Maintenance should focus on providing well-kept grass, flowers and trees and encourage wildlife to flourish with the use of varied vegetation through appropriate management. Community Leisure Officers should work with other organisations and the community to provide a hub of interest, activities and local events. Good quality and appropriate ancillary facilities (play areas, litter-bins, dog-bins and benches) should be provided to encourage greater use. ”</i></b>
<p>A commonly expressed view of residents through the local consultation is that the quality of Local Parks across York is average (44%). A quality standard has been devised which reflects both concerns expressed through local consultations (as demanded by PPG17) and also the Green Flag Award criteria. Particularly important factors to arise from the local consultation that are included within the quality vision are well kept grass, clean and litter free, litter bins, flowers and trees and toilets. Explicit reference is not made to specific play opportunities to be included within the site (such as LEAPs, playing pitches and ball games area) as it is considered that the nature of provision is dependent on the size of the site and other facilities available in the area – therefore reference to active recreation is intended to provide a greater degree of flexibility.</p>

The importance of Local Parks is highlighted by the fact that they are one of the most frequently used typologies of open space. Therefore the achievement of a quality standard should be considered as one of the highest priorities for the Council. This focus on the achievement of the quality vision should be given more weight in light of the fact that it is widely felt (by 49%) that the level of provision of Local Park sites across York is about right/more than enough, suggesting that the emphasis should be on improving existing sites. Residents' perception of quality and quantity are interlinked with quality improvements often mitigating the need for new provision.

**Quality benchmarking**

4.16 The calculation of the upper quartile quality score (84% on the site assessment for parks and gardens) provides an indication of the desired level of quality at each site and enables a comparison at sites across the City. It highlights sites that currently meet the visionary standard, and those sites falling below and consequently where improvement is required. A full list of site scores can be found in Appendix D.

**Table 4.3 – Parks and gardens quality scores**

Above upper quartile	85+	(90%) – Rowntree Park – York South – Site ID 80 (86%) – Glen Gardens – Urban East – Site ID 187
Median – Upper quartile	80%-84%	(84%) – Museum Gardens – City Centre – Site ID 282 (82%) – West Bank Park – City Centre - Site ID 277 (80%) – Heslington Hall – Urban East – Site ID 81
Lower quartile - median	70%-79%	(78%) – Grounds of “The Retreat” – York South – Site 835 (70%) - Clarence Gardens – Urban East – Site ID 216
Less than lower quartile	Below 70	(64%) – Hull Road Park – Urban East – Site ID 229 (62%) - St Georges Field – Urban East – Site ID 402

4.17 The key issues emerging from Table 4.3 include:

- the average score of parks and gardens within York is 77%, showing that generally the quality of parks and gardens within the city is good. Rowntree Park and Glen Gardens achieved scores within the upper quartile or top 25th percentile. Both of these sites currently have Green Flag Awards.



## SECTION 4 – PARKS AND GARDENS

- with a score of 90%, Rowntree Park is considered to be a good/very good and should be used as an example of good practice
- high quality sites, especially sites achieving the upper quartile score of 86% should be protected, specifically if they have high/significant usage. The aspiration should be for all parks and gardens to fall within this category and achieve the quality vision.
- sites scoring below the average of 77% should be prioritised for enhancement to help achieve the quality vision set for this type of open space.

### Setting provision standards – accessibility

- 4.18 The recommended local accessibility standard for parks and gardens has been summarised below. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix H.

### Accessibility Standard

<b>Recommended standard – CITY PARKS</b>
<b>20 MINUTE WALK TIME (960 metres)</b>
<b>Justification</b>
<p>Setting separate accessibility standards for City Parks and Local Parks is consistent with PPG17 which makes reference to hierarchies of provision. This is in recognition of the fact that large facilities tend to attract users from a wider area and have a higher local profile. Residents are less likely to travel the same distances to Local Parks. In terms of investigating the spatial distributions of unmet demand, the proposed City Park standard should not be considered in isolation but rather in the context of Local Parks. Those living within the Local Park distance threshold of a City Park will have no need of a Local Park as well. It will be important to provide an overall network of provision. The wide catchment of City Parks was further highlighted at drop-in sessions with many visitors to York having used these facilities.</p> <p>Linking in with the health agenda, it is important to consider sustainable methods of transport and encouraging walking and cycling to and within open spaces. There is a clear expectation from residents in the urban analysis areas that a walk time is required. A 20-minute walk time is recommended, as this is also consistent with the 75% threshold level as advocated in the PPG17 Companion Guide. Setting smaller accessibility catchments could provide unrealistic expectations in terms of delivering further provision in areas outside of the distance threshold – however given that 60% think that the current level of provision is about right it is unlikely that increased provision will be required. Emphasis should be on enhancing the quality of provision and using the opportunity to improve Local Parks into more formalised provision like City Parks. It is important to seek to enhance the accessibility of all existing City Parks – for example by promoting new entrance points or better routes to them and/or information and signage.</p>

<b>Recommended standard – LOCAL PARKS</b>
<b>15 MINUTE WALK TIME (720 metres)</b>
<b>Justification</b>
<p>There is a clear emphasis in favour of walking in terms of current travel patterns and expectations. 74% of respondents to the household survey would expect to walk to a local park, and 75% of regular users do walk. Moreover, given the more local nature of these facilities compared to the City Parks, it is considered appropriate to focus on access these sites on foot. This was further reflected in the IT for young people survey, where the location of facilities emerged as the key determinant of whether people use facilities.</p> <p>The standard has been set at a 15-minute walk time as this is the distance that 75% of respondents (across all analysis areas apart from the City Centre area) would be willing to walk up to. A lower accessibility standard could be justified on the basis of current users travel patterns – with most users travelling less than 10 minutes to access a Local Park. However, PPG17 states that lower thresholds are only needed where there is clear evidence that a significant proportion of local people do not use existing provision because they regard it as inaccessible. Given the findings of the local consultation (which highlight the high levels of use at Local Parks) this could not be substantiated.</p> <p>Therefore a 15-minute walk time is recommended – albeit alongside measures designed to improve accessibility, such as improved public transport or cycling routes. This will be particularly important if targets to increase participation in physical activity are realised. Local Parks will play a key role in ensuring all sectors of the community have access to parks.</p>

**Current provision - accessibility**

- 4.19 Accessibility at each site was also assessed through a detailed site visit and the completion of a detailed pro forma. The assessment takes into account issues including whether the entrance to the site is easily accessible, the condition of roads, paths and cycleways, whether there is disabled access, how accessible is the site by public transport, bicycle or walking, and whether there are clear and appropriate signs to the site.
- 4.20 The accessibility of existing parks and gardens in the City is summarised in Table 4.4 overleaf. It is important to note that site assessments are conducted at a snapshot in time and may not always be reflective of the accessibility of the site throughout the year.

**Table 4.4 – Parks and gardens accessibility scores**

Above upper quartile	80+	(90%) – Rowntree Park – York South – Site ID 80 (80%) – Glen Gardens – Urban East – Site ID 187 (80%) – Museum Gardens – City Centre – Site ID 282
Median – Upper quartile	73.3%-79%	(76%) – Hull Road Park – Urban East – Site ID 229 (73.3%) – Heslington Hall – Urban East – Site ID 81 (73.3%) – West Bank Park – Urban West – Site ID 277
Lower quartile - median	70%-73.2%	(70%) – St Georges Field – City Centre – Site ID 402
Less than lower quartile	Below 70	(65%) – Clarence Gardens – Urban East – Site ID 216 (53%) – Grounds of the Retreat – York South – Site ID 835

4.21 The key issues emerging from Table 4.4 include:

- the median score achieved was 73.3%. Those sites scoring below the median accessibility score should be prioritised for improvement in order to achieve the standards set by those within the upper quartile.
- the upper quartile score was 80%. The aspiration should be for providers of parks and gardens to deliver sites that achieve the upper quartile accessibility benchmark.
- the lower quartile score was 70%.

**Applying provision standards – identifying geographical areas**

4.22 In order to identify geographical areas of importance and those areas with required local needs the quantitative provision of parks and gardens in York should be considered alongside the recommended local standard for accessibility. The quantity standards enable the identification of areas that do not meet the minimum provision standards, while the accessibility standards will help determine where those deficiencies are of high importance. Applying the standards together is a much more meaningful method of analysis than applying the standards separately and therefore helps with the prioritisation of sites.

## **SECTION 4 – PARKS AND GARDENS**

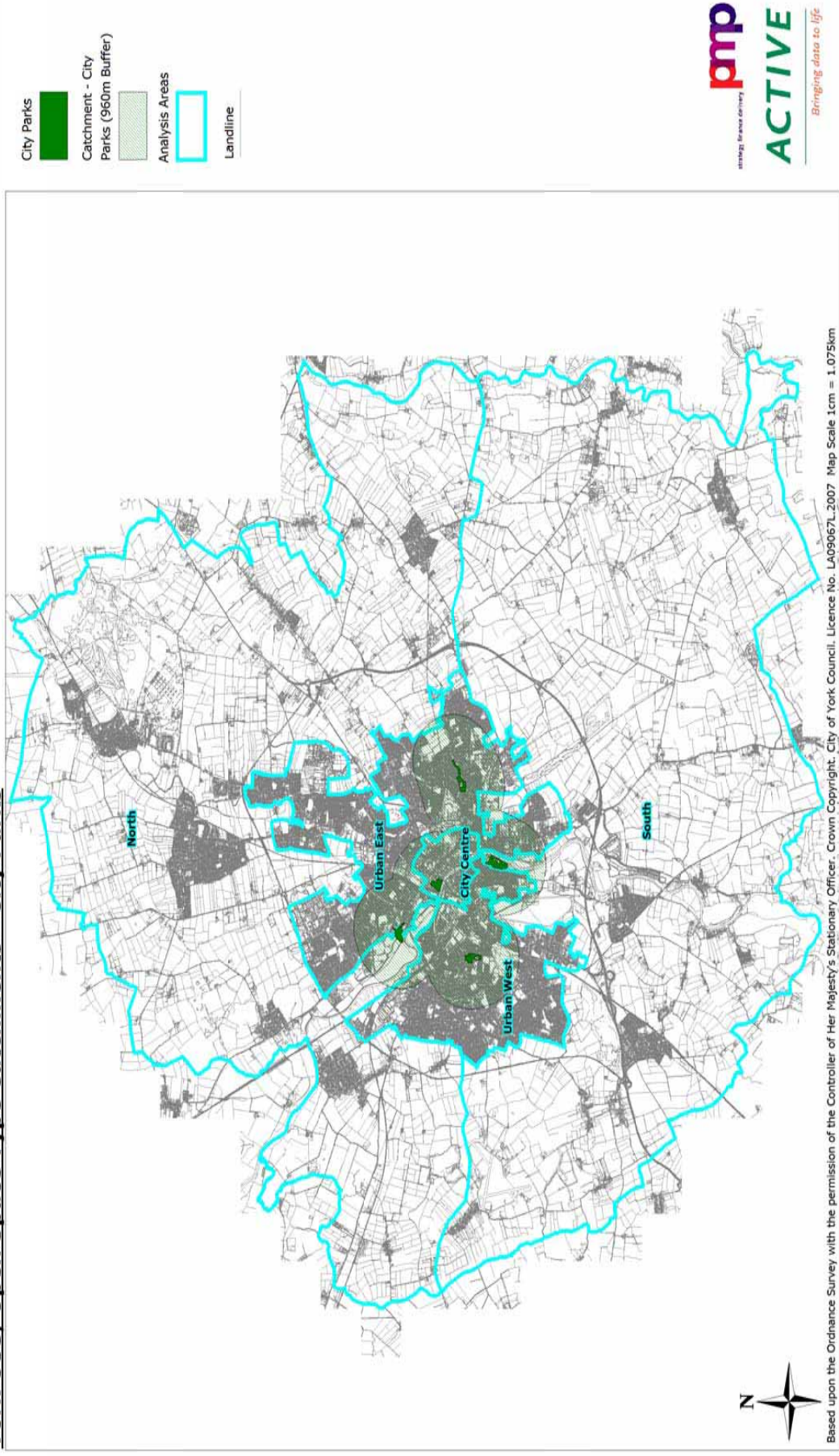
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- 4.23 As highlighted, the local quantity standard has been set at the existing level of provision. While the overall quantity of parks and gardens therefore meets the existing quantity standard, population increases in future years will see this transformed into a shortfall.
- 4.24 While the City centre and York South analysis areas have sufficient provision of parks in quantitative terms to meet the recommended local standard, other areas of the City fall below the appropriate level of provision. Given the wide catchment area of parks the application of the accessibility standards is of particular importance in determining areas of real deficiency.
- 4.25 As Map 4.1 (overleaf) illustrates, the provision of City parks are focused around the urban area and there are no sites located within the outlying settlements. When applying the local accessibility standard it can be seen that there is a reasonably good distribution, with only a marginal overlap. The outer parts of the York urban area are not well served (ie Urban East and Urban West). However, paragraphs 4.33 and 4.34 highlight the role that amenity and natural and semi natural green spaces may play in fulfilling the roles of parks in areas not within the accessibility standards set.
- 4.26 Map 4.2 (overleaf) provides information relating to local parks, from this it can be seen that there is an even distribution when applying the local accessibility standard. However, it is clear that local parks are concentrated centrally and to the south east of the City.

**SECTION 4 – PARKS**

**Map 4.1 – City Parks in York**

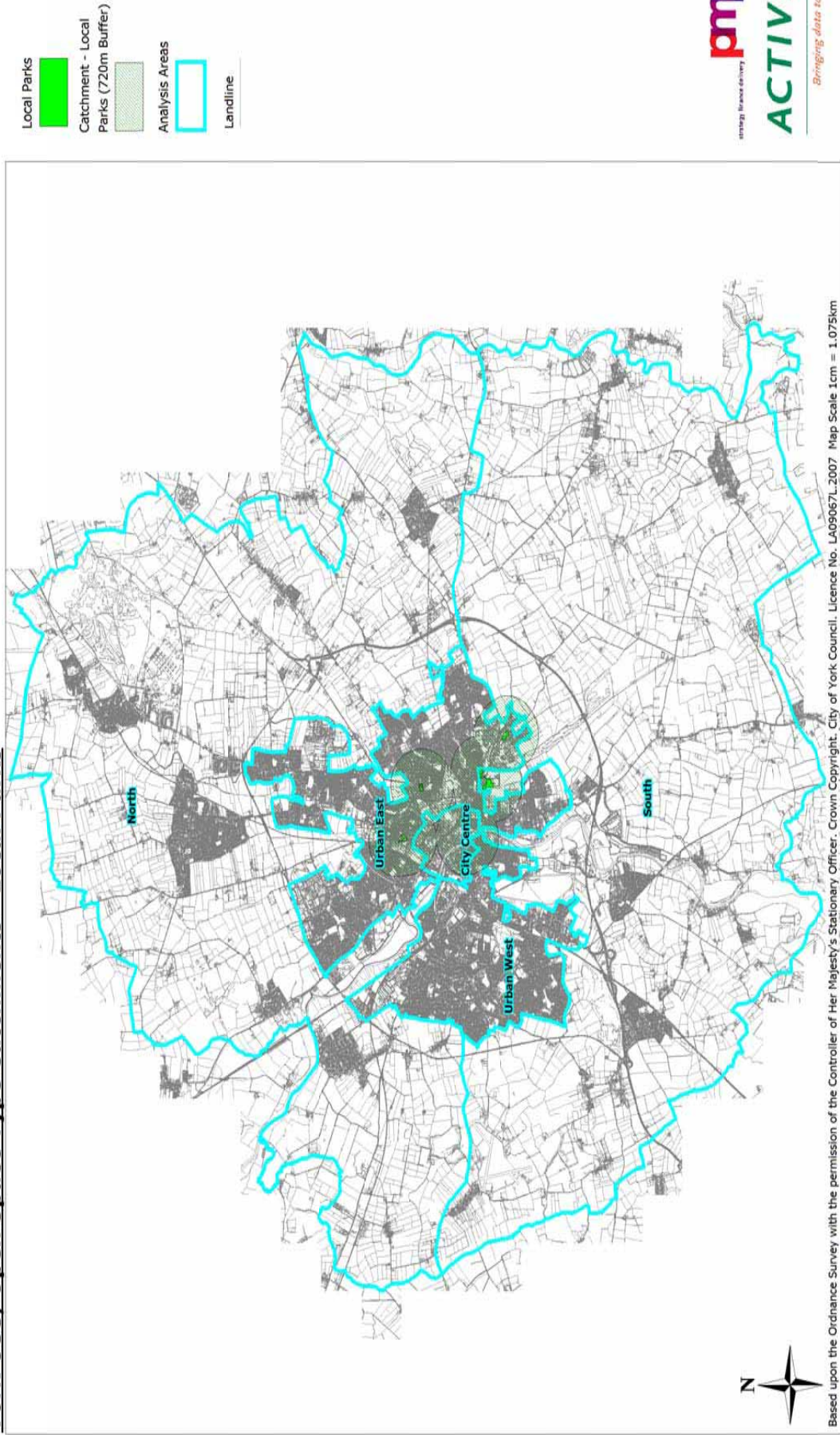
**York OSS, Open Space Type Catchments - City Parks**



**SECTION 4 – PARKS**

**Map 4.2 – Local Parks in York**

**York OSS, Open Space Type Catchments - Local Parks**



## SECTION 4 – PARKS AND GARDENS

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- 4.27 While consultation highlighted the importance of the provision of parks, it was clear that the emphasis was placed on enhancing the quality of existing sites. Rowntree Park and Museum Gardens were perceived to be examples of good practice.
- 4.28 The recommended local standard highlights the importance of attractive, well designed and well maintained parks, which are in keeping with the local area and meet the needs of local residents.

<b>PG1</b>	Strive to mirror the high standard of Rowntree Park and Museum Gardens at parks across the City through a programme of ongoing investment. Sites should be enhanced in line with the quality visions, taking into account the needs of both humans and wildlife.
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- 4.29 It is evident that there is significant interest and community involvement across the City of York, particularly in the provision of parks and natural and semi natural open spaces. Partnership working with such groups offers the opportunity to capitalise upon a variety of skills and ensure that parks are a hub of interest, activities and local events. Misuse of facilities within parks was also highlighted as a significant issue within the household survey. Community involvement (alongside the appropriate provision of facilities for young people to be addressed in Section 8) can help to create a culture of respect.

<b>PG2</b>	Continue to promote partnership working and management across the parks in York.
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- 4.30 Alongside the quality of provision, access to parks is also an extremely important feature. As highlighted during the consultation, parks are perceived to be a key point of the green infrastructure of the City and they are predominantly located within the urban area. As such, safe and effective sustainable transport routes will be essential in both increasing usage of parks and creating linkages between different open space types.

<b>PG3</b>	Maximise links to, between and within parks through the effective development of footpaths, cycle routes and public transport.
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- 4.31 While enhancing quality and access to parks remains the key priority across York, the importance of local provision was emphasised throughout the consultation process. Consideration has therefore been given to the location of existing facilities and gaps within the current infrastructure.
- 4.32 Any new facilities should be targeted in locations that are currently lacking in provision. Moreover, in order to ensure that the maximum number of residents are within the accessibility catchment of parks and gardens, any new site should preferably be located where there is no overlap with the catchment of existing parks.

## **SECTION 4 – PARKS AND GARDENS**

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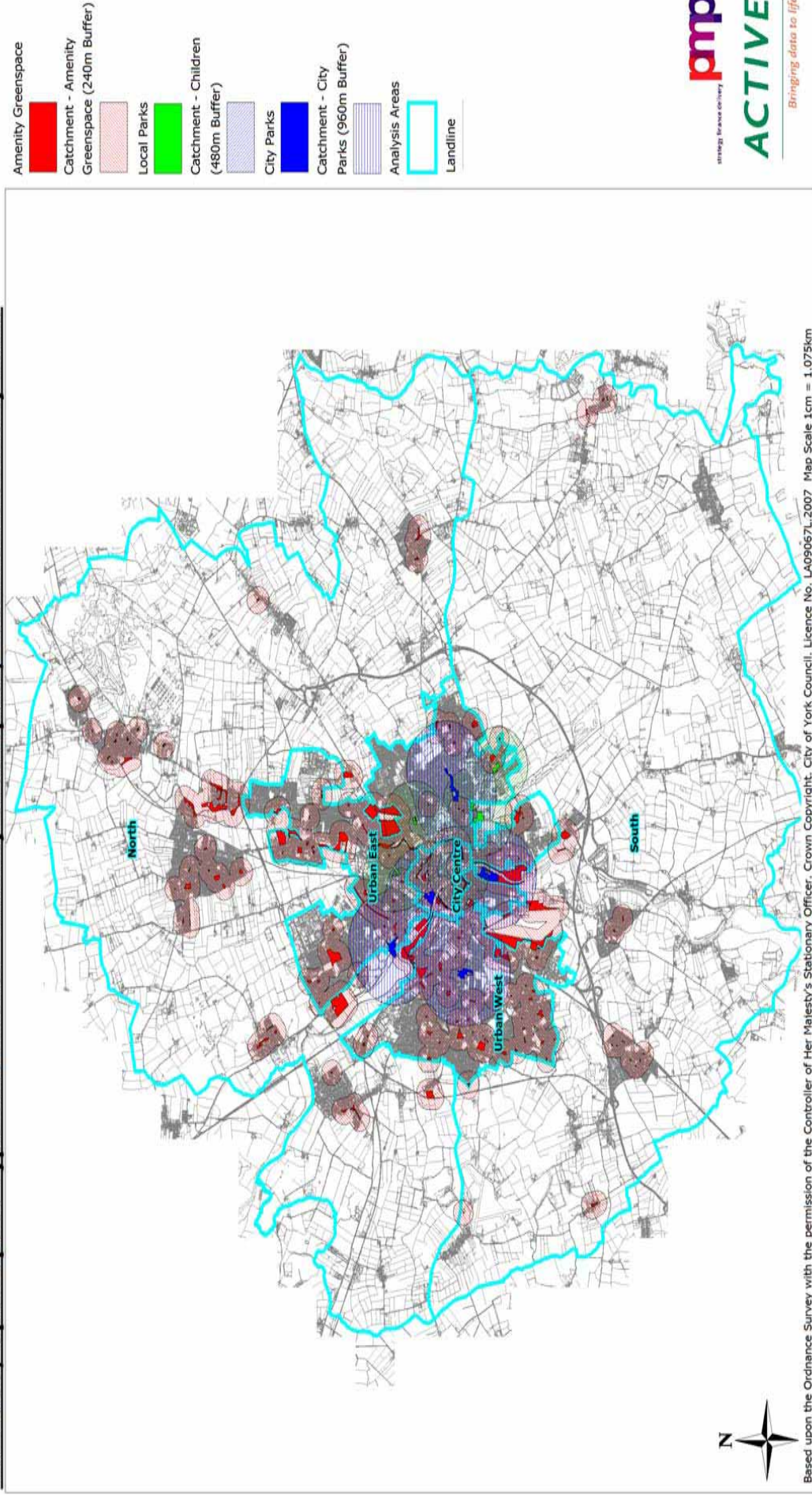
- 4.33 Map 4.3 overleaf illustrates the provision of parks in the context of amenity green space in the area. The presence of amenity green space in areas deficient of parks provides an opportunity to formalise these spaces and therefore better meet the needs of local residents. Amenity green spaces in areas deficient of parks may also take on greater importance to local residents. Where parks are provided within a 5 minute catchment (the recommended distance threshold for amenity green space – set in Section 6) they may negate the need for further provision of amenity green space (as a higher order facility they provide a greater range of facilities). This is discussed in greater detail within Section 6.
- 4.34 Similar to amenity green spaces, natural and semi natural open spaces may fulfil the role of a park in areas where there is no formal park provision. There is a good spread of natural and semi natural open space across the City, with all residents within the catchment area of at least one site. Section 5 discusses this in greater detail.



**SECTION 4 – PARKS AND GARDENS**

**Map 4.3 - The provision of parks in the context of amenity green space**

**York OSS, Open Space Type Catchments - Amenity Greenspace, Local Parks and City Parks**



## SECTION 4 – PARKS AND GARDENS

- 4.35 As illustrated on Map 4.1, City parks are evenly distributed across the central urban area of the City. This means that a large proportion of residents are within the recommended catchment area of a City park.
- 4.36 Museum Gardens is centrally located, meeting the needs of both residents in the City centre and visitors. Although Rowntree Park is situated to the York South analysis area, this site is located on the periphery of the City Centre analysis area and therefore also serves City centre residents.
- 4.37 Residents in the Urban East and Urban West analysis areas have good access to City parks, with Hull Road Park located in the east and West Bank Park in the west.
- 4.38 Access to City parks is more limited in the York North analysis area, where the Homestead (more limited accessibility) is located in the north west, furthermore there is no City park to the north east. Glen Gardens, a local park meets this deficiency to some extent (Figure 4.2).

**Figure 4.2 - Provision of local parks to the north east of the City**



<b>PG4</b>	In light of the even distribution of City parks, all sites should be protected and where possible, investment should be directed into sites to enhance their quality. If any new City park was to be developed, this should be located in the north east of the City.
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- 4.39 As displayed on Map 4.2, with the exception of Glen Gardens, local parks primarily serve residents in the south east of the City and are located in the vicinity of Hull Road Park. Consultations highlighted that these local parks provide an important resource ensuring that local facilities are available in close proximity to the home.

## SECTION 4 – PARKS AND GARDENS

<b>PG5</b>	Ensure that local parks are protected and enhanced in quantitative and qualitative terms where appropriate.
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- 4.40 In addition to access to formal parks and gardens, small amenity areas and larger natural and semi natural open spaces provide other opportunities to residents within the City Centre analysis area. In light of the lack of park and limited provision of amenity green space to the east of the City, Monk Stray is of particular importance to local residents, providing a large area for informal recreation.
- 4.41 Despite an even provision of parks in the City centre and central urban areas it is clear that people living on the outskirts of the urban area (to the edge of the Urban East and Urban West areas) have limited access to parks. These areas are illustrated in Figures 4.3 and 4.4 below: This is further accentuated by the application of the quantity standards, where it can be seen that the greatest areas of deficiency are likely to be in these areas (urban east  $-3.45$  and urban west  $-5.16$ ). Map 4.3 clearly demonstrates the importance of amenity green space in these areas (particularly around the Acomb and Woodthorpe areas of the City) where residents do not have access to formal parks and gardens.

**Figure 4.3 - Residents in the urban east area outside the catchment of a park**



**Figure 4.4 - Residents in the urban west area outside the catchment of a park**



<b>PG6</b>	Consider the provision of small local parks in urban areas currently devoid of parks. This may be delivered by upgrading amenity green spaces.
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- 4.42 Further comments surrounding this can also be found within the amenity green space chapter and recommendations AGS5 and AGS7.
- 4.43 While the distribution of parks in the City centre and central urban areas is good, provision of formal parks is sparse in the outlying urban areas and in the more rural settlements. The strays are of particular importance in some of these areas of deficiency, with Micklegate Stray and Bootham Stray both located in areas where residents have more limited access to parks and gardens.
- 4.44 While provision of local parks in smaller settlements would be impractical, where possible efforts should be made to ensure that residents have access to a form of park. In light of the location of parks solely within the urban area, all residents living within smaller settlements are outside of the catchment of a local facility. These shortfalls are also evident through the application of the quantity standards, which highlight deficiencies in the York North analysis area, although it suggests that there are sufficient parks to meet local need in the York South analysis area. These surpluses are influenced by the location of Rowntree Park, which falls into the York South analysis area despite serving residents within the City centre. Therefore, significant accessibility deficiencies still exist.
- 4.45 As a result, development of small local parks should be considered in some of the larger settlements where access to parks in the area is more limited including Wigginton, Strensall, Huntington, Dunnington, Nether and Upper Poppleton and Wheldrake.
- 4.46 Consideration could be given to the provision of pocket parks in these areas. Pocket parks are open spaces managed and run by local people. They provide a formal space dedicated to informal recreation as well as the protection of wildlife and landscape.

Many pocket parks are informal natural areas and there are therefore strong links with the natural open space typology. Provision of a pocket park may be of particular value in settlements to the south of the urban area (City Centre, Urban East and Urban West analysis areas), where there is currently a shortfall of provision of natural and semi natural open space.

<b>PG7</b>	Consider opportunities to facilitate the development of small local parks (eg Pocket Parks) in the smaller settlements in the York South and York North analysis areas.
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### Summary

- 4.47 Parks and gardens were perceived to be particularly important to local residents across York and were one of the most frequently used types of open space by both residents and visitors. Visitors commented how the parks in the central area add to the character and heritage of the City.
- 4.48 The quality of parks and gardens is consistently high and Museum Gardens and Rowntree Park were highlighted as examples of good practice.
- 4.49 Consultations highlight the importance of maintaining and enhancing the quality and accessibility of parks, and the recommended standards prioritise these elements over additional provision.
- 4.50 Despite this, application of the accessibility standards highlight that parks are predominantly focused in the central urban area. There are therefore some residents on the edge of the urban areas (both Urban West and Urban East analysis areas) and also to the south of the City (City Centre analysis area) who do not have local access to parks. In light of the expectations expressed by residents that parks should be in close proximity to the home, consideration has been given to areas where opportunities for new provision should be considered. This may involve the creation of pocket parks in the more rural settlements of the City.
- 4.51 In planning for the growth of York to 2029, opportunities should be considered to provide new parks and amenity green spaces as part of major new residential area, particularly where a deficiency in either quantity, accessibility, or both has been identified in this study.

<b>PG8</b>	Consider opportunities to meet current deficiencies as well as meeting future needs when planning major residential areas to meet housing needs to 2029, as part of the Local Development Framework.
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## **Natural and semi natural provision**

### **Definition**

- 5.1 This type of open space includes woodlands, urban forestry, scrubland, grasslands (eg downlands, commons, meadows), wetlands, nature reserves and wastelands with a primary purpose of wildlife conservation and biodiversity within the settlement boundaries. In some instances there may be some sites classified as amenity green space that also provide a natural and semi natural type of provision, thus highlighting the overlap between typologies.
- 5.2 Larger sites that sit outside of settlement boundaries have not been audited (for example Strensall Common) and considered within the quality of provision, however they are important sites and this has been recognised within the report, particularly sites that can alleviate natural and semi natural deficiencies.
- 5.3 Although natural and semi natural open space plays a key role in wildlife conservation and biodiversity the recreational opportunities provided by these spaces are also important. In this respect, natural and semi natural open spaces play a similar role and function to that of amenity green space and parks and gardens.
- 5.4 This section outlines the strategic context and key consultation findings relating to natural and semi natural open space and concludes with the development of local standards.

**Figure 5.1 – Land at Lords Moor Lane, Strensall**



**SECTION 5 – NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL PROVISION**

**Table 5.1 – Regional and local strategic context**

Document reviewed	Summary of key strategic drivers	Links to open space, sport and recreation study
<p>Yorkshire and Humber Plan – Regional Spatial Strategy (Consultation Draft December 2005)</p>	<p>Policy ENV8 “Biodiversity” is particularly relevant to this study. It states that the region will safeguard and enhance the historic environment, and ensure that historical context informs future development and regeneration.</p> <p>All development strategies, plans, programmes and decisions in the Region will conserve distinctive elements of the historic environment and enhance local character and distinctiveness in line with heritage priority areas of regional, sub regional and local cultural and historical importance.</p>	<p>The application of the local standards for natural and semi natural provision contained within the study will ensure an appropriate balance between further provision and enhancement of existing provision.</p>
<p>City of York Development Control Local Plan</p>	<p>Policies NE1 to NE7 consider the protection and enhancement of biodiversity across the city and ensure that there is balanced consideration given to nature conservation against the need for development. The plan states that considerable weight will be given to the protection of designated sites.</p> <p>Policy NE2 prevents development where it is deemed that it would be harmful to river corridors or wetlands. Likewise, policy NE5a prevents development which may be harmful to designated local nature reserves. Policy NE8 specifically protects green corridors from development.</p>	<p>The Council’s commitment to providing these types of spaces is evident through the policies contained within the Local Plan.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to utilising other spaces, such as parks to provide wildlife and natural areas. This will be considered within the individual typology sections for parks and amenity greenspaces.</p>

### Consultation

5.5 Consultation undertaken as part of the study highlighted the following key issues:

- natural and semi natural open space is very popular with residents of York with 54% of respondents stating that they visit this typology more than once a month
- based on the findings of the household survey, there is a split in opinion regarding the quantity of natural and semi natural provision in York. In total, 49.9% of the population stated that there is more than enough/about right amount of natural and semi natural areas within the City and 43.4% stated that there was nearly enough/not enough.
- while many attendees at the workshops expressed opinions about the value of natural and semi natural sites, the underlying theme of these discussions related to a desire for increased emphasis on the quality and value of existing sites, rather than on the development of new facilities
- 43% of respondents to the household survey felt that the quality of sites was good, 44% indicated these open spaces were average and the remaining 12% felt that the quality of sites was poor
- Heslington Common was highlighted as a particularly high quality site with well-defined paths and appropriate maintenance for a natural site. Askham Bog was also perceived to be high quality and well valued by local residents. Hob Moor was also perceived to be well used, and contains good quality paths.
- the household survey reveals that 62% of people would **expect** to walk to natural and semi natural areas in York, as opposed to only 20% who would expect to drive. Of those users (who visit natural and semi natural open spaces more often than any other typology in the study) 72% **currently** walk and only 20% use cars.
- there was an ongoing concern that residents at workshops do not believe that enough is done to advertise the available opportunities – particularly in relation to biodiversity and play provision. Other views expressed include a lack of accessibility to river corridors, which are considered to be under used and under developed. Ensuring continued access to these sites was very important – even in situations where river development was permitted.

### Setting provision standards – quantity

5.6 The recommended local quantity standard for natural and semi natural spaces has been summarised overleaf. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix F.



**Quantity Standard (see appendices F and I – standards and justification, worksheet and calculator)**

Existing level of provision	Recommended standard
1.78 hectares per 1000.	1.79 hectares per 1000 population
Justification	
<p>Current provision across York is equivalent to 1.78 hectares per 1000 population. The spread of natural and semi natural provision about the City varies and it can be seen that provision is significantly higher in York South and North than the urban areas. Due to the size of Strensall Common and its subsequent tendency to skew figures, it has been removed from the calculation of the local standard. This ensures that the standard is reasonable.</p> <p>The overall split in opinion between provision being about right and insufficient is perhaps representative of the uneven distribution – which suggests a large contrast across York with some areas well served by natural and semi natural green spaces whilst in other areas there are likely to be locational deficiencies. The recommended standard takes into account the differences in the current level of provision between the analysis areas, and also the differences in expectations living in these areas. In light of the overriding levels of satisfaction with existing levels of provision, the standard has been set only marginally above current levels.</p> <p>The Council should continue to consider incorporating natural areas within other typologies as a key mechanism for achieving the local standard (where there is a localised surplus of that typology). This standard should be considered a minimum level of provision.</p>	

**Current quantity provision**

- 5.7 The provision of natural and semi natural green space in the City is summarised in Table 5.2 overleaf. Strensall Common has been excluded from the quantity calculations as it covers substantial areas. As a consequence the inclusion of this site would skew the findings and give a misleading picture as to the amount of natural open space.

## SECTION 5 – NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL OPEN SPACE

**Table 5.2 – Provision of natural and semi natural open space in York**

Analysis Areas	Current Provision	Number of sites	Smallest site (Hectares)	Largest site (Hectares)	Provision per 1000 population	Current Balance Against Local Standard (1.79 hectares per 1000 population)	LDF Population (2029)	Provision per 1000 population (2029)	Future Balanced Against Local Standard (1.79 hectares per 1000 population)
City Centre	1.05	3	0.29	0.47	0.17	-9.56	6,911	0.15	-11.32
Urban East	30.03	22	0.09	9.24	0.41	-98.93	83,954	0.35	-120.25
Urban West	54.14	13	0.23	38.12	1.02	-40.72	61,755	0.87	-56.40
York South	72.06	5	0.34	41.82	3.25	32.44	25,790	2.79	25.90
York North	188.95	23	0.07	53.45	4.66	116.46	47,190	4.00	104.48
Overall	346.23	66	0.07	53.45	1.78	-0.31	225,600	1.53	-57.59

5.8 The key issues emerging from Table 5.2 include:

- there are currently 66 natural and semi natural open spaces in York. The overall level of provision equals 346.23 hectares, producing an average size of 5.24 hectares per open space. The size of sites ranges significantly – with some sites equivalent to 0.07 hectares whilst others are far larger pieces of land, up to 53.45 hectares. To a large extent this can be explained by the broad nature of this typology.
- whilst all analysis areas contain small natural and semi natural areas, the largest site across the City Centre analysis area is only 0.47 hectares. In contrast, York South and North both contain sites over 40 hectares.
- as shown in the table, there is a large variety in terms of both the number of sites and the level of provision per 1000 population. The largest number of sites is in Urban East (22), whilst the smallest number is in the City Centre (3).
- the overall level of provision currently meets the standards set out in this Study
- applying the standard up to 2029 reveals that the City Centre, Urban East and Urban West all show significant levels of deficiency per 1000 of the population. Therefore further provision will be required in order to meet the local standard in these localities.
- York South and York North both show significantly positive results when looking at the future balanced against the local standard of 1.79 hectares per 1000 population.

## **SECTION 5 – NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL OPEN SPACE**

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- 5.9 Table 5.3 overleaf lists those wards within the City that have a shortfall in natural and semi natural open space when assessed against the local quantity standard.
- 5.10 It is worth noting that in terms of accessibility, (see paragraphs 5.15 onwards) there are very few areas of the City outside the standard.
- 5.11 The provision of additional natural and semi natural open space (as defined in paragraph 5.1) may not be possible in densely developed or very urban Wards and in this case attention should be given to improving accessibility to this type of open space further afield in adjoining areas (see paragraph 5.22).

**SECTION 5 – NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL OPEN SPACE**

**Table 5.3 – Wards in York with a shortfall in natural and semi natural open space when assessed against the local quantity standard.**

Ward	Pop	Provision of natural and semi natural open space (hectares)	Local Standard (ha/1000)	Per 1000 population current	TOTAL Requirement	Surplus / Deficiency
Westfield Ward	15,308	0	1.79	0	27.40	-27.40
Micklegate Ward	12,293	0	1.79	0	22	-22
Holgate Ward	12,931	1.92	1.79	0.14	23.14	-21.22
Haxby and Wigginton Ward	13,942	4.78	1.79	0.34	24.95	-20.17
Clifton Ward	13,437	4.68	1.79	0.34	24.05	-19.37
Hull Road Ward	9,246	1.57	1.79	0.16	16.55	-14.98
Acomb Ward	8,642	2.65	1.79	0.30	15.46	-12.81
Wheldrake Ward	4,360	0	1.79	0	7.80	-7.80
Bishopthorpe Ward	4,251	0	1.79	0	7.60	-7.60
Osbalwick Ward	3,521	0	1.79	0	6.30	-6.30
Derwent Ward	3,958	1.29	1.79	0.32	7.08	-5.79
Fulford Ward	2,902	0	1.79	0	5.19	-5.19
Guildhall Ward	7,465	9.52	1.79	1.27	13.36	-3.84
Heworth Ward	4,233	5.68	1.79	1.34	7.57	-1.89

## SECTION 5 – NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL OPEN SPACE

5.12 The key issues emerging from Table 5.3 include:

- 7 wards have a shortfall of over 10 hectares for natural and semi natural open space
- 6 wards with a shortfall in provision currently have no natural and semi natural open space. This includes three smaller wards that have populations of less than 4000 residents.

### Setting provision standards – quality

5.13 The recommended local quality vision for natural and semi natural open space has been summarised overleaf. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix G.

### Quality Standard (see appendix G)

<b>Recommended standard – NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL OPEN SPACE</b>
<i>“A clean and litter free site with clear and obvious pathways that provide opportunities to link other open spaces together and where appropriate link to the outlying countryside. Sites should encourage wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental awareness and contain appropriate natural features. Litterbins, dog bins, benches and picnic areas should be provided where possible and there should be a clear focus on balancing recreational and wildlife needs, whilst ensuring public access. Community involvement through management, maintenance and promotion of these sites should be maximised.”</i>
<p>From consultation it is evident that the majority of users of natural areas value these sites for their recreational value, (for example, walking, as a picnic area etc) indicating that ancillary facilities will be an important quality feature of this type of open space. Clear footpaths and appropriate management of vegetation are specific issues to be addressed at these sites and this has been reflected in the quality vision.</p> <p>The main issues identified through local consultations centre around litter and dog fouling and this is reflected in the need for sites to be clean and litter free. Natural and semi natural green spaces are one of the more commonly used green space typologies of residents in York (as indicated in the household survey). As a consequence, the need to balance recreation and wildlife needs is reflected within the vision ensuring that quality is maintained while providing access. There is also a need to maintain and improve the biodiversity and wildlife value of all open space sites. This was a key finding of the workshops.</p> <p>The standard also incorporates the Council and public aspirations for safe, clean and functional natural open spaces that are well used and promoted for their conservation and educational benefits. To facilitate the management of sites the vision suggests the involvement of and consultation with the local community. The Green Flag Criteria represent a key national benchmark of quality for natural sites and the key elements of this standard are therefore also included within the proposed vision.</p>

## SECTION 5 – NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL OPEN SPACE

### Current provision - quality

- 5.14 The quality of existing natural and semi natural open space in the City is summarised in Table 5.4. It is important to note that site assessments are conducted at a snap shot in time and may not always be reflective of the quality of the site.
- 5.15 The application of the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile standard (set at a score of 66% on the site assessment for natural and semi natural open space) provides an indication of the desired level of quality suggested at each site and enables a comparison at sites across the City. Those sites falling below are consequently where improvement is required. The median score obtained was 60%, and the lower quartile was 54%. A full list of site scores can be found in the natural and semi natural section of Appendix D.

**Table 5.4 – Selection of quality assessment results for natural and semi-natural provision**

Above upper quartile	66+	(88%) – Natural area by River Foss – Urban East – Site ID 811 (80%) – Askham Bog Nature Reserve – York South – Site ID 124
Median – Upper quartile	60%-65%	(64%) - Land Off Beech Grove – Urban West – Site ID 267 (60%) - Burnholme Drive Natural area – Urban East – Site ID 184
Lower quartile - median	55%-59%	(56%) - Tang Hall Beck – Urban East – Site ID 183 (56%) – Caroline Close Natural area – Urban West – Site ID 693
Less than lower quartile	Below 54	(50%) – Natural area to East of Strensall – York North – Site ID 903 (50%) – Natural area off Westfield Place – York South – Site ID 837

- 5.16 The key issues emerging from Table 5.4 and the site assessments include:
- a couple of sites scored extremely highly (including Askham Bog – Site ID 124) and can be considered to be excellent examples of good practice
  - the aspiration should be for all natural and semi natural areas to fall within the upper quartile category and achieve the quality vision
  - sites considered to be of high quality but with no or low/insignificant usage should be investigated further. Options include re-designation to other open space types to increase its value.

## SECTION 5 – NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL OPEN SPACE

- three sites scored below 50%. These sites should be prioritised for enhancement to help achieve the quality vision set for this type of open space.

### Setting provision standards – accessibility

- 5.17 The recommended local accessibility standard for natural and semi natural open space has been summarised overleaf. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix H.

### Accessibility Standard

Recommended standard
<b>15 MINUTE WALK TIME (720 meters)</b>
Justification
<p>The local consultation serves to highlight the split in opinion regarding whether natural and semi natural sites should be access by walking or driving. (20% of respondents would travel by car, whilst 62% of people stated that they would travel by foot). To a certain extent, this will relate to the varying size and function of spaces within each locality.</p> <p>A drive time standard would produce a significantly larger distance threshold than a walk time standard. PPG17 states that higher thresholds may be appropriate if there is no realistic possibility of sufficient new provision to allow lower thresholds to be achievable, but can result in levels of provision that are too low and may not meet some local needs. In the context of the local consultation findings regarding the quantity of provision (28% think that there is not enough as opposed to only 6% who think there is more than enough) and given the importance of facilitating everyday contact with nature, a standard based on a walk time is recommended as this will help to deliver a greater number of localised natural and semi natural spaces.</p> <p>An assessment of the 75% threshold level citywide suggests that residents are willing to walk up to 15 minutes to a natural and semi natural open space. Given the high levels of agreement from respondents to the household survey regarding the appropriateness of a 15-minute walk time, it is recommended that the standard is set at this level.</p>

### Current provision - accessibility

- 5.18 Accessibility at each site was also assessed through a detailed site visit and the completion of a detailed pro forma. The assessment takes into account issues including whether the entrance to the site is easily accessible, the condition of roads, paths and cycleways, whether there is disabled access, how accessible is the site by public transport, bicycle or walking, and whether there are clear and appropriate signs to the site.
- 5.19 The accessibility of existing natural and semi natural open space in the city is summarised in Table 5.5 overleaf. It is important to note that site assessments are conducted at a snapshot in time and may not always be reflective of the accessibility of the site throughout the year.
- 5.20 Based on the accessibility scores obtained, the upper quartile score was 60%. The mean was 53.3%, and the low quartile was 43.3%.

**Table 5.5 – Selection of accessibility assessments results for natural and semi natural areas**

Above upper quartile	60+	(70%) - Nether Poppleton Markfields – York North - Site ID 652 (63%) - Burnholme Drive Natural and Semi Natural – Urban East – Site ID 184
Median – Upper quartile	53%-59%	(53%) – Walmgate Stray – York North – Site ID 552 (53%) – Lakeside Gardens Natural and Semi Natural – York North – Site ID 806
Lower quartile - median	43%-52%	(50%) – Ash Walk Natural and Semi Natural – York North – Site ID 744 (43%) - NSN to east of Strensall - York North – Site ID 903
Less than lower quartile	Below 43	(40%) - Land opposite the Tannery – York North – Site ID 144 (37%) – Natural and Semi Natural by River Foss – Urban East – Site ID 811

5.21 The key issues emerging from Table 5.5 and the site assessments include:

- Bootham Stray obtained the highest accessibility score of all the sites assessed (80%), and can be considered to be excellent examples of good practice
- those sites scoring below the average accessibility score should be prioritised for improvement. Two of these sites scored below 40%. A space that is inaccessible is almost irrelevant to potential users and therefore may be of little value, irrespective of its quality. For example the natural and semi natural open space next to the River Foss achieved a quality score of 88% (the highest of all sites), but scored very low in terms of accessibility. It should be prioritised for improvement to its accessibility.

#### **Applying provision standards – identifying geographical areas**

5.22 In order to identify geographical areas of importance and those areas with required local needs the quantitative provision of natural and semi natural open spaces in York should be considered alongside the recommended local standard for accessibility. The quantity standards enable the identification of areas that do not meet the minimum provision standards, while the accessibility standards will help determine where those deficiencies are of high importance. Applying the standards together is a much more meaningful method of analysis than applying the standards separately and therefore helps with the prioritisation of sites.



## SECTION 5 – NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL OPEN SPACE

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- 5.23 As detailed, application of the local quantity standards highlights significant variations in the amount of provision across the City of York. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the level of provision in the urban areas (City Centre, Urban East and Urban West analysis areas) compares unfavourably to that in the York South and York North analysis areas. Moreover, residents in the York South and York North analysis areas are also in close proximity to the natural countryside. Many residents in the York South and York North analysis areas highlighted the importance of the nearby countryside.
- 5.24 Map 5.1 overleaf illustrates the distribution of natural and semi natural open spaces across York. Although only sites falling within settlement boundaries are considered, it is important to also consider the role of larger strategic sites located in the green belt. Sites categorised into other typologies may also contain some element of natural and semi natural open space.
- 5.25 Map 5.1 highlights that there is an even distribution of natural and semi natural open spaces across the City, with the majority of residents able to access one site. As may be expected given the characteristics of the area, some residents in the more densely populated City centre areas are outside of the catchment area for natural open space.
- 5.26 There is also an array of larger strategic sites across the City. While these may not necessarily serve local needs within the walk time catchment, they complement the provision within settlements and ensure that residents have choice and opportunity. Larger sites can be of particular strategic significance to residents and may attract visitors from a wider catchment area. Such sites include Strensall Common, Askham Bog Nature Reserve and the strays. There is also potential for long-term community use to be secured for Clifton Ings that would enhance the natural and semi natural resources in this area. In many instances, these sites fulfil a wider strategic role, meeting informal recreational needs across all areas of the City.

<b>NSN1</b>	Protect sites of strategic importance across the City and ensure their ongoing access to residents.
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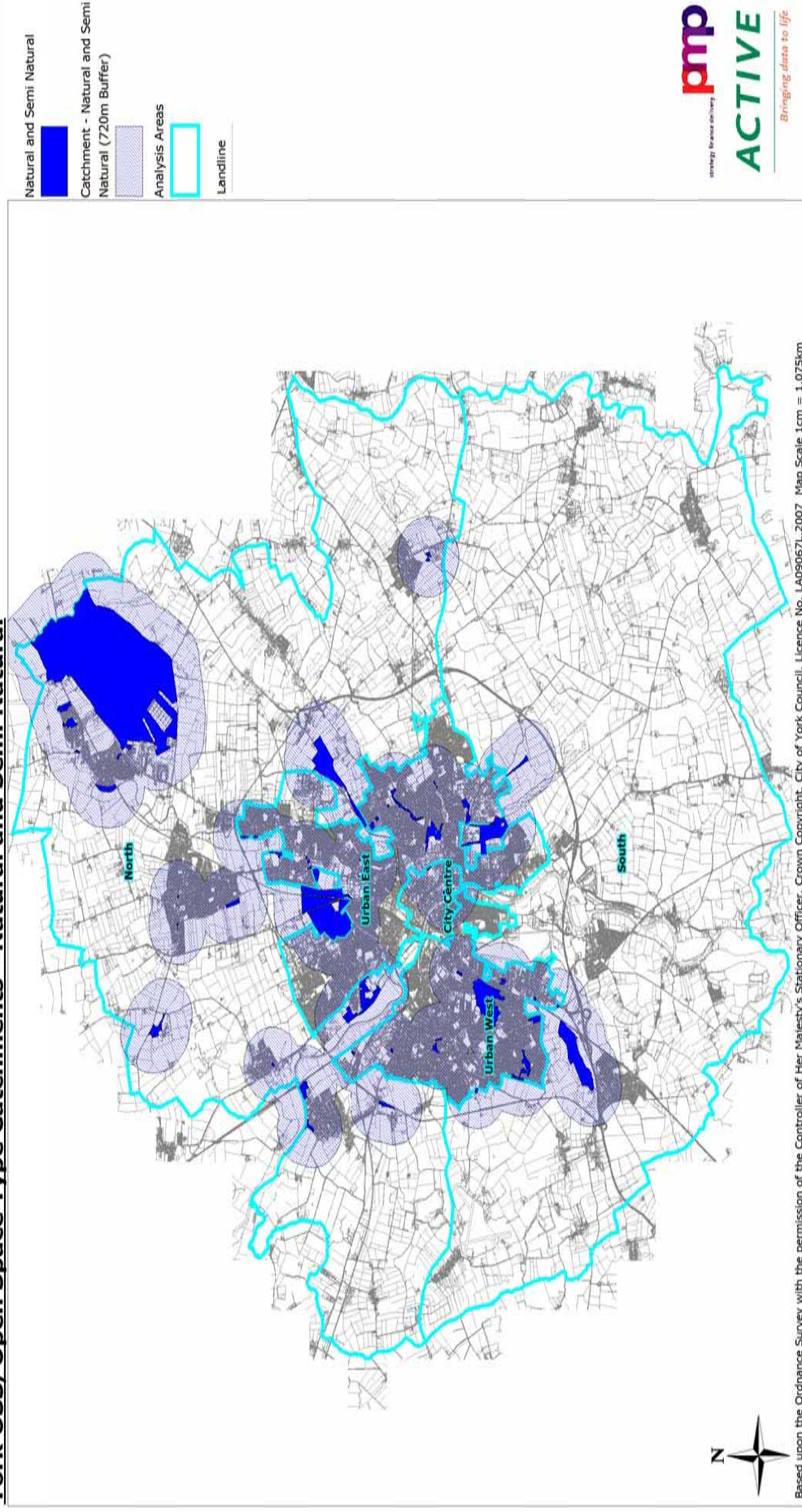
- 5.27 It is evident that there is significant interest and community involvement across the City of York, particularly in the provision of parks and natural and semi natural open spaces. Wheatlands Educational and Community woodland is an excellent example of a successful natural and semi natural open space. Partnership working with such groups offers the opportunity to capitalise upon a variety of skills. The Wheatlands Community and Education Centre also educates residents on biodiversity and wider conservation issues.

<b>NSN 2</b>	Continue to promote partnership working and management across the natural and semi natural open spaces in York.
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## SECTION 5 – NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL OPEN SPACE

Map 5.1 - Provision of natural and semi natural open space in York

### York OSS, Open Space Type Catchments - Natural and Semi Natural



5.28 Within the rural areas of the City, accessible countryside provides much of the natural provision for residents. It is important that this countryside is made accessible through signposting rights of way and green corridors. There are many residents living in rural villages outside of the recommended catchment area for natural and semi natural open space within their village. It is therefore essential to maximise the accessibility of the countryside. Application of the quantity standards highlights that there is sufficient natural and semi natural open space to meet the needs of residents in quantitative terms.

<b>NSN3</b>	Establish a network of accessible green corridors to link natural and semi natural sites within settlements to other types of local open space and also to wider strategic sites. This network should also link the City with smaller settlements.
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5.29 The quality of provision of natural and semi natural open spaces should not only consider recreational opportunities, but should also take into account the biodiversity and wildlife value of the site. Many participants in consultations considered this to be imperative. The typologies set out in PPG17 (and therefore used in this study) primarily focus on open spaces used for recreational purposes. There are many other sites across the city that do not directly fit within these typologies but are of high significance and importance in terms of biodiversity and conservation of habitats. Although not directly included or referenced within this study the importance of these sites should not be ignored.

<b>NSN4</b>	Monitor the impact of recreational use on natural and semi natural open space sites and ensure that recreational opportunity is balanced with biodiversity.
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5.30 The importance of qualitative enhancements is reinforced by the findings of the site assessments, which suggest that the quality of natural areas across the City was wide ranging. Three sites achieved scores of below 50% and the range in site scores was between 50% and 88%.

5.31 The local quantity standard highlights the need for additional provision of natural and semi natural in areas that are currently deficient, but advocates a focus on the enhancement of the quality of sites in all other areas. In areas where there is already sufficient natural and semi natural open spaces, future efforts should therefore be concentrated into improvements to the quality of sites.

5.32 While it is not expected that these sites will be managed in the same way as formal parks/amenity green spaces, they should be inviting and controlled. Site assessments highlighted that the quality of ancillary accommodation, alongside the cleanliness and maintenance of some sites were key areas for improvement.

<b>NSN5</b>	Consider opportunities for the enhancement of natural and semi natural open spaces both in terms of their recreational opportunities and maximizing biodiversity as highlighted in NSN 2.
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## SECTION 5 – NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL OPEN SPACE

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- 5.33 As highlighted, the local quantity standard supports the need for increased natural and semi natural open space in the City. In some instances, this may be delivered by providing access to existing natural resources. New natural and semi natural open spaces can be particularly difficult to create. Maximising the positive value of Green Belt land (including better public access) in accordance with PPG2 could provide significant opportunities to maximise this type of provision to server the outer urban areas of York and the villages beyond.
- 5.34 Although the distribution of sites is good, it is essential to ensure adequate access to these sites in order to effectively meet the local need. Site visits highlight that signage to natural sites is particularly poor. The entrance to sites is also frequently hidden.

<b>NSN6</b>	Maximise access to natural and semi natural open space sites by ensuring that entrances to sites are visible and that appropriate signage is provided.
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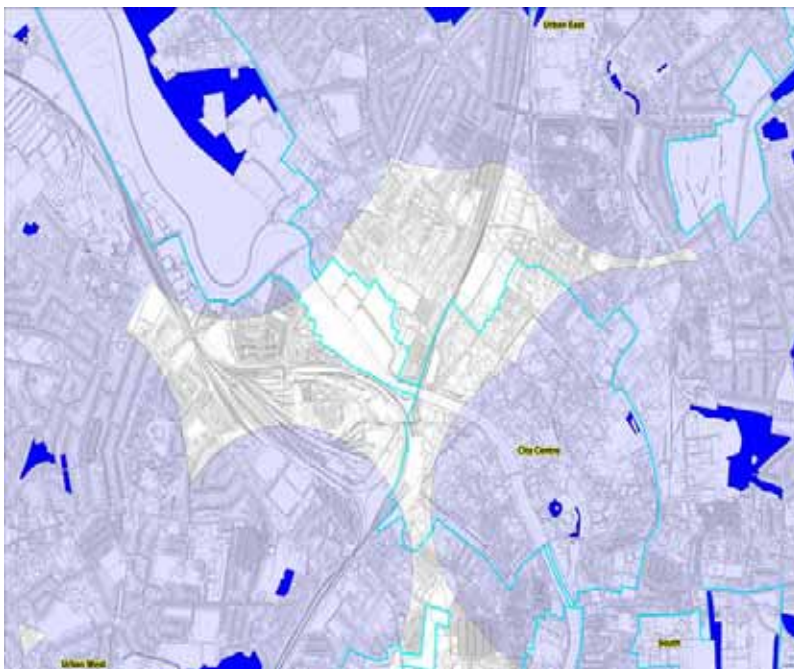
- 5.35 While the overall emphasis is on improving the quality of existing sites, the application of both the quantity and accessibility standards highlights some areas of deficiency. Opportunities to provide naturalised areas in these locations should be considered. In particular there may be a need for additional natural and semi natural provision over the Local Development Framework period (as population increases and new housing is required) and this should be considered as part of a Green Infrastructure and Green Spaces Strategy for the City.
- 5.36 New provision should be targeted in localities that are currently devoid of natural and semi natural open space or areas where major new growth is concentrated through the LDF Core Strategy. In terms of the current breakdown in provision, quantitative deficiencies can be found in City centre, Urban West and Urban East analysis areas. In quantitative terms, there is sufficient natural and semi natural open space to satisfy local need.
- 5.37 Application of the quantity standard highlights that the highest deficiency is in the Urban East analysis area and equates to almost 100ha. Analysis of the accessibility standard provides little evidence of this, highlighting few deficiencies. This suggests that sites are evenly distributed but small in size.
- 5.38 The key areas of deficiency are highlighted in Figures 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 overleaf. Perhaps unsurprisingly, a key area of deficiency is on the periphery of the City centre (see Figure 5.2). These residents reside near the Clifton Ings, an area dedicated to farmland, which currently offers some degree of public access. Long term access to this site is not secure, however in light of identified deficiencies, this area is of clear public significance.

<b>NSN7</b>	Pursue long term access for the public to Clifton Ings.
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- 5.39 Similarly, residents in the Clifton area of the City (Figure 5.3) are outside of natural and semi natural open space but are close to open countryside to the north and the amenity space at Clifton Backies. There are also deficiencies of natural and semi natural open spaces in the Osbaldwick area. The shortfall in the Micklegate area (Figure 5.4)

emphasises the importance of the Knavesmire to local residents as it also offers some natural resources.

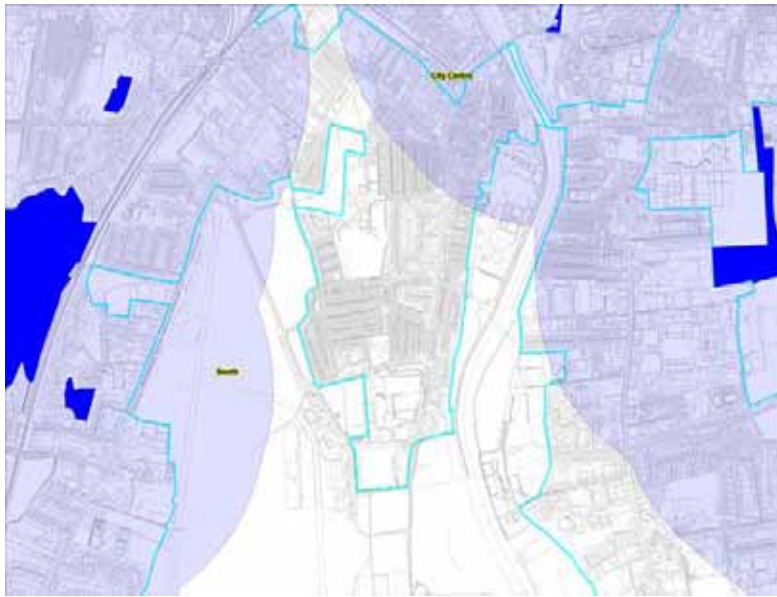
**Figure 5.2 - Accessibility deficiency on the periphery of the City centre**



**Figure 5.3 - Accessibility deficiency within the Clifton area**



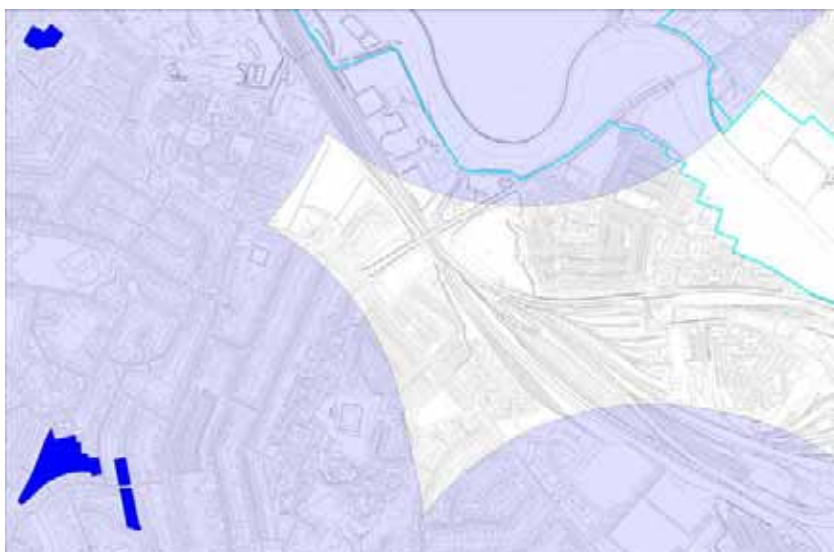
**Figure 5.4 - Accessibility deficiency within the Micklegate area**



<b>NSN8</b>	Consider opportunities to address the quantitative and access deficiencies to natural and semi natural open space within Osbaldwick, Clifton and central areas of the City. Some deficiencies may be met by incorporating natural and semi natural open spaces into other types of open space.
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5.40 Application of the quantity and accessibility standards identifies similar characteristics within the Urban East and Urban West analysis areas, with both areas having large quantitative deficiencies. However, despite this both areas only contain a small number of residents who are unable to access natural and semi natural open spaces. Figure 5.5 below illustrates the main area of deficiency within the Urban West analysis area, the majority of which is located within the Holgate ward.

**Figure 5.5 - Accessibility deficiency within the urban west analysis area**



<b>NSN9</b>	Consider opportunities to address the quantitative and access deficiency of natural and semi natural open space where there is a deficiency.
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- 5.41 Although there is a deficit of natural and semi natural open spaces in the City centre analysis area (particularly within the Guildhall ward), almost all residents within this area are able to access at least one site and there is limited opportunity for new provision in this area. All residents in this area have access to parks and amenity green spaces and river corridors. Incorporation of natural and semi natural open space within sites of other typologies should be considered in order to ensure that the local standard is met.

<b>NSN10</b>	Incorporate natural and semi natural open space within sites of other typologies in order to ensure that local needs for natural and semi natural open space are met.
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### Summary

- 5.42 Natural and semi natural open space is one of the most popular of all types of open space across York, with 54% of respondents indicating that they visit this type of open space at least once per month.
- 5.43 In addition to the recreational value of natural resources, residents also frequently recognise the wider benefits of natural open spaces, particularly in terms of providing opportunities for biodiversity and habitat creation. The importance of achieving a balance between recreational opportunities and biodiversity was central to discussions throughout consultations.
- 5.44 Larger strategic sites and areas of countryside were perceived to be as important to local residents as smaller localised natural open spaces. Sites of key importance include the Strays, Askham Bog and Strensall Common. Facilitating access to these sites is as important as providing local natural and semi natural open spaces. Residents identified further opportunities to maximise use of existing resources through increased access to larger strategic sites.
- 5.45 Application of the recommended quality, quantity and accessibility standards highlights that the key priority for natural and semi natural open space is improvements to the quality of sites. Maximising access to natural and semi natural sites both within settlements and to those in the surrounding countryside should also be a key future priority. This will be a key priority for residents in small settlements.
- 5.46 Opportunities should also be taken to address locational deficiencies, particularly around the Urban East and Urban West analysis areas and opportunities to link this to areas for new development required to meet the housing need, should be explored through the LDF Core Strategy.

### Amenity green space

#### Definition

- 6.1 Amenity Green Space is most commonly found in housing areas. It includes informal recreation spaces and green spaces in and around housing, with a primary purpose of providing opportunities for informal activities close to home or work, enhancing the appearance of residential or other areas. Amenity green space provides more of a visual amenity for older residents and a meeting place for young people.
- 6.2 There are a number of benefits in providing this type of open space including recreation value, a meeting place and/or focal point for communities. It is also important to recognise and take account of the secondary functions of amenity green space, in particular the visual benefits.
- 6.3 Amenity spaces can play an integral role in increasing participation in physical activity across the City, providing local opportunities to participate in activity and informal sport.

**Figure 6.1 – Amenity green space in Clifton/Water End**



#### Strategic context and consultation

- 6.4 There are a number of regional and local documents that refer to the importance of the provision of amenity green spaces within City of York. These key documents are set out in Table 6.1 overleaf:



## SECTION 6 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE

Table 6.1 – Local strategic context – amenity green space

Document reviewed	Summary	Links to open space, sport and recreation study
<p>Yorkshire and Humber Plan – Regional Spatial Strategy (Consultation Draft December 2005)</p>	<p>Policy ENV10 states that development plans will maintain and enhance a range of landscapes and related assets of regional, sub-regional and local importance including historic landscapes, parks and gardens.</p>	<p>The audit undertaken as part of this study will provide a detailed understanding of existing provision. The subsequent analysis and application of local standards will guide the protection and enhancement of future open spaces.</p>
<p>City of York Development Control Local Plan</p>	<p>On a local level, the local plan further emphasises the importance of amenity green space in York, particularly in new developments. Policy L1c seeks to ensure that all new housing developments, and commercial proposals over 2500m<sup>2</sup> gross, contribute to the provision of amenity space to ensure that the needs of future occupiers are met. Commuted sums towards off site provision will be required in developments of less than 10 dwellings.</p> <p>For sites of 10 or more dwellings, an assessment of existing open space provision accessible to the proposed development site including its capacity to absorb additional usage will be undertaken. This is to ascertain the type of open space required and whether on-site or a commuted sum payment for off-site provision is more appropriate (this will include the cost of land purchase), based on individual site circumstances.</p> <p>The policy states that 0.9ha per 1000 population will be required.</p> <p>Policy 1d identifies a number of locations as potential areas for recreation opportunity and development of new amenity green space.</p>	<p>This open space study will provide a detailed understanding of the quality and quantity of existing provision. The study will also provide new local standards specific to the provision of amenity green space within the City of York. This should be used to guide the provision in new developments.</p>

### Consultation

- 6.5 Consultation undertaken as part of the study highlighted the following key issues:
- the findings of the household survey indicate that there is a split in opinion regarding the quantity of amenity green space in York. In total, 43.6% of the population stated that there is more than enough/about right amount of amenity green space areas while in contrast 43% indicated that there was insufficient.
  - consultation indicated that the quality of amenity areas is perceived to be average by 59% of household respondents. A higher percentage of people stated that they were good (26%) as opposed to poor (16%). Other consultations highlighted that safety concerns are a particular barrier to usage of amenity spaces.
  - the most common response was that the quality of amenity spaces was average in the household survey. Discussions at the workshops indicated that there remain concerns over the quality of sites, with some attendees highlighting that there remains significant potential for the enhancement of these sites.
  - the household survey reveals that 82% of people would **expect** to walk to amenity green spaces in York, with 72% of respondents stating a journey should take between 5-10 minutes – this highlights the expectation that these open spaces will be provided locally
  - the IT young people survey illustrates the value of amenity green spaces, particularly to children under the age of 11, who use these spaces as an opportunity to meet with friends, particularly due to their locality to residential areas.

### Setting provision standards – quantity

- 6.6 The recommended local quantity standard for amenity green space has been summarised overleaf. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix F.

**Quantity Standard (see appendices F and I – standards and justification, worksheet and calculator)**

Existing level of provision	Recommended standard
1.05ha per 1000 population	1.07ha per 1000 population
Justification	
<p>The current level of provision is equivalent to 1.05 hectares per 1000 population. Consultation highlights the importance of these sites for recreational and landscape purposes in providing green space in what would otherwise be a built up area. Furthermore, of those residents who expressed an opinion (household survey) 29% think that the level of provision is insufficient, whilst only 39% think that the level of provision is about right. Therefore a standard above the existing level of provision is recommended (the recommended standard should be viewed as a minimum standard). This will enable the Council to focus on improvements to the quality of sites to ensure that each area fulfils a role that is complementary to the surrounding green space network but also deliver new sites in areas of quantitative deficiency. This is particularly important in light of the emphasis on these spaces for landscape benefits as well as localised recreational resources.</p> <p>The application of the recommended local standard shows that the greatest requirement for amenity green space is within the Urban East area, where provision is significantly lower than other areas of the City. However, it is important to consider the provision of amenity green spaces alongside the provision of parks and gardens and provision for children as they have similar functions. Amenity green spaces are smaller facilities that tend to attract only local users. As highlighted in the consultations, amenity spaces are particularly important in the provision of local informal play opportunities for children and young people. Those residents living within close proximity to a park may have no need for local amenity green space as well although this type of open space will still be important in the context of visual amenity.</p>	

- 6.7 Amenity green spaces provide an important urban function, visually breaking up the urban area and providing informal recreation opportunities. They also provide important recreational spaces within villages, perhaps as a village green or as part of a local recreation ground. This may be the only open space available within a village.
- 6.8 It is also important to recognise the secondary functions of amenity green space, specifically the visual benefits. Amenity green space sites may also provide a resource to meet deficiencies in other typologies eg play provision or outdoor sports facilities. This will be considered during the application of the local quality, quantity and accessibility standards.
- 6.9 The provision of amenity green space across City of York is set out in Table 6.2 overleaf.

**Table 6.2 – Provision of amenity green space in York**

Analysis Areas	Current Population	Current Provision	Provision per 1000 population	Current Balance Against Local Standard (1.07 hectares per 1000 population)	LDF Population (2029)	Provision per 1000 population (2029)	Future Balanced Against Local Standard (1.07 hectares per 1000 population)
City Centre	5,930	10.11	1.70	3.76	6,911	1.46	2.72
Urban East	72,045	37.63	0.52	-39.46	83,954	0.44	-52.22
Urban West	52,995	24.25	0.45	-32.45	61,755	0.39	-41.83
York South	22,132	48.88	2.20	25.20	25,790	1.89	21.28
York North	40,497	82.79	2.04	39.46	47,190	1.75	32.30
Overall	193,599	203.66	1.05	-3.49	225,600	0.90	-37.73

6.10 The key issues emerging from Table 6.2 include:

- the overall level of provision in York equals 203.66 hectares, which equates to a deficiency of -3.49 against the local standard (1.07 hectares per 1000 population)
- while the City Centre, north and south areas have sufficient amenity spaces in quantitative terms to exceed the local standard, the urban areas in close proximity to the City Centre (Urban East (-39.46) and Urban West (-32.45) both display an undersupply of amenity green space per 1000 population
- the application of the local standard to the future population shows a significant increase in the level of undersupply across the City (-37.73 hectares against the local standard of 1.07 per 1000 population).

6.11 Given that there is an expectation that amenity green spaces will be provided locally, consideration has also been given to the application of the local standard on a ward-by-ward level. Although the quantity of amenity green space provision should be considered in the context of access to sites, analysis of the quantity of provision provides a useful indication regarding surpluses and deficiencies.

6.12 The distribution of amenity spaces on a ward-by-ward basis is set out in Table 6.3 overleaf. It can be seen that there are deficiencies in provision in 13 wards.

## SECTION 6 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE

**Table 6.3 – Provision of amenity green space by ward**

Ward	Pop	Provision of amenity green space (hectares)	Local Standard (ha/1000)	Per 1000 population current	TOTAL Requirement	Surplus / Deficiency
Acomb Ward	8,642	1.43	1.07	0.16	9.24	-7.81
Bishopthorpe Ward	4,251	0.34	1.07	0.07	4.54	-4.20
Clifton Ward	13,437	8.02	1.07	0.59	14.3	-6.35
Derwent Ward	3,958	1.25	1.07	0.31	4.23	-2.98
Dringhouses and Woodthorpe Ward	12,001	8.88	1.07	0.73	12.8	-3.96
Fishergate Ward	8,857	15.75	1.07	1.77	9.47	6.27
Fulford Ward	2,902	2.84	1.07	0.97	3.10	-0.26
Guildhall Ward	7,465	5.36	1.07	0.71	7.98	-2.62
Haxby and Wigginton Ward	13,942	6.61	1.07	0.47	14.9	-8.30
Heslington Ward	4,609	1.36	1.07	0.29	4.93	-3.57
Heworth Ward	4,233	21.83	1.07	5.15	4.52	17.3
Heworth without Ward	4,233	6.75	1.07	1.59	4.52	2.22
Holgate Ward	12,931	18.59	1.07	1.43	13.8	4.75
Hull Road Ward	9,246	1.71	1.07	0.18	9.89	-8.18
Huntington and New Earswick Ward	13,518	19.72	1.07	1.45	14.4	5.25
Micklegate Ward	12,293	35.48	1.07	2.88	13.1	22.3
Osbalwick Ward	3,521	0.72	1.07	0.20	3.76	-3.04
Rural West York Ward	11,502	5.22	1.07	0.45	12.3	-7.08
Skelton, Rawcliffe and Clifton Without Ward	13,597	20.75	1.07	1.52	14.5	6.20
Strensall Ward	8,791	13.64	1.07	1.55	9.40	4.23
Westfield Ward	15,308	6.44	1.07	0.42	16.3	-9.93
Wheldrake Ward	4,360	0.61	1.07	0.13	4.6	-4.05

**Setting provision standards – quality**

- 6.13 The recommended local quality vision for amenity green space has been summarised overleaf. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix G.

**Quality Standard (see appendix G)**

<b>Recommended standard – Amenity Green Space</b>
<p><b><i>“A clean and well-maintained green space site that is accessible to all. Sites should have appropriate ancillary facilities (dog and litter bins etc), pathways and landscaping in the right places providing a safe secure site with a spacious outlook that enhances the appearance of the local environment and provides a safe area for young people to meet. Larger sites should be suitable for informal play opportunities and should be enhanced to encourage the site to become a community focus, while smaller sites should at the least provide an important visual amenity function.”</i></b></p>
<p>The local consultation reveals that amenity green spaces are one of the least used types of open spaces in the area, although they provide an important meeting place for children and young people. The importance of these sites as a visual amenity was reinforced across consultations, highlighting the need for high quality amenity space provision.</p> <p>Provision of amenity green space needs to be considered in the context of park provision, to ensure that they are complimentary to the wider green space network and increase their level of usage. For this reason, it is particularly important for larger sites to contain informal play opportunities and for smaller sites to provide an important visual amenity function and promote a sense of ownership. The recommended quality vision addresses some of the key concerns at existing open space sites cited by residents and also considers aspirations. While a desire for lighting was a key feature of local consultations, inclusion of this element may provide unrealistic expectations.</p> <p>Amenity green spaces can serve an important function in urban areas, breaking up the urban fabric. As a consequence, one of the important aspects in the vision is for a spacious outlook. This is also reflective of local consultation comments stating that sites are often confined to small cramped areas that aren't of sufficient size to enable informal play or more formalised play facilities. The standard incorporates both public and Council aspirations and has been designed to promote best practice encouraging informal play where sites are large enough - it is also designed to link in with the Green Flag criteria where appropriate. The vision also recognises the need for amenity spaces to contribute positively to the overall landscape and environment.</p>

**Current provision - quality**

- 6.14 The calculation of the upper quartile quality score (74%) provides an indication of the desired level of quality at each site and enables a comparison at sites across the city. It highlights sites that currently meet the visionary standard, and those sites falling below and consequently where improvement is required.

## SECTION 6 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE

6.15 The median score is 68% and the lower quartile score is 60%. A selection of assessment results have been included in the table below to illustrate the distribution of scores. A full list of site scores can be found in the amenity green space section of Appendix D.

**Table 6.4 – Selection of scores for amenity green space**

Above upper quartile	74+	(86%) - Hunters Way AGS – Urban West – Site ID 809 (86%) - Land along Hodgson Road – York North – Site ID 287
Median – Upper quartile	68%-73%	(70%) Mayfield Grove AGS – York South – Site ID 588 (70%) St Giles Way AGS – York South – Site ID 771
Lower quartile - median	60%-67%	(65%) Rosecroft Way AGS – York North – Site ID 637 (62%) Stratford Way AGS – Urban East – Site ID 674
Less than lower quartile	Below 60	(44%) - Lynwood Close AGS - York North – Site ID 742 (30%) - Land adjacent to Chapel Fields Road – Urban West – Site ID 274

6.16 The key issues emerging from Table 6.4 and the site assessments include:

- 29% of sites scored above the upper quartile standard of 74%. This therefore indicates that a large number of sites require improvements to meet the quality standard.
- the average score of amenity green space sites is 67% although there is a significant range in the quality of provision across the area. This reinforces perceptions expressed in consultation that there is a significant variation in the quality of sites.
- seven sites scored below 50%. These sites should be prioritised for enhancement to help achieve the quality vision set for this type of open space. Cleanliness and maintenance of amenity green spaces were perceived to be particularly important to residents.
- the aspiration should be for all amenity green spaces to fall within the upper quartile category and achieve the quality vision
- sites considered to be of high quality but with no or low/insignificant usage should be investigated further. Options for sites falling into this category include re-designation to other open space types to increase its value.

**Setting provision standards – accessibility**

- 6.17 The recommended local accessibility standard for amenity green space has been summarised overleaf. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix H.

**Accessibility Standard**

<b>Recommended standard</b>
<b>5 minute walk time (240 metres)</b>
<b>Justification</b>
<p>Given the large emphasis on walking rather than driving in terms of the expectations of respondents it is suggested that a walking standard is set. The expressed desire for local amenity space supports the perception that a standard based on travelling on foot is most appropriate.</p> <p>At a citywide level, the 75% threshold level (from the household survey) of a 10 minutes walk is higher than the modal response (5 minutes). Whilst setting a standard based on the 75% threshold level of a 10 minute walk time has been considered, this has to be rationalised against the local nature of amenity green spaces and the aspiration of residents for these open spaces. In the absence of other forms of open space, sport and recreation provision within close proximity of residents, the value of localised amenity green spaces is particularly important.</p> <p>Applying a shorter walk time will highlight real priority areas of deficiency. Furthermore, whilst having a smaller distance threshold will reveal a larger number of accessibility deficiencies, within these areas the provision of alternative forms of open space can often substitute the provision of informal amenity green spaces and new amenity green spaces may not also be a priority in these areas. A smaller accessibility catchment will ensure all residents have access to some type of local open space, facilitating delivery of increased participation in sport and physical activity. The importance of local provision to break up the urban landscape should also not be underestimated.</p>

**Applying provision standards – identifying geographical areas**

- 6.18 In order to identify geographical areas of importance and those areas with required local needs the quantitative provision of amenity green space in York should be considered alongside the recommended local standard for accessibility. The quantity standards enable the identification of areas that do not meet the minimum provision standards, while the accessibility standards will help determine where those deficiencies are of high importance. Applying the standards together is a much more meaningful method of analysis than applying the standards separately and therefore helps with the prioritisation of sites.
- 6.19 While the City centre, York North and York South analysis areas have sufficient amenity green spaces in quantitative terms to exceed the local standard, the urban areas in close proximity to the City Centre (Urban East – 39.46 and Urban West –32.45) both display an undersupply of amenity green space per 1000 population. As demand will grow over the LDF period, these under supplies will be significantly greater by 2029.



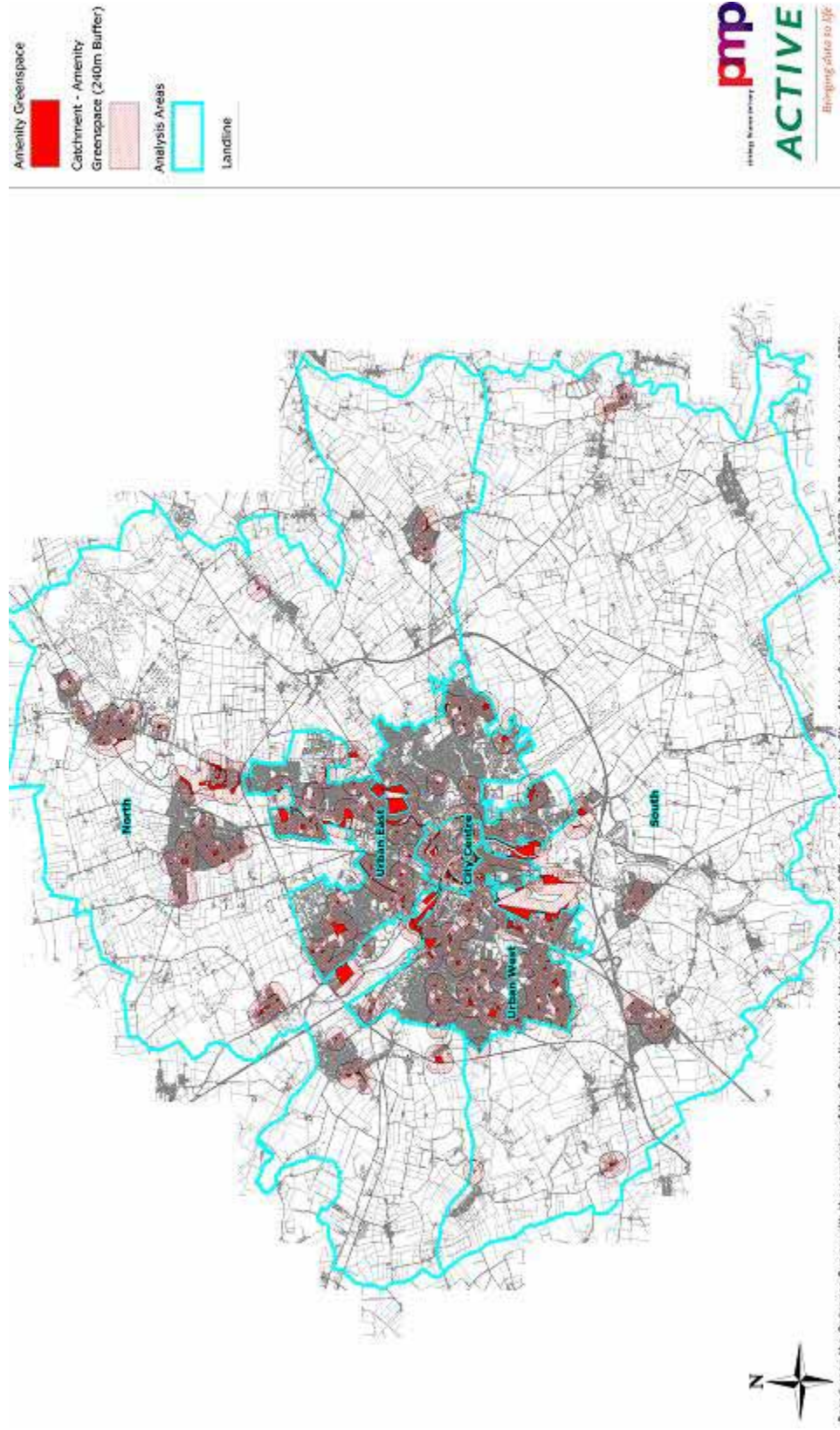
## **SECTION 6 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE**

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- 6.20 The application of the local accessibility standards for amenity space is set out on Map 6.1 (overleaf). Map 6.2 considers the distribution of amenity spaces in the context of the provision of Local and City parks.
- 6.21 As Map 6.1 (overleaf) illustrates, the distribution of amenity spaces is uneven, with many areas well supplied, contrasting with the Heworth, Osbaldwick and Acomb areas where provision is sparse. In many instances, the lack of amenity spaces is offset by the provision of parks, which provide a wider variety of functional amenities to local residents.
- 6.22 Map 6.2 overleaf illustrates the provision of amenity green space in the context of local and City parks within York. As a higher order facility (providing a greater range of facilities), where parks are provided within a 5 minute catchment (the recommended distance threshold for amenity green space) they may negate the need for further amenity green space provision. As can be seen, despite areas of the Hull Road and Clifton wards containing accessibility deficiencies in relation to amenity green space, residents are able to access a park within the 5 minute catchment.

**SECTION 6 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE**

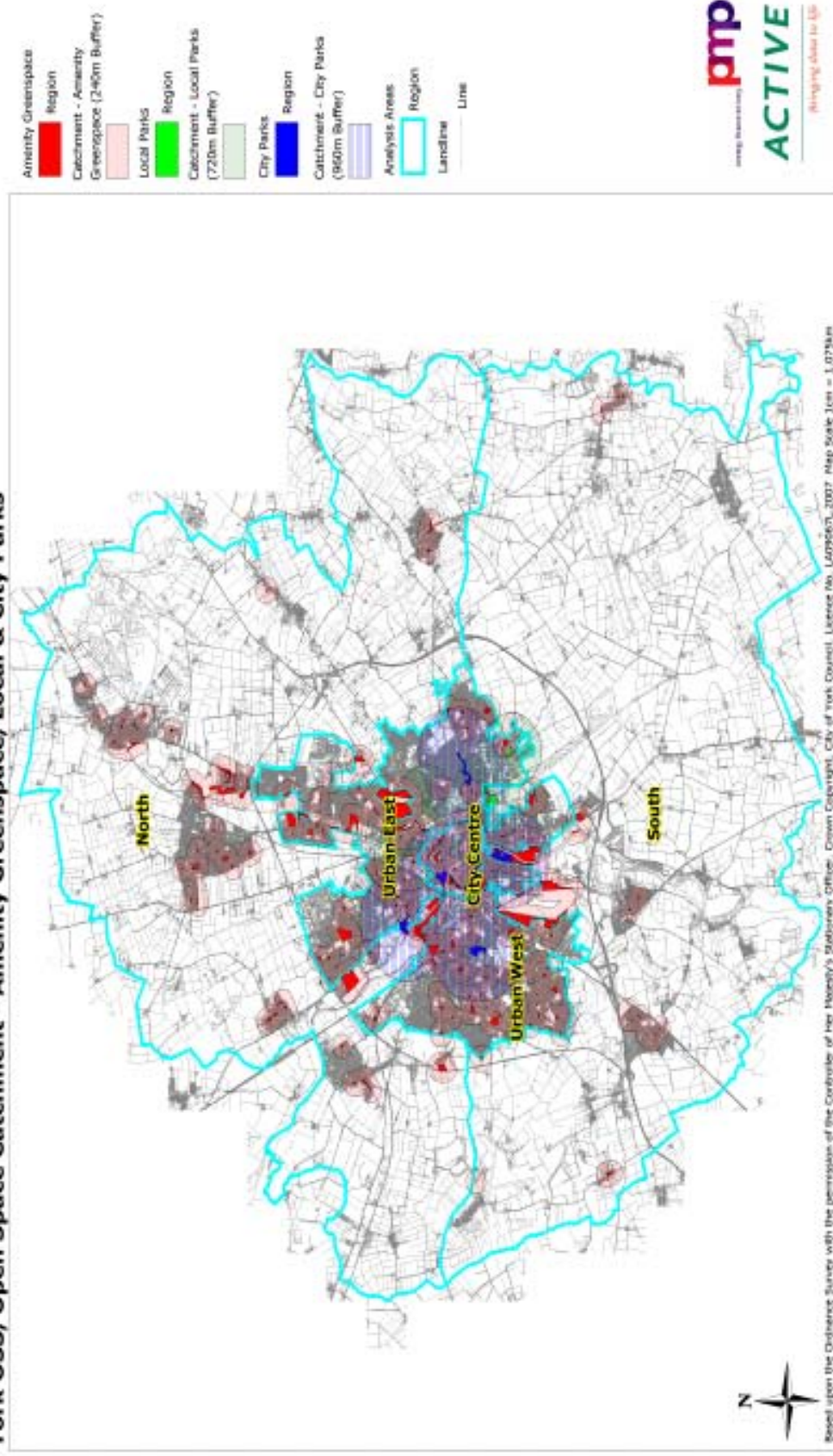
**Map 6.1 - Provision of amenity green space**



**SECTION 6 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE**

**Map 6.2 - Provision of amenity greenspace, local parks and City parks**

**York OSS, Open Space Catchment - Amenity Greenspace, Local & City Parks**



## SECTION 6 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE

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- 6.23 As highlighted, application of the local quality, quantity and accessibility standards in parallel is much more meaningful than application of these standards in isolation.
- 6.24 Consultation highlights the importance of obtaining a balance between the quality and quantity of amenity green space. Analysis of the quality of existing provision suggests that there are significant variations in quality, with site assessment scores ranging from 30% to 90%. This is illustrated in Map 6.3 overleaf where it can be seen that there are clusters of poor quality sites within the Strensall and Holgate wards.
- 6.25 Given the value of amenity green spaces not just for informal recreation but also for the role that they play in enhancing the character and landscape of an area. Improvements to the quality are particularly important. Map 6.3 overleaf illustrates that poor quality facilities are scattered across the city, particularly in the central and northern areas. Similarly, high quality facilities are evenly distributed.

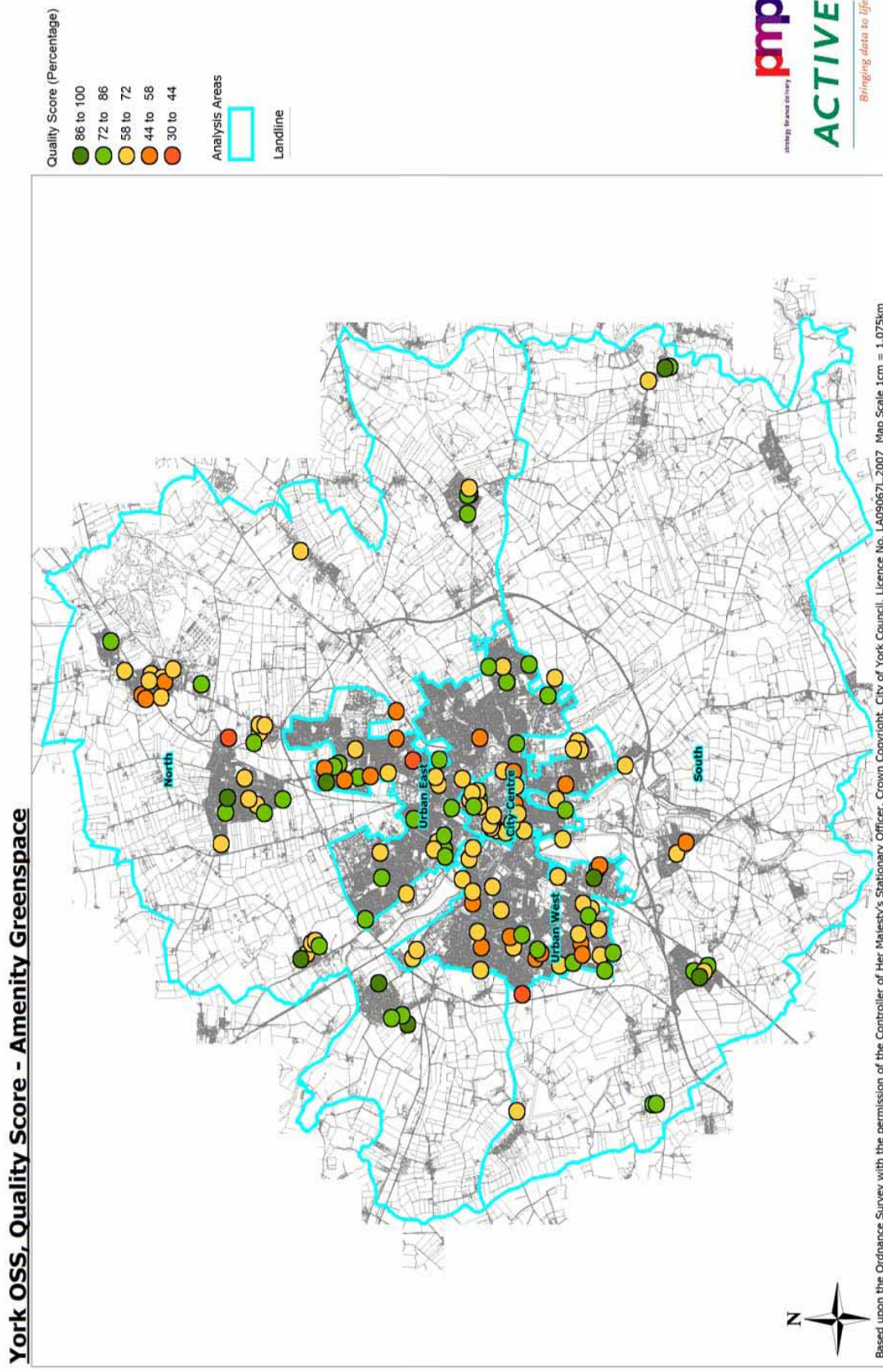
<b>AGS1</b>	Sites not achieving a quality score of 74% (the level required to fall within the top quartile) would benefit from investment.
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- 6.26 In light of the variations in the quality of sites and the interrelationship between amenity spaces and other types of open space it is essential to consider the distribution of facilities. In some instances, poor quality facilities located in areas of overlapping catchment may be of limited value to residents. In order to ensure the future quality of open spaces, consideration should be given to the size of sites. Smaller sites (particularly those located in proximity to larger facilities) may be of limited value to the residents and costly in terms of maintenance to the provider.
- 6.27 In contrast to many other types of open space, the City centre analysis area is well served for amenity space in quantitative terms, with sufficient provision to meet anticipated needs over the LDF period. It will be essential however to ensure that the regeneration programme in this area ensures that appropriate provision of amenity space remains.
- 6.28 Current provision includes the riverside area alongside the Ouse and the amenity areas circling the City walls. There are also a substantial number of small grassed areas. These sites add character to the City area as well as providing informal space for residents, visitors and workers.

<b>AGS2</b>	Ensure that the regeneration programme within the City centre maintains an appropriate level of amenity space. Focus on qualitative improvements within this area.
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**SECTION 6 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE**

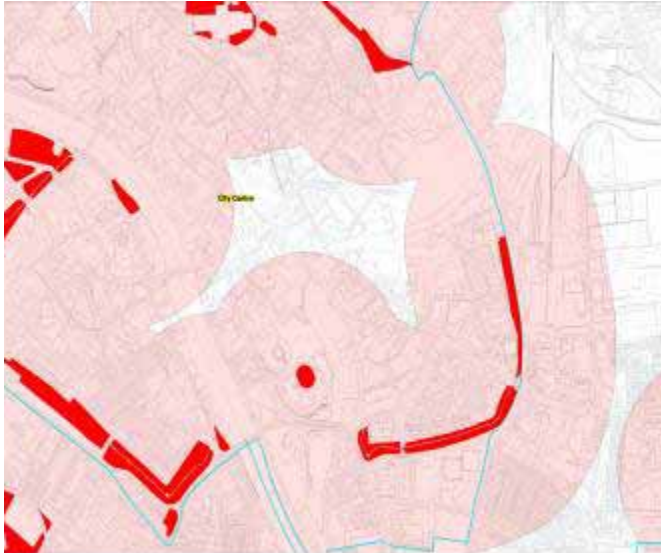
**Map 6.3 - The quality percentage scores for amenity green spaces within York**



## SECTION 6 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE

- 6.29 The only identified deficiency within the City Centre analysis area is highlighted in Figure 6.2 below. Although this deficiency is supported by the application of the local standard at ward level this area (Guildhall) is in close proximity to Museum Gardens and additional provision is therefore not required.

**Figure 6.2 - Accessibility deficiency within the City Centre analysis area**



- 6.30 In contrast to the even distribution of sites and quantitative provision within the City Centre, there are quantitative deficiencies within the Urban East (-39.46ha) and Urban West (-32.45ha) analysis areas.
- 6.31 Furthermore, application of the accessibility standards suggests that there are significant deficiencies in provision in the Urban East analysis area, which highlights areas of Hull Road, Osbaldwick Heworth and Heworth (Without) wards that are outside of the catchment for amenity green spaces. These areas are illustrated in Figures 6.3 – 6.4 below and overleaf. To some degree, these deficiencies are overcome by the proximity of local parks in these areas as shown previously in Map 6.2.

**Figure 6.3 - Accessibility deficiency within Hull Road ward**



**Figure 6.4 - Accessibility deficiency within Osbaldwick ward**



**Figure 6.5 - Accessibility deficiency within Heworth and Heworth (Without) wards**



- 6.32 Huntington and Clifton ward contain areas of deficiency in relation to amenity green space and parks. In light of deficiencies in parks and gardens, the current amenity green spaces in Huntington are of particular importance in providing local amenities to residents (see Map 6.2).
- 6.33 Many of the amenity green space deficiencies discussed in relation to Heworth, Osbaldwick and Hull Road are offset by the good supply of parks in these areas, with Glen Gardens, Hull Road Park and the Museum Gardens offering local amenity to residents. Residents in Heworth also have access to Monk Stray. As a higher order facility (ie one with more facilities) the presence of a local park can negate the need for additional provision of amenity space for those within the catchment of the park that is recommended for amenity space (5 minutes). Priority should therefore be given to those residents who are able to access neither type of informal space.

## SECTION 6 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE

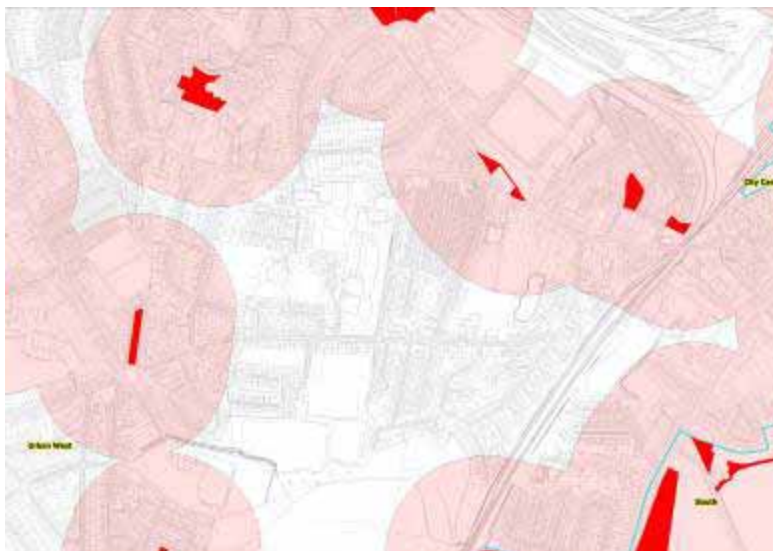
<b>AGS3</b>	Seek opportunities to provide local amenity spaces within the Heworth, Osbaldwick and northern Hull Road areas.
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- 6.34 A comparable situation exists to the west of the City (Urban West analysis area), where there is insufficient provision in quantitative terms and areas of accessibility deficiency when the local standards are applied. These are highlighted in Figures 6.6 and 6.7 below, which show areas of Acomb and Micklegate wards that are outside of the catchment for amenity green spaces.

**Figure 6.6 - Accessibility deficiency within Acomb**



**Figure 6.7 - Accessibility deficiency within Micklegate**



<b>AGS4</b>	Seek opportunities to provide local amenity spaces within the Acomb and Micklegate areas.
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## SECTION 6 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE

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- 6.35 Map 6.2 highlights an area of Clifton and Holgate where there are accessibility deficiencies in terms of both amenity space and parks. These residents reside near the Clifton Ings, an area dedicated to farmland, which currently offers some degree of public access. Long term access to this site is not secure, however in light of identified deficiencies, this area is of clear public significance. Pursuing the long term access of this site has been discussed within recommendation NSN7.
- 6.36 Map 6.1 highlights a further area of Clifton where local access to amenity space is limited. Despite this, these residents reside in close proximity to Bootham Stray (NSN) and have therefore have access to informal recreation. Where there are no deficiencies, priority should be given to the improvement of the quality of existing facilities.
- 6.37 While the areas of accessibility deficiency in the Urban West analysis area may not be of great priority for the provision of further amenity space, it is important to highlight the value of amenity sites in this area, which is less well served in terms of parks than the Urban East analysis area. The amenity space is of particular importance in the far south (Woodthorpe area) of the City. In light of the deficiencies in parks in this area, and the emphasis placed on the importance of parks and the inclusion of a variety of facilities within sites, consideration should be given to upgrading an amenity site in this area to fulfil the function of a park.
- 6.38 Although there are also deficiencies within the Micklegate area, residents in frequently use the Knavesmire as amenity space. Issues have however emerged regarding the conflict of use between recreational and formal sports functions and a segregation of pitches and recreational areas is likely.

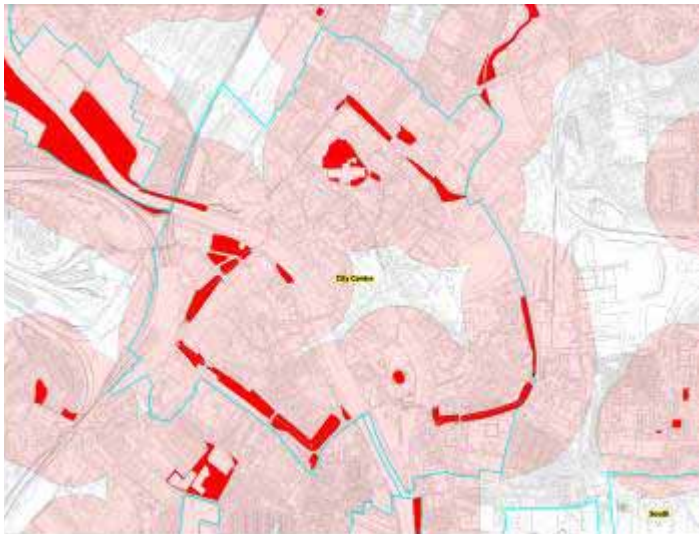
<b>AGS5</b>	Protect amenity space in areas where it provides the only opportunity for informal recreation. Consider upgrading an amenity green space to fulfil a local park function in the Woodthorpe area of the City.
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- 6.39 Despite the poor quantity of provision across the Urban West analysis area, it is evident that there are several sites serving overlapping catchments. There may therefore be some opportunities for the change of use for sites in this area. Only sites with limited value to residents (ie poor quality, low accessibility and overlapping catchments) should be considered and sites should be assessed in terms of their value as other open space types prior to their loss as amenity sites.

<b>AGS6</b>	Consider the value of poorer quality amenity sites serving overlapping catchments. These sites should be targeted for improvement.
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- 6.40 Given that there are some small deficiencies in provision in the City Centre analysis area, opportunities for new sites (illustrated overleaf – Figure 6.8) should be taken, however the primary focus should be on improving the quality of existing amenity spaces. Amenity spaces in the City Centre analysis area were of significantly lower quality on average than in other areas. The role of key parks and gardens needs to be taken into account in fulfilling an amenity green space role.

**Figure 6.8 - Accessibility deficiencies within the City Centre analysis area**



- 6.41 Analysis of amenity green spaces in the York South and York North analysis areas shows that although there are several villages where amenity green space is provided, there are some areas of deficiency. Of the larger settlements, the notable area would be Wheldrake.
- 6.42 Some further deficiencies in provision within the larger rural settlements are highlighted in Figures 6.9 – 6.12 below and overleaf. Despite overall quantitative surpluses in both York North and York South analysis areas, the wards of Wheldrake, Bishopthorpe, Copmanthorpe and Haxby all contain shortfalls, echoing the findings of the accessibility assessment.
- 6.43 Strensall is particularly well served in terms of the provision of amenity space, with a linear strip of green space to the west of the settlement and access to the common for residents residing to the east. Despite this, the quality of facilities is amongst the poorest of all areas (as illustrated on map 6.3) and enhancements to these sites should therefore be the future focus in this area.

**Figure 6.9 - Accessibility deficiency within Wheldrake**



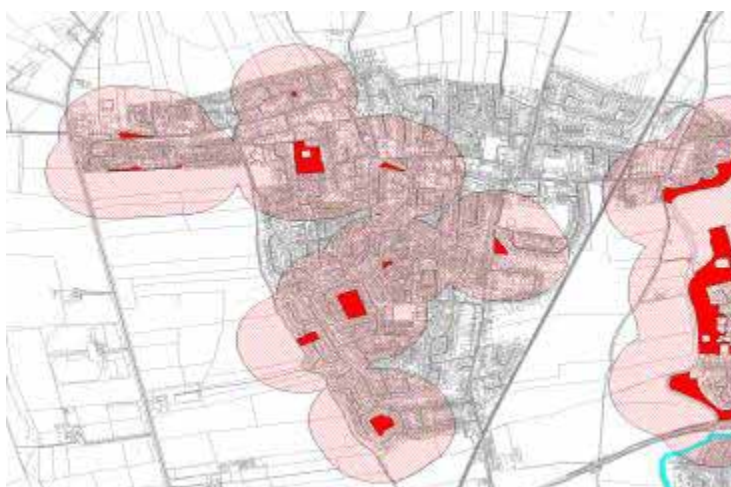
**Figure 6.10 - Accessibility deficiency within Bishopthorpe**



**Figure 6.11 - Accessibility deficiency within Copmanthorpe**



**Figure 6.12 - Accessibility deficiency within Haxby**



## SECTION 6 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE

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- 6.44 The application of local standards for parks (see Map 6.2) also highlighted shortfalls in these areas, with residents travelling into the City Centre, Urban West and Urban East analysis areas to reach facilities.
- 6.45 Application of the quantity standards suggests that overall provision in these areas is sufficient to meet local need. Amenity green space can be particularly important in the York South and York North analysis areas, and in many instances may act as a substitute for the provision of play areas.
- 6.46 In light of the identified deficiencies of parks and gardens within the smaller settlements and deficiencies highlighted in the provision of amenity space above, consideration should be given to upgrading amenity space (where possible) or providing a new small local park in these areas. Provision of parks would reduce the need for amenity space and would ensure that residents are well served with a range of open space.

<b>AGS7</b>	Address deficiencies in the provision of parks by upgrading suitable amenity spaces to local parks or pocket parks. Where there is no provision of amenity space, opportunities for new provision should be sought.
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- 6.47 Based on the local quantity standard and the minimum size of an amenity green space, suggested in PPG17 guidance (0.2ha) it could be suggested that amenity green space should be provided in settlements where the population exceeds 200 (the number of people that would be required before the application of the local standard would generate a need for over 0.2 ha amenity space). Those settlements without sufficient provision should therefore be prioritised for improvement. This links with the provision for children and young people where a slightly larger population is required before an equipped facility is provided. In many instances, the presence of a suitable amenity space may reduce the demand for dedicated provision for children and young people.
- 6.48 Given the importance of providing amenity space in every area, while priority should be given to larger settlements, it should be ensured that where possible residents of all settlements have access to informal space. High quality amenity green space can play an important role in village life.

<b>AGS8</b>	Ensure that all villages with over 200 residents contain an amenity green space. PPG17 guidance recommends a minimum site size of 0.2ha. Consideration should also be given to providing amenity space in settlements devoid of any other open space.
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- 6.49 While this may prove challenging in some smaller settlements, amenity space could be delivered by negotiating community access to school sites, or working in partnership with other providers and the local community.

### Summary

- 6.50 For many residents amenity greenspace will be the most accessible form of open space provision. The value of amenity green spaces within close proximity to residents was noted through the local consultation although the varying quality of sites was highlighted. While amenity green space often fulfils a similar role to larger informal open spaces (eg parks and natural areas) the local nature of this type of open space is of particular importance.

## **SECTION 6 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE**

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- 6.51 In particular, the role of amenity space in the provision for young people was highlighted as being significant in providing a local amenity.
- 6.52 Application of the local standards highlighted that while the overall quantity of provision is sufficient in the rural area to meet the local standard, there are localised deficiencies within some of the larger settlements. In contrast, large quantitative shortfalls in the Urban West and Urban East analysis areas were reinforced by an uneven distribution of existing sites. Despite this, few deficiencies of high importance have been identified as in the many residents outside of the recommended catchment for amenity space have access to a park, a higher order facility.
- 6.53 While the overall direction should remain on enhancing the quality of amenity spaces (particularly with regards cleanliness and maintenance and increasing the range of facilities provided), opportunities to address the identified deficiencies should also be taken.

## **Provision for children**

### **Definition**

- 7.1 PPG17 defines provision for children and young people as one of its eight green space typologies. It states that the broad objective of provision for children and young people is to ensure that they have opportunities to interact with their peers and learn social and movement skills within their home environment. At the same time, they must not create nuisance for other residents or appear threatening to passers-by.
- 7.2 This typology encompasses a vast range of provision from small areas of green space with a single piece of equipment (similar to the typology of amenity green space) to a large multi purpose play areas. The National Playing Fields Association categorises play facilities into three distinct types of facility, specifically:
- Local Areas of Play (LAPs)
  - Local Equipped Areas of Play (LEAPs)
  - Neighbourhood Equipped Areas of Play (NEAPs).
- 7.3 PPG17 notes that using these sub-types of provision for children and young people often ignores the needs of older children such as teenagers. Each site and range of equipment has a different purpose and often serves a different age group and catchment. It is therefore important to divide the typology into two separate categories and analyse provision for children separately to provision for young people.
- 7.4 Provision for children is taken to include equipped children's play areas and adventure playgrounds.
- 7.5 This section of the report sets out the background, strategic context, consultation and current provision for children in York. Local standards have been derived from the local consultation undertaken as part of this study and are therefore directly representative of local needs.

**Figure 7.1 - Play area in Dunnington.**



## **SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN**

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- 7.6 The Big Lottery Fund (<http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/index>) has recently allocated £155 million of funding for provision of children's play facilities. The play initiative is based on the recommendations of the 2004 play review Getting Serious About Play, which defines children's play as "what children and young people do when they follow their own ideas, in their own way and for their own reasons."
- 7.7 The initiative aims (selected few) to:
- create, improve and develop children and young people's free local play spaces and opportunities throughout England, according to need
  - ensure that local authorities work with other local stakeholders to develop children's play strategies and plans
  - ensure that good, inclusive and accessible children's play services and facilities are provided locally.
- 7.8 Local authorities applying for funding are required to consult with relevant stakeholders including children and young people, provide a detailed play strategy and include a portfolio of proposed projects. Examples of individual projects that can form part of the portfolio include:
- adventure playgrounds, BMX and skateboard parks
  - small public playgrounds and creating a play area
  - informal sports facilities
  - a mobile play team, play workers (either paid or volunteers) and holiday and after school play activities.
- 7.9 City of York Council, in conjunction with other partners have recently developed a play strategy, 'Taking Play Forward, A Strategy for York'. This is discussed further in Table 7.1 overleaf.

## SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN

**Table 7.1 – Regional and Local Strategic Context**

<p>City of York Development Control Local Plan</p>	<p>Local Plan policy L1C: Provision of New Open Space in Development. Developments for all housing sites or commercial proposals over 2,500m<sup>2</sup> gross floor space will be required to make provision for the open space needs of future occupiers. The following provision of open space is required – 0.9 hectares per 1000 population of informal amenity space, 1.7 hectares per 1000 population of sports pitches, and 0.7 hectares per 1000 population for children’s equipped playspaces.</p>	<p>The contributions required towards children’s equipped playspaces in the Local Plan should be reviewed in light of the quantity, quality and accessibility standards contained within this report. Adopting these new standards in the Local Development Framework will help to ensure that new development plays its part in delivering an adequate level of open space, sport and recreation facilities for new communities.</p>
<p>Taking Play Forward – A Play Strategy for York</p>	<p>The Play Strategy targets the provision of sufficient appropriate play opportunities for both children and young people across all areas of the City. This relates to the provision of informal and formal opportunities for play and development, in addition to the provision of equipped play facilities.</p> <p>Taking Play Forward, A Play Strategy for York aims to (amongst others):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• raise the standards of play provision</li> <li>• encourage genuine communication and interactions between children and young people, individuals and services with interests in play</li> <li>• better manage play environments.</li> </ul> <p>The strategy ensures that provision meets the needs of children, meets necessary legislative requirements and involves users in decision-making and consultation. The strategy targets an increase in the proportion of play areas meeting NBPFA criteria from 36% to 42%. While no formal quality standards are set, ensuring good quality play opportunities is a key target of this play strategy. Equipped play provision is just one component of provision for play in York.</p>	<p>The recommendations and consultation within the Play Strategy should link directly with the recommendations and standards within this study. It is important that the open space study provides sufficient detailed analysis on consultation with children and analysis of need in order to implement objectives within the Play Strategy.</p>



### **Consultation**

7.10 Consultation specific to children and young people was undertaken using a variety of research techniques and findings have been used to inform the local standards, ensuring they are reflective of local needs. Key themes emerging from consultations include:

- responses from the household survey suggest that there is an overall dissatisfaction with the quantity of provision for children. 52.2% of the population believe that there is nearly enough/not enough, opposed to 32.8% who believe there is more than enough/about right.
- many residents at drop in sessions reiterated the viewpoint that there is a lack of provision for children. This was perceived to be particularly apparent in the central areas, where there was a desire for more play facilities integrated within formal parks. Museum Gardens was highlighted as a particularly good opportunity.
- the two most commonly mentioned types of facilities that children responding to the IT Survey wanted near to their homes would be play areas with interesting play equipment and kickabout areas
- consultation indicated that the quality of children's play areas is rated average by 46% of household respondents. A higher percentage of people stated that they were poor (30%) as opposed to being good (25%).
- many residents at drop in sessions expressed concerns that older children use facilities intended for younger children and cause damage and vandalism. It was felt that this might be a consequence of a lack of provision for teenagers. Rowntree Park play area and Clarence Gardens play area were perceived to be of good quality while in contrast, Westhorpe play area was perceived to be particularly poor, as was West Park play area (which is considered to be damp and dark). Sites located in larger parks were perceived to be of higher quality.
- responses from the household survey regarding preferred methods of travel to this type of open space highlighted that 86% of residents expected to walk. Expectations in terms of travel time show a clearer pattern than for those of regular users, with 77% of people expecting the journey to take 5-10 minutes.
- the IT for young people survey highlighted the importance of providing local facilities, with many local children indicating that the key determinant of which facilities they used was the location. Distance from home was perceived to be a far greater barrier to usage than cost or poor quality facility provision.

### **Setting provision standards - quantity**

7.11 The recommended local quantity standards for children's provision and young people's provision have been summarised overleaf. Full justifications for the local standards are provided within Appendix F.

## SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN

**Quantity Standard (see appendices F and I – standards and justification, worksheet and calculator)**

Existing level of provision	Recommended standard
0.04 ha per 1000 population	0.07 hectares per 1000 population
Justification	
<p>The current level of provision is equivalent to 0.05 hectares per 1000 population. The extent to which locational deficiencies may exist within each analysis area will be dependent on the specific location of each facility (illustrated through the application of the relevant accessibility standard discussed in Appendix H).</p> <p>A key theme emerging from the consultation has been a shortage of provision for children (for example almost 48% of respondents to the household survey think that the level of provision is insufficient). This is supplemented by comments regarding the quality of existing sites. A standard has been recommended (derived from the local consultation) that seeks to encourage new provision in some areas, and quality improvements in other areas.</p>	

### Current quantity provision

7.12 The provision of facilities for children in the city of York is summarised in Tables 7.2 and 7.3.

**Table 7.2 – Provision for children in York**

Analysis Areas	Current Provision	Number of sites	Smallest site (Hectares)	Largest site (Hectares)	Current Population	Provision per 1000 population	Current Balance Against Local Standard (0.07 hectares per 1000 population)	LDF Population (2029)	Provision per 1000 population (2029)	Future Balanced Against Local Standard (0.07 hectares per 1000 population)
City Centre	0.1	2	0.03	0.07	5,930	0.01	-0.31	6,911	0.01	-0.38
Urban East	3.21	30	0.02	0.31	72,045	0.04	-1.83	83,954	0.04	-2.66
Urban West	2.11	17	0.04	0.44	52,995	0.03	-1.59	61,755	0.03	-2.21
York South	1.77	11	0.02	0.53	22,132	0.08	0.22	25,790	0.07	-0.03
York North	2.47	19	0.01	0.72	40,497	0.06	-0.36	47,190	0.05	-0.83
Overall	9.66	79	0.01	0.72	193,599	0.04	-3.87	225,600	0.04	-6.11

7.13 The key issues emerging from Table 7.2 include:

- there are currently 79 children's play areas in York, with significant differences in the level of distribution across the analysis areas. The level of provision ranges from 0.01 hectares per 1000 population in the City Centre to 0.72 hectares per 1000 population in York North.

## **SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN**

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- given that there is a total of 79 sites covering an area of 9.66 hectares the average site size is 0.12 hectares. The smallest site can be found in York North (0.01 hectares). However, York North also contains the largest site (0.72 hectares).
- based on the local standard of 0.07 hectares per 1000 population, all analysis areas are predicted to have an undersupply by 2029. The most significant undersupply can be found in Urban East with –2.66 against the local standard.
- it is important to note that whilst it appears that York South analysis area has near sufficient provision, locational deficiencies could still exist and this should be explored through the application of the local accessibility standard.

**Table 7.3 – Provision for children by ward**

Ward	Population	Provision of facilities for children (hectares)	Local Standard (ha/1000)	Per 1000 population current	TOTAL Requirement	Surplus / Deficiency
Acomb Ward	8,642	0.12	0.07	0.01	0.60	-0.48
Bishopthorpe Ward	4,251	0	0.07	0	0.29	-0.29
Clifton Ward	13,437	1.33	0.07	0.09	0.94	0.38
Derwent Ward	3,958	0.08	0.07	0.02	0.27	-0.19
Dringhouses and Woodthorpe Ward	12,001	0.54	0.07	0.04	0.84	-0.30
Fishergate Ward	8,857	0.29	0.07	0.03	0.62	-0.33
Fulford Ward	2,902	0.17	0.07	0.05	0.20	-0.03
Guildhall Ward	7,465	0.19	0.07	0.02	0.52	-0.33
Haxby and Wigginton Ward	13,942	0.4	0.07	0.02	0.97	-0.57
Heslington Ward	4,609	0.21	0.07	0.04	0.32	-0.11
Heworth Ward	4,233	0.61	0.07	0.14	0.29	0.31
Heworth without Ward	4,233	0.07	0.07	0.01	0.29	-0.22
Holgate Ward	12,931	0.76	0.07	0.05	0.90	-0.14
Hull Road Ward	9,246	0.19	0.07	0.02	0.64	-0.45
Huntington and New Earswick Ward	13,518	0.38	0.07	0.02	0.94	-0.56
Micklegate Ward	12,293	0.73	0.07	0.05	0.86	-0.13
Osbaldwick Ward	3,521	0.2	0.07	0.05	0.24	-0.04
Rural West York Ward	11,502	0.9	0.07	0.07	0.80	0.09
Skelton, Rawcliffe and Clifton Without Ward	13,597	0.91	0.07	0.06	0.95	-0.04
Strensall Ward	8,791	0.89	0.07	0.10	0.61	0.27
Westfield Ward	15,308	0.5	0.07	0.03	1.07	-0.57
Wheldrake Ward	4,360	0.21	0.07	0.04	0.30	-0.51

7.14 The key issues emerging from Table 7.3 include:

- given that the local quantity standard has been set at a level equivalent to a 40% increase on current provision, it is not unexpected to see that almost all wards require further provision in order to satisfy the local standard for provision for children. The largest requirement can be found in both Westfield and Haxby and Wigginton wards – where there is a requirement for a further 0.57 hectares of provision to meet the local standard.

## SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN

- only four wards have sufficient quantity to satisfy the local standard at the current time – Clifton, Strensall, Rural West York and Heworth.

### Setting provision standards – quality

- 7.15 The recommended local quality vision in terms of provision for children has been summarised below. Full justification is provided in Appendix G.

### Quality Standard

<b>Recommended standards</b>
<p><b><i>“A well designed clean site of sufficient size to provide a mix of well-maintained and imaginative formal equipment and an enriched play environment in a safe and convenient location. Equipped play spaces should be fun and exciting and should have clear boundaries with dog free areas and include appropriate ancillary accommodation such as seating, litter bins and toilets in the locality of larger sites. Sites should also comply with appropriate national guidelines for design and safety and safeguard residential amenity of neighbouring land users. The site should also be accessible to all”.</i></b></p>
<b>Justification</b>
<p>The need to address the mis-use of some sites is reflected within the standard in the need to design the site well, to locate it in a safe and secure location and to have clear boundaries. This can also refer to clear boundaries from facilities for young people to try and deter young people using younger children facilities. As such, the standard reflects the need for the good design and planning of play areas.</p> <p>Recognition of the need for places to go to meet friends is incorporated in the need for an enriched play environment rather than a focus only on formal equipment, following suggestions from children that some equipment can be boring. Consultation highlighted the importance of these sites being of sufficient size for children to enjoy, and this is mentioned in the quality vision. It is also essential to ensure that the equipment provided is suitable for the age group for which it is intended.</p> <p>The standard aims to achieve a balance between locating play areas close to housing or footpaths as an additional level of security to be provided through natural policing eg overlooking houses where possible, but also ensuring that residential amenity and privacy is protected. The standard encompasses the need for play areas to be both sustainable in management terms but also promote a mix of facilities and provide an enriched play environment that is clean and safe to use. Wherever viable, the play equipment should be changed and developed over time (preferably in consultation with local children) to ensure that the facilities remain relevant to children and continue to be fit for purpose. The standard highlights the need for imaginative equipment, which emerged as a key issue throughout the consultation programme.</p> <p>The standard supports the principles of equipped play set out in the play strategy and encourages the design of interactive areas providing a range of play opportunities. It reflects the key principles outlined in the strategy, including the involvement of users and the desire for challenging, innovative and imaginative facilities. While this vision relates to equipped facilities only, these principles should be applied to all areas providing play opportunities for children.</p>

**Current provision – quality**

- 7.16 The quality of existing provision for children in the City is summarised in Table 7.5. It is important to note that site assessments are conducted as a snapshot in time and may not always been reflective of the quality of the site throughout the year.
- 7.17 The calculation of the upper quartile quality score (72%) provides an indication of the desired level of quality at each site and enables a comparison at sites across the City. It highlights sites that currently meet the visionary standard, and those sites falling below and consequently where improvement is required.
- 7.18 The median score is 64.85% and the lower quartile score is 58%. A selection of assessment results have been included in Table 7.4 below to illustrate the distribution of scores. A full list of site scores can be found in the provision for children section of Appendix D.

**Table 7.4 – Selection of quality assessments results for children’s play areas**

Above upper quartile	72+	(84%) - Esk Drive Play Area – Urban West – Site ID 52 (80%) - CYP at Harewood Close/Kensington Road – Urban East – Site ID 817
Median – Upper quartile	64%-72%	(65.7%) – Hollis Crescent Play Area – York North – Site ID 748 (70%) Clarence Gardens Play Area – Urban East – Site ID 16
Lower quartile - median	58%-64%	(60%) Hull Road Park Play Area – City Centre – Site ID 17 (58%) Woodthorpe Rec Play Ground – Urban West – Site ID 34
Less than lower quartile	Below 58	(50%) – Gale Lane/Foxwood Lane Playground – Urban West – Site ID 35 (49%) - Ashton Avenue Playground – York South – Site ID 67

- 7.19 The key issues emerging from Table 7.4 and the site assessments include:
- 46% of respondents to the household survey felt that the quality of sites for children was average, and 30% think that the quality of provision is poor. This is reflected in the findings of the site assessments, with a median score of only 64.85%.
  - despite this, 36% of sites scored over 70% or above, this suggests that a number of sites only require small improvements to achieve the quality vision. Furthermore, some play areas – such as the one located on land to the east of Common Road – scored very highly and could be thought of as examples of best practice.

## SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN

- Ashton Avenue playground (site ID 67), Salisbury Road play area (site ID 1) and the play area near Shipton AGS (site ID 818) scored very poorly (below 50%). Quality improvements at these sites should be considered a key priority for the Council.

### Setting provision standards – accessibility

- 7.20 The recommended local accessibility standards for provision for children has been summarised below. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix H

### Accessibility Standard

Recommended standards
<b>10 MINUTE WALK TIME (480 METRE)</b>
<b>Justification</b>
<p>The majority of respondents to the household questionnaire indicate that they would expect to walk to a children's play facility. Furthermore, the distances that parents are willing to let their children travel unaccompanied from their homes to play facilities has reduced as concerns over safety have grown in recent years. However, PPG17 suggests that distance thresholds should be reflective of the maximum distance that typical users can reasonably be expected to travel. The 75% threshold level for children using the responses from the household survey was a 10-minute walk time across the City. This figure was consistent across all analysis areas, indicating an overall consensus of opinion. Furthermore the modal response was also a 10-minute walk time (consistent across all of the geographical areas).</p> <p>Setting the standard in accordance with the 75% threshold level is advocated in PPG17. Moreover, going for a larger accessibility catchment is recommended in terms of providing the Council with greater flexibility in terms of striking a balance between qualitative and quantitative improvements in provision. A 5-minute catchment would place a greater requirement on new provision, however local consultation revealed the importance of high quality sites and not just new facilities. The Council should continually seek to promote measures designed to improve accessibility, such as better public transport or cycling routes.</p> <p>A standard of 10 minutes walk time (480m) therefore meets user expectations and provides a realist target for implementation. Furthermore, this local standard encompasses all types of provision for children, including the larger, more strategic sites that people could be expected to travel further to visit. The provision of local facilities meets with the aspirations of children and young people and ensures that the use of these play facilities is maximized. It will be important to consider the provision of play facilities in the context of amenity open spaces, and other typologies providing more informal play opportunities for children.</p> <p>The standard of 10 minutes should also be considered in the context of other open space types, particularly amenity green space, which offer informal and unstructured opportunities for play.</p>

**Current provision – accessibility**

- 7.21 Accessibility at each site was also assessed through a detailed site visit and the completion of a detailed pro forma. This takes into account issues including whether the entrance to the site is easily accessible, the condition of the roads, paths and cycleways, whether there is disabled access, how accessible is the site by public transport, bicycle or walking, and whether there are clear and appropriate signs to the site.
- 7.22 The accessibility of existing provision for children is summarised in Table 7.5 below.

**Table 7.5 - Accessibility of provision for children**

Above upper quartile	70%+	(77%) - Play area off Burton Stone Lane – Urban East – Site ID 14 (77%) – Esk Drive Play Area – Urban West – Site ID 52
Median – Upper quartile	61%-70%	(70%) Howard Road Play Area – Urban East – Site ID 13 (70%) Cemetary Road Play Area – Urban East – Site ID 21
Lower quartile - median	53.5%-60%	(60%) – Rowntree Park Play Area – York South – Site ID 3 (60%) – West Bank Park (u11s Playground) – Urban West – Site ID 26)
Less than lower quartile	Below 53.5%	(50%) – Leaside Play Area – Urban West – Site ID 22 (43%) - Hollis Crescent Play Area – York North – Site ID 748

- 7.23 Key issues from the assessment of site specific accessibility in York include:
- the median score was 60%. The upper quartile score was 70%, and the lower quartile score was 53.5%.
  - the play area off Burton Stone Lane obtained the highest accessibility score of all the sites assessed (77%), and can be considered to be an excellent example of an accessible play area. Sites with high accessibility scores, especially sites achieving scores within the upper quartile percentile, should be protected specifically if they have high/significant usage.
  - those sites scoring below the average accessibility score should be prioritised for improvement. Four sites scored below 45%. These sites should be prioritised for enhancement. A space that is inaccessible is almost irrelevant to potential users and therefore may be of little value, irrespective of its quality.



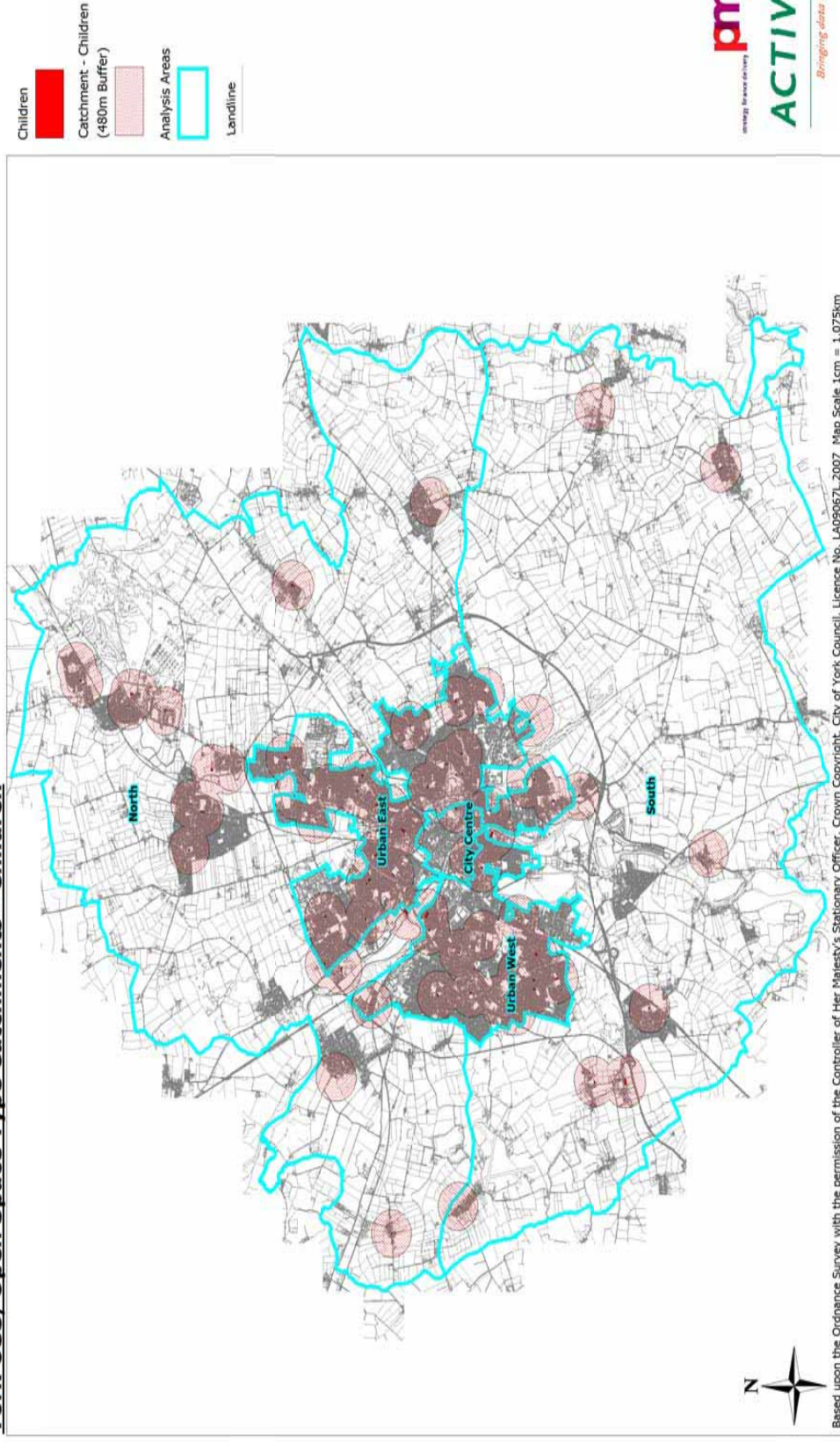
**Applying provision standards – identifying geographical areas**

- 7.24 In order to identify geographical areas of importance and those areas with required local needs the quantitative provision for children in York should be considered alongside the recommended local standard for accessibility. The quantity standards enable the identification of areas that do not meet the minimum provision standards, while the accessibility standards will help determine where those deficiencies are of high importance. Applying the standards together is a much more meaningful method of analysis than applying the standards separately and therefore helps with the prioritisation of sites.
- 7.25 The application of the local accessibility standards for children has been set out in Map 7.1. This shows that many parts of the urban area and villages currently meet the accessibility standards.
- 7.26 Application of the quantity standards suggests that all areas of the city are expected to have a shortfall in provision by 2029. In relation to the local standard, levels of provision are particularly unfavourable in the Urban East and Urban West analysis areas. The York South analysis area is the only location where it is anticipated that there will be sufficient provision by 2029. The largest requirement can be found in Haxby and Wigginton ward – where there is a requirement for a further 0.57ha of provision to meet the local standard.

## SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN

### Map 7.1 - Provision of facilities for children

#### York OSS, Open Space Type Catchments - Children



## **SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN**

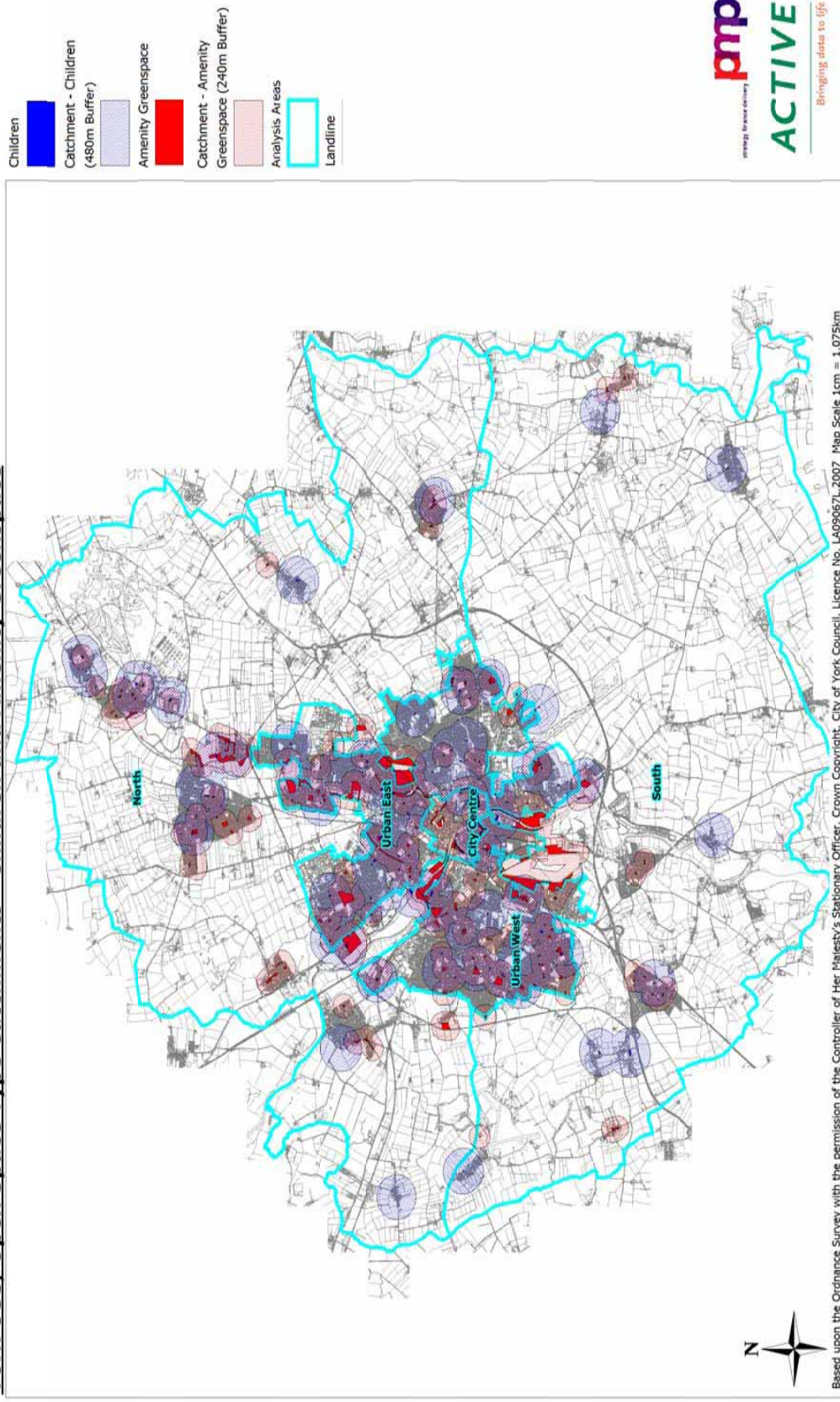
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- 7.27 The accessibility mapping indicates that facilities are equitably distributed across the urban area (City Centre, Urban East and Urban West analysis areas) although there are some areas where residents have to travel greater than a 10 minute walk time to reach a facility. Examples of deficiencies can be seen in a large proportion of the City Centre analysis area, and the Acomb, Osbaldwick and Hull Road areas.
- 7.28 Provision in the smaller settlements is more sparsely distributed, although there are clusters of facilities in the York North analysis area around Haxby, Wigginton and Strensall.
- 7.29 Consideration of natural barriers is particularly important when analysing provision for children, as main roads and rivers present safety issues and prevent usage of sites which would otherwise appear to be located in close proximity.
- 7.30 While this Section focuses primarily on equipped areas for children it is also essential to consider the role that amenity green spaces play in offsetting the need for the provision of facilities for children. Areas deficient in both amenity space and formal facilities for children should be a particular priority for new provision. The provision of amenity green space in relation to facilities for children is set out overleaf in Map 7.2. The importance of informal opportunities for play supporting equipped provision was also raised as a key strand of the City of York Play Strategy.

## SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN

### Map 7.2 - Provision of amenity greenspace and facilities for children

#### York OSS, Open Space Type Catchments - Children and Amenity Greenspace



## **SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN**

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- 7.31 Map 7.2 shows some areas where there is limited access to both amenity green space and facilities for children. Future provision should be a priority in the areas that are currently not served by either type of open space, for example within Acomb, Holgate and Hull Road.
- 7.32 While the quantity of provision was the overriding theme of consultations, the quality of provision was also considered to be important, and many existing facilities were criticised for the lack of innovative and exciting play equipment. The location of the site, providing a perception of safety and security was highlighted as of utmost importance. The importance of maintaining a balance between privacy and residential amenity and incidental supervision/proximity to footpaths was recognised. Site assessments indicate that the quality of some existing play areas compares unfavourably to other types of open space, with site scores ranging from below 50% to 84%.

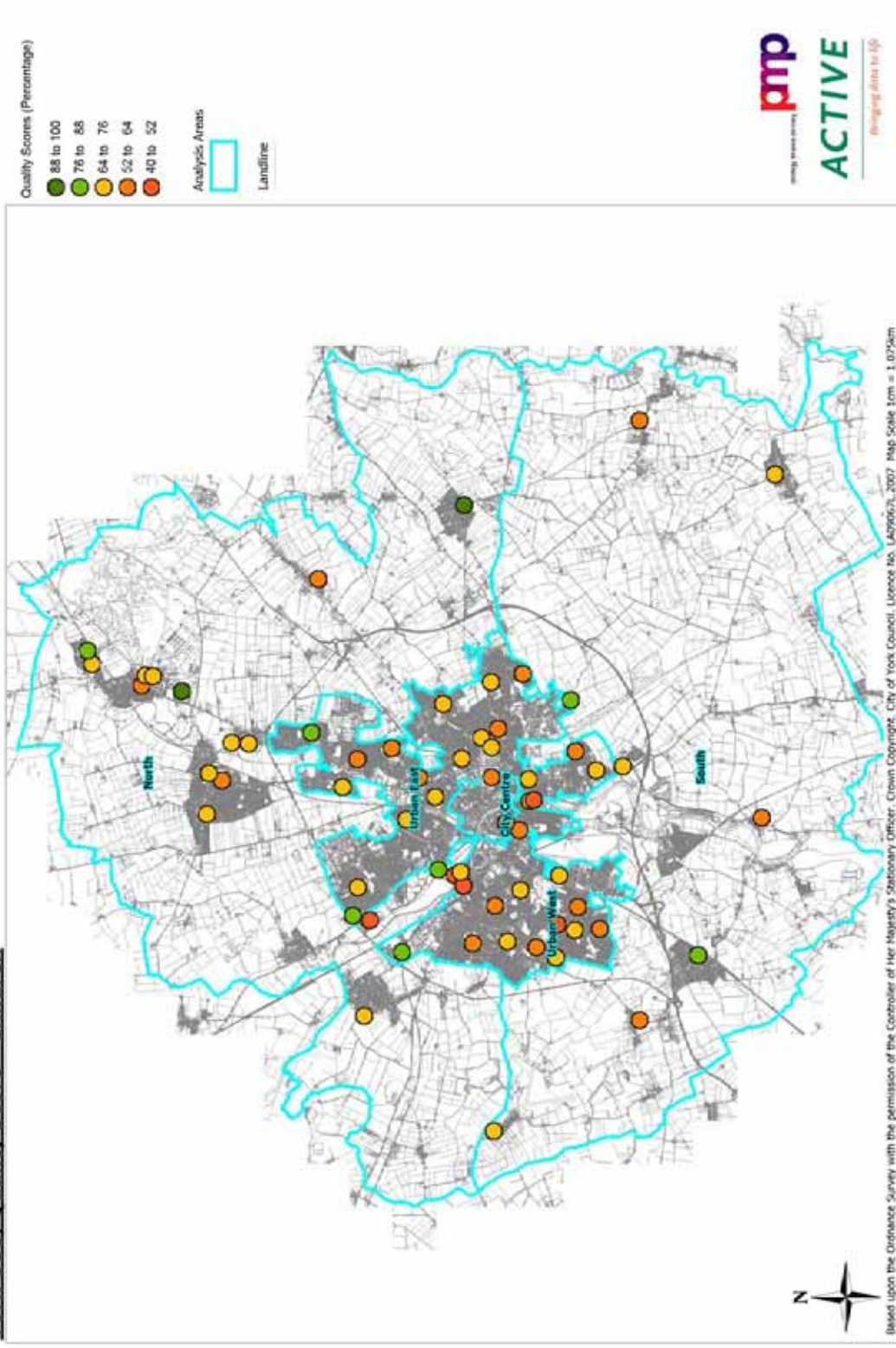
<b>C1</b>	Use the findings of the quality assessment to inform decisions on sites requiring investment. New sites should promote interactive, innovative and imaginative facilities in line with both user expectations and the strategic direction set out in the City of York Play Strategy.
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- 7.33 The distribution of the quality of facilities (according to the site assessments) can be seen on Map 7.3 overleaf. This highlights that there are clusters of high quality and poorer quality facilities across the City. Of particular importance is those facilities considered to be of poor quality, which are located in small settlements and are the only facility in the settlement.

**SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN**

**Map 7.3 - Quality of existing children's play areas in City of York**

**York OSS, Quality Score - Children**



## SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN

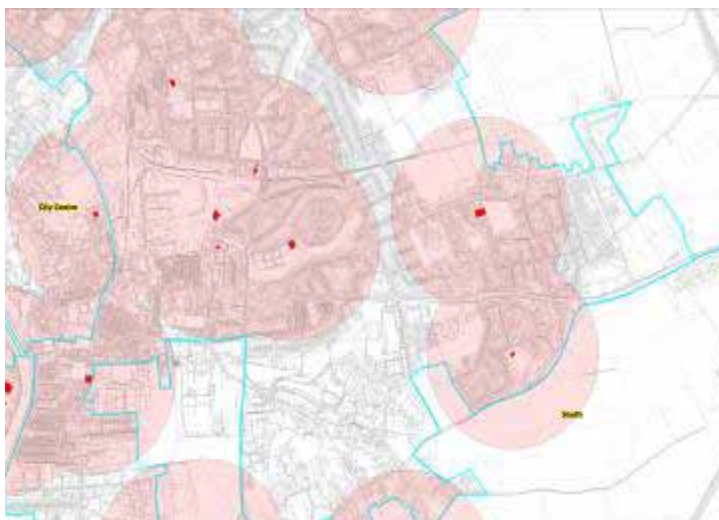
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- 7.34 As illustrated on Map 7.3, high quality facilities are evenly distributed across the City, although there are clusters of poorer quality facilities located in Urban West and Urban East. Site visits highlight particular issues with the cleanliness and maintenance of facilities, much of which arises from the misuse of sites by children in the older age group. Appropriate design will be instrumental in the delivery of new facilities.

<b>C2</b>	Any new facilities should meet the recommended quality standard. Effective maintenance coupled with an appropriate location was perceived to be of paramount importance.
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- 7.35 Provision of equipped play facilities places both capital and revenue pressures on the provider. Consultations have already emphasised the importance of ongoing maintenance to local residents. It will be important to ensure that the maintenance (both short and long term) of facilities provided as part of new development is considered and addressed at the outset. This is further discussed in the planning, priorities and implementation Section (12).
- 7.36 In light of the localised nature of play provision, consideration has been given to priorities within each area of the City. Analysis of the application of the local quantity standard at ward level highlights that with the exception of four wards, all areas will be deficient in facilities by 2029. Analysis of the existing level of provision compared to the local standard also demonstrates that with the exception of the York South analysis area, provision in all areas compares unfavourably to the recommended minimum. New provision should be targeted at those areas outside the distance threshold where there are sufficient people to justify new provision.
- 7.37 Analysis of the quantitative standards indicates that the Urban East analysis area shows the greatest overall deficiency in the provision of equipped facilities for children, with a shortfall of 1.83ha currently, which will increase by a further hectare by 2029.
- 7.38 This suggests that there are insufficient facilities to meet the needs of current and future residents in this area. This is reinforced by the application of the accessibility standards, which highlights several areas of deficiency as shown in Figure 7.2 overleaf. In particular, residents are outside of the catchment area for local provision in parts of the Osbaldwick, Heworth Without, Fulford and Huntington areas of the City. Somewhat surprisingly, although the Heworth ward is one of only three where provision meets minimum quantity standards, there are deficiencies in this area.

**Figure 7.2 - Deficiencies in the urban east area of York**



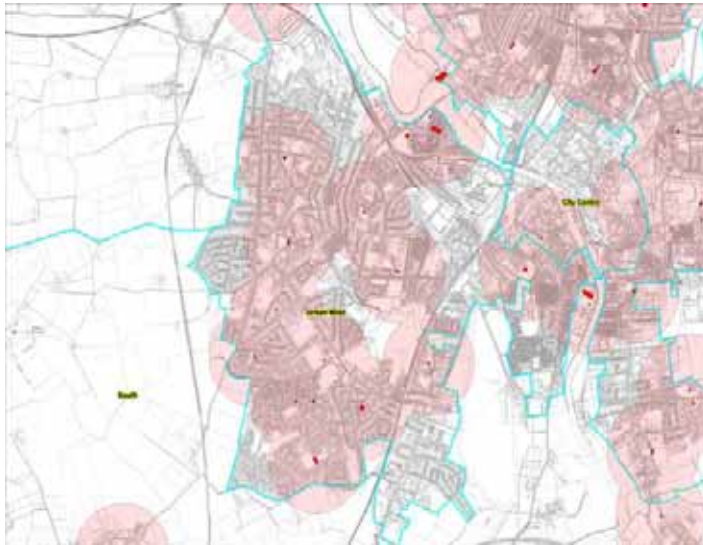
- 7.39 Analysis of quantitative deficiencies highlights that shortfalls in the Heworth Without and Osbaldwick areas would be sufficient to justify at least one additional facility by 2029 (based on the average minimum size of existing facilities). In light of larger deficiencies in the Huntington and New Earswick ward, opportunities to address this deficiency should be considered. The deficiency within the Clifton area of the town is of lesser importance as this primarily includes the industrial estate.
- 7.40 The importance of effective provision for children takes on even greater importance in these areas, as amenity space is particularly sparse. While there is a good level of provision of parks (Glen Gardens, Hull Road Park), access to localised amenity provision is essential.

<b>C3</b>	Focus the development of any new facilities in the identified areas of deficiency of Heworth Without, Heslington and Huntington and New Earswick Areas.
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- 7.41 Furthermore, in areas where the quantity of play areas is insufficient to meet local needs, the quality of these sites takes on greater importance. Deramore Drive and Monkton Road Play areas were both considered to be poorer quality. Monkton Road Play area is the largest site in Heworth, an area of accessibility deficiency but quantitative surplus.
- 7.42 To a lesser extent, quantitative and accessibility deficiencies exist in the Urban West analysis area. Furthermore, it can be seen that there are several facilities across Dringhouses and Woodthorpe serving similar catchments (illustrated in Figure 7.3 overleaf).



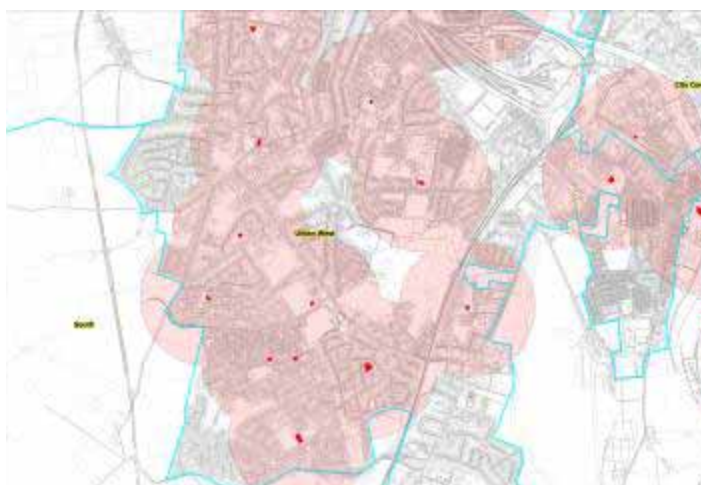
**Figure 7.3 - Facilities serving several catchments in Urban West**



<b>C4</b>	Consider the value of play areas serving similar catchments as illustrated above and seek opportunities to rationalize sites in close proximity to each other in order to enhance the quality of the remaining site.
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7.43 The primary areas of accessibility deficiency exist within the Acomb and Westfield areas of the City. This is further emphasised by the application of the quantity standards at ward level, which indicates that provision in these areas compares unfavourably to the expected level. The areas of accessibility deficiency are highlighted below in Figure 7.4 below. These areas are also characterised by a striking lack of amenity green space, further emphasising the importance of localised provision for children. The regeneration of the British Sugar site in Acomb may provide some opportunities for additional provision. There are also significant shortfalls in accessibility in the Dringhouses area of the City.

**Figure 7.4 - Deficiencies in Urban West area of York**



## SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN

<b>C5</b>	Seek opportunities for new provision in the Westfield, Dringhouses and Acomb areas of the City.
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7.44 Provision for children within the City centre analysis area is minimal, with only two facilities (Victoria Bar and Rosemary Place). Furthermore, these facilities are located on the periphery of the area and for the majority of residents, there are several natural barriers impeding access.

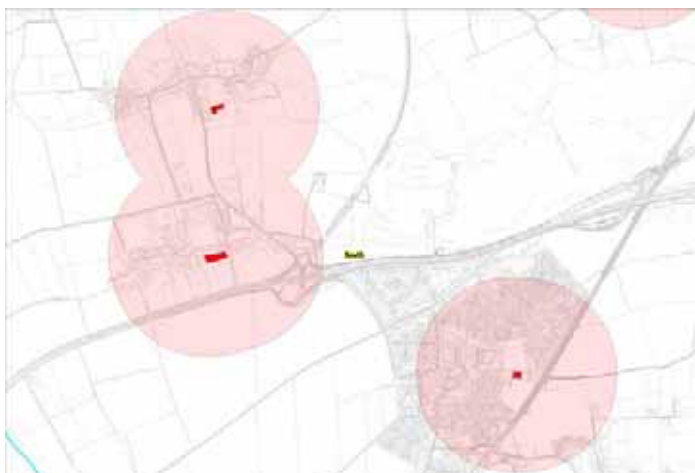
7.45 Given the future growth in population in this area (although much of this is likely to be apartments and therefore the number of families within the area may be limited) new provision to cater for the resident population will be essential. Location of facilities at Museum Gardens (Site ID 282) and St Georges Fields (Site ID 402) could be considered. Opportunities at Museum Gardens were also frequently highlighted through consultation. Based on the average size of existing facilities, current deficiencies suggest that at least two additional sites are required. Longer-term growth in this area over the LDF period will increase this requirement.

<b>C6</b>	Provide additional facilities within the City centre area. Consider the co – location of play areas within larger park or amenity areas.
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7.46 Parish Councils are key providers of facilities for children within the more rural settlements of York. Provision for children is challenging within a rural area, as even residents living in small villages expect access to a facility. In order to effectively serve residents, it is therefore likely that the level of provision would exceed the recommended minimum standard as facilities may serve small numbers of residents. While provision in York South analysis area will meet the minimum standard, provision in the York North analysis area falls below the quantity expected.

7.47 Although quantitatively there are deficiencies, analysis of the existing distribution of provision suggests that the majority of larger settlements have access to at least one facility although there are some gaps, notably Bishopthorpe village, the east of Copmanthorpe (York South analysis area) and South Wigginton, a small area of Strensall, East Nether Poppleton and Skelton (York North analysis area). This is illustrated in Figure 7.5 below. Additionally, facilities in Wheldrake, Askham Bryan and Elvington are of poorer quality. In light of the importance of these sites in serving local residents qualitative enhancements should be considered.

**Figure 7.5 - Deficiency in Bishopthorpe Village**



## SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN

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- 7.48 Application of the quantity standard would suggest that based on the average size of existing facilities within York, as a minimum a play area should be provided if the population of a village exceeds 1714 (the number of people that would be required before the application of the local standard would generate a need for a play area of a size equivalent or above the assumed minimum size). Decisions regarding the provision of facilities in other smaller settlements should be based on demand from the local residents. There are frequently few opportunities to provide formal play facilities within villages, and any new development of facilities should take into account the demand from the local community.

<b>C7</b>	Protect rural play facilities and support parish councils in the ongoing provision and maintenance of these sites. Provide new facilities in areas where there is sufficient population and where local demand is expressed. Focus in particular in areas where the population exceeds 1700.
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- 7.49 In light of the limited opportunities to provide facilities in rural settlements and the high costs this entails, consideration could be given to the collocation of facilities at school sites, in order to maximise both use of the facility and resources.

<b>C8</b>	Consider the appropriateness of collocation of facilities at school sites.
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### Summary and recommendations

- 7.50 Equipped provision for children was the overriding theme of consultations throughout the study with residents expressing concerns over the quantity of provision, as well as highlighting that the quality of many facilities is insufficient and that facilities are perceived to be boring and not challenging.
- 7.51 The recommended local standards address these issues, setting challenging criteria that can be used to identify priority areas. Analysis of existing facilities highlight that there is significant variation in the quality of sites although sites are distributed relatively evenly across the City.
- 7.52 Application of the standards highlights several priorities across the City, particularly in the City Centre analysis area, Acomb, Heworth and Dringhouses areas. Shortfalls in these areas are further exacerbated by a lack of local amenity green space.
- 7.53 Any new facilities developed should meet the suggested quality criteria and should provide exciting play opportunities for children. Site assessments carried out at existing facilities should also be used to inform decisions on those facilities in need of enhancement.
- 7.54 Effectively providing facilities in the York North and York South analysis areas is an important challenge and it will be essential to ensure that public transport links are maximised.
- 7.55 Consideration should be given to delivering facilities for children at school sites to maximise resources and ensure that all residents are able to access at least one facility. While provision in rural settlements is challenging, provision of a facility in areas where the population exceeds 1714 should be targeted.

### Provision for teenagers

#### Definition

- 8.1 This type of open space includes areas such as equipped play areas, ball courts, skateboard areas and teenage shelters with the primary purpose of providing opportunities for play and social interaction involving both children and young people.
- 8.2 It is important to re-iterate that play facilities designed for children have been assessed separately to those for young people (section 7). Throughout this section emphasis will be on young people but we will also consider both in conjunction with each other to look at the overall picture for provision.
- 8.3 Although this assessment of provision for young people considers only facilities specifically designed for the purpose of entertaining young people, it is recognised that other types of open space also fulfil this purpose. This will be considered as part of the application phase of the local standards.

#### Strategic context and consultation

##### Strategic context

- 8.4 The Big Lottery Fund (<http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/index>) has recently allocated £155 million of funding for provision of children's play facilities. The play initiative is based on the recommendations of the 2004 play review Getting Serious About Play, which defines children's play as "what children and young people do when they follow their own ideas, in their own way and for their own reasons."
- 8.5 The initiative aims (selected few) to:
- create, improve and develop children and young people's free local play spaces and opportunities throughout England, according to need
  - ensure that local authorities work with other local stakeholders to develop children's play strategies and plans
  - ensure that good, inclusive and accessible children's play services and facilities are provided locally.
- 8.6 Local authorities applying for funding are required to consult with relevant stakeholders including children and young people, provide a detailed play strategy and include a portfolio of proposed projects. Examples of individual projects that can form part of the portfolio include:
- adventure playgrounds, BMX and skateboard parks
  - small public playgrounds and creating a play area
  - informal sports facilities
  - a mobile play team, play workers (either paid or volunteers) and holiday and after school play activities.

8.7 Table 8.1 overleaf sets out the strategic context for the provision of facilities for young people within the City of York. Provision for children and young people is of particular importance within York. This is reinforced within the Local Area Agreement, which prioritises children and young people as one of the four building blocks. Key priorities for children and young people include:

- being healthy
- staying safe
- enjoying and achieving
- making a positive contribution
- achieving economic wellbeing.

## SECTION 8 – PROVISION FOR TEENAGERS

Table 8.1 – Provision for young people local strategic context

Document reviewed	Summary	Relevance to this open space, sport and recreation study
<p>City of York Development Control Local Plan</p>	<p>Local Plan policy L1C considers the provision of new open space (including provision for children and young people), stating specifically that:</p> <p>“developments for all housing sites or commercial proposals over 2,500m<sup>2</sup> gross floor space will be required to make provision for the open space needs of future occupiers. The following provision of open space is required – 0.9 hectares per 1000 population of informal amenity space, 1.7 hectares per 1000 population of sports pitches, and 0.7 hectares per 1000 population for <b>children’s equipped playspaces.</b>”</p>	<p>The contributions required towards provision for young people should be reviewed and specified in light of the quantity, quality and accessibility standards contained within this report. Adopting these new standards in the Local Development Framework will help to ensure that new development plays its part in delivering an adequate level of open space, sport and recreation facilities for new communities.</p>
<p>Taking Play Forward – A Play Strategy for York</p>	<p>The Play Strategy targets the provision of sufficient appropriate play opportunities for both children and young people across all areas of the city. This relates to the provision of informal and formal opportunities for play and development, in addition to the provision of equipped play facilities</p> <p>Taking Play Forward, A Play Strategy for York aims to (amongst others):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• raise the standards of play provision</li> <li>• encourage genuine communication and interactions between children and young people, individuals and services with interests in play</li> <li>• increase participation in play between children and young people</li> <li>• better manage play environments.</li> </ul> <p>The strategy ensures that provision meets the needs of children, meets necessary legislative requirements and involves users in decision-making and consultation. Equipped play provision is just one component of provision for play in York.</p>	<p>The recommendations and consultation within the Play Strategy should link directly with the recommendations and standards within this study. It is important that the open space study provides sufficient detailed analysis on consultation with young people and analysis of need in order to implement objectives within the Play Strategy.</p>

### **Consultation**

- 8.8 Consultation specific to young people was undertaken using a variety of research techniques and findings have been used to inform the local standards, ensuring they are reflective of local needs. Key themes emerging from consultations include:
- across York, the majority of residents (58.9%) stated that the level of provision for young people is insufficient. In contrast, only 1.9% thinks that there is more than enough provision. Provision for teenagers and young people was a key theme throughout all consultations, with the majority of comments focusing on a lack of activities for young people across the City.
  - this perception was reflected in all geographical areas of the City. Over 50% of residents in all areas indicated that provision was insufficient in quantitative terms to meet local needs.
  - when considering also those residents who felt there to be nearly enough facilities for teenagers (8%), this position is further strengthened. The perception of a lack of provision for teenagers is the most conclusive of all open space typologies. Other consultations highlighted the negative impact that a lack of provision for young people was perceived to have on the quality of other types of open space across the City.
  - consultation indicated that the quality of teenage facilities is rated as poor by 64% of household survey respondents. This is significantly higher than for any of the other typologies.
  - the high level of dissatisfaction with the quality of facilities is consistent across all geographical areas of the City. These issues surrounding the quality of existing provision are compounded by the dissatisfaction with the quantity of provision.
  - 68% of respondents stated that walking would be the preferred option when travelling to this type of open space. Of those respondents who would expect to walk to teenager facilities – the most commonly held expectation is that this journey should take 5-10 minutes (66%).
  - the provision of local facilities was highlighted as particularly important. Many young people indicated that they most frequently visit parks and amenity spaces, as a result of the close proximity of these facilities to their homes. This reinforces the importance of providing facilities local to young people in order to ensure that they have sufficient opportunities for play and active recreation.

### **Setting provision standards - quantity**

- 8.9 The recommended local quantity standards for teenagers provision has been summarised overleaf. Full justifications for the local standards are provided within Appendix F.

## SECTION 8 – PROVISION FOR TEENAGERS

**Quantity Standard (see appendices F and I – standards and justification, worksheet and calculator)**

Existing level of provision	Recommended standard
0.0013ha per 1000 population	0.01ha per 1000 population
Justification	
<p>The current level of provision is equivalent to 0.0013 hectares per 1000 population, which is significantly lower than the level of provision for children and reflects the lack of provision that was a key theme across consultations. Across the analysis areas, the greatest requirement for further provision will be in the two urban analysis areas. The extent to which locational deficiencies may exist within each analysis area will be dependent on the specific location of each site (illustrated through the application of the relevant accessibility standard – see Appendix H). In light of the low number of dedicated facilities for young people, it is likely that large areas of deficiency will be identified. Provision for young people should also be considered in the context of the provision of parks and amenity space, which provide informal opportunities for young people.</p> <p>A similar proportion of respondents to the IT Young Peoples Survey think that the level of provision is inadequate as was the case for children’s provision. Both adults and young people made similar comments at drop in sessions around the City and the lack of provision for young people was a key issue across all consultations. Furthermore, the lack of provision for young people was perceived to have a negative impact on the quality of other open spaces across the City boundaries. A standard has therefore been recommended that is above the existing level of provision.</p>	

### Current quantity provision

- 8.10 The provision of facilities for teenagers across York is summarised below in Table 8.2.

**Table 8.2 – Provision for teenagers in York**

Analysis Areas	Current Population	Current Provision	Provision per 1000 population	Current Balance Against Local Standard (0.01 hectares per 1000 population)	LDF Population (2029)	Provision per 1000 population (2029)	Future Balanced Against Local Standard (0.01 hectares per 1000 population)
City Centre	5,930	0	0.0000	-0.06	6,911	0.0000	-0.07
Urban East	72,045	0.15	0.0021	-0.57	83,954	0.0018	-0.69
Urban West	52,995	0.08	0.0015	-0.45	61,755	0.0013	-0.54
York South	22,132	0.06	0.0027	-0.16	25,790	0.0023	-0.20
York North	40,497	0	0.0000	-0.40	47,190	0.0000	-0.47
Overall	193,599	0.29	0.0015	-1.65	225,600	0.0013	-1.97



## SECTION 8 – PROVISION FOR TEENAGERS

8.11 The key issues emerging from Table 8.2 include:

- the information displayed in the Table 8.2 reinforces the findings from the household survey, indicating that there is a lack of provision across the City when measured against the local standards of 0.01 hectares per 1000 population
- the overall undersupply is equivalent to 1.97 hectares. The Urban East area has particularly high levels of under provision, equivalent to –0.69 hectares against the local standard.
- when projecting the likely adequacy of provision in light of population growth, there is an increase in overall deficiency, further justifying the need to improve the level of provision for teenagers.

### Setting provision standards – quality

8.12 The recommended local quality visions for teenagers provision has been summarised below. Full justification is provided in Appendix G.

#### Quality Standard

Recommended standards
<i>“A well designed high quality site that provides a meeting place for young people, encompassing the needs of all users with varied formal and informal equipment/space. The site should be located in a safe environment that is accessible to all, without compromising neighbouring land users. The focus should be on providing a well maintained, clean and litter free area with appropriate lighting and shelter, promoting a sense of community ownership. Facilities should be developed through extensive consultation with the local community at all stages of the process”</i>
Justification
Consultation with young people reinforced the findings in similar studies that highlight the importance to regular users of such spaces to ‘meet friends’, as somewhere to go and not specifically to use the equipment. Promoting a sense of ownership with the sites may also help to reduce the level of vandalism, as may the provision of more innovative and imaginative solutions. It is important that these sites are clean, safe and secure. This was a key element emerging from local consultation and is therefore reflected within this standard.  A recent CABE Space study shows that well designed, well maintained public spaces can contribute to reducing the incidence of vandalism and anti-social behaviour, and result in long term cost savings and this is reflected in the quality vision. Consideration should also be given to the achievement of the Green Flag criteria inherent within this vision. It is important that facilities for teenagers meet the needs of users and teenagers should be involved throughout the consultation and development phase of the site in order to promote community involvement and respect. This is in line with priorities identified in the City of York Council Play Strategy.

### Current provision – quality

8.13 The quality of existing provision for teenagers in the City is summarised in Table 8.3 overleaf. It is important to note that site assessments are conducted as a snapshot in time and may not always been reflective of the quality of the site throughout the year.

## SECTION 8 – PROVISION FOR TEENAGERS

- 8.14 The application of the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile score (calculated at 69.95% on the site assessment for teenagers) provides an indication of the desired level of quality at each site and enables a comparison at sites across the city. It highlights sites that currently meet the visionary standard, and those sites falling below and consequently where improvement is required.
- 8.15 The quality scores achieved by sites designed to meet the needs of young people are set out below in Table 8.3.

**Table 8.3 – Provision for teenagers quality scores**

Above upper quartile	69%+	(74%) - West Bank Park (Over 11s playground) – Urban West – Site ID 25
Median – Upper quartile	67%-69%	(69%) - Skatepark in Rowntree Park – York South – Site ID 827
Lower quartile - median	66%-67%	(66%) - Vesper Walk – Urban East – Site ID 66 (66%) - Acomb Moor by Ashmeade Close – Urban West – Site ID 313
Less than lower quartile	Below 66%	

- 8.16 It can be seen that overall, the quality of provision for young people is relatively consistent across the City, with the quality scores achieved ranging from 66% to 74%. Rowntree Park skate park was perceived to be an example of good practice throughout consultations.

### Setting provision standards – accessibility

- 8.17 The recommended local accessibility standard for provision for young people has been summarised overleaf. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix H

**Accessibility Standard**

<b>Recommended standard</b>
15 minutes walk (720 metres)
<b>Justification</b>
<p>The majority of people stated that walking is the most preferred method of travel to a young person's facility; therefore it is recommended that a walk time standard be adopted. A walk time is considered most appropriate as these facilities are for young people who do not always have access to a motorised vehicle and consequently a walk time enables access for all ages and users. Provision of localised facilities meets the needs of young people as identified within the IT young people survey.</p> <p>The recommended standard of 15 minutes walk time is in line with the 75% threshold level, however, it is important to note the implications in terms quantitative improvements. Setting a higher travel time threshold provides opportunities to invest in existing facilities and highlights areas in most need (priority for new provision). The standard also sits in line with the recommended accessibility standard for local parks, providing an opportunity to deliver facilities for young people in these parks. This will be explored further through the application of the local standards (once approved).</p> <p>While the 75% threshold was marginally lower in the rural area, indicating that residents in this area expect more local facilities – the delivery of facilities for teenagers in each of the rural villages would be unduly onerous and inappropriate.</p>

**Current provision – accessibility**

- 8.18 Accessibility at each site was also assessed through a detailed site visit and the completion of a detailed pro forma. This takes into account issues including whether the entrance to the site is easily accessible, the condition of the roads, paths and cycleways, whether there is disabled access, how accessible is the site by public transport, bicycle or walking, and whether there are clear and appropriate signs to the site.
- 8.19 The accessibility of existing provision for teenagers is summarised in Table 8.4 overleaf.

**Table 8.4 - Accessibility of provision for teenagers**

Above upper quartile	61%+	(63%) - Skatepark in Rowntree Park – York South – Site ID 827
Median – Upper quartile	60%-61%	(60%) - Vesper Walk – Urban East – Site ID 66 (60%) - West Bank Park (Over 11s playground) – Urban West – Site ID 25
Lower quartile - median	56%-60%	
Less than lower quartile	Below 56%	

8.20 Like the quality of provision for young people, the accessibility to sites for young people is relatively consistent across the City.

**Applying provision standards – identifying geographical areas**

8.21 In order to identify geographical areas of importance and those areas with required local needs the quantitative provision of young people in York should be considered alongside the recommended local standard for accessibility. The quantity standards enable the identification of areas that do not meet the minimum provision standards, while the accessibility standards will help determine where those deficiencies are of high importance. Applying the standards together is a much more meaningful method of analysis than applying the standards separately and therefore helps with the prioritisation of sites.

8.22 The results of the application of the local quantity standard are striking and it can be seen that all areas of the City currently have a shortfall and this is anticipated to increase by 2029.

8.23 Map 8.1 overleaf illustrates the findings of the application of the accessibility standard for young people. As may be expected, in light of the limited quantity of existing provision, significant deficiencies can be identified. Provision is particularly lacking in the Urban East analysis area and it is evident that there is very little for young people in the rural settlements.

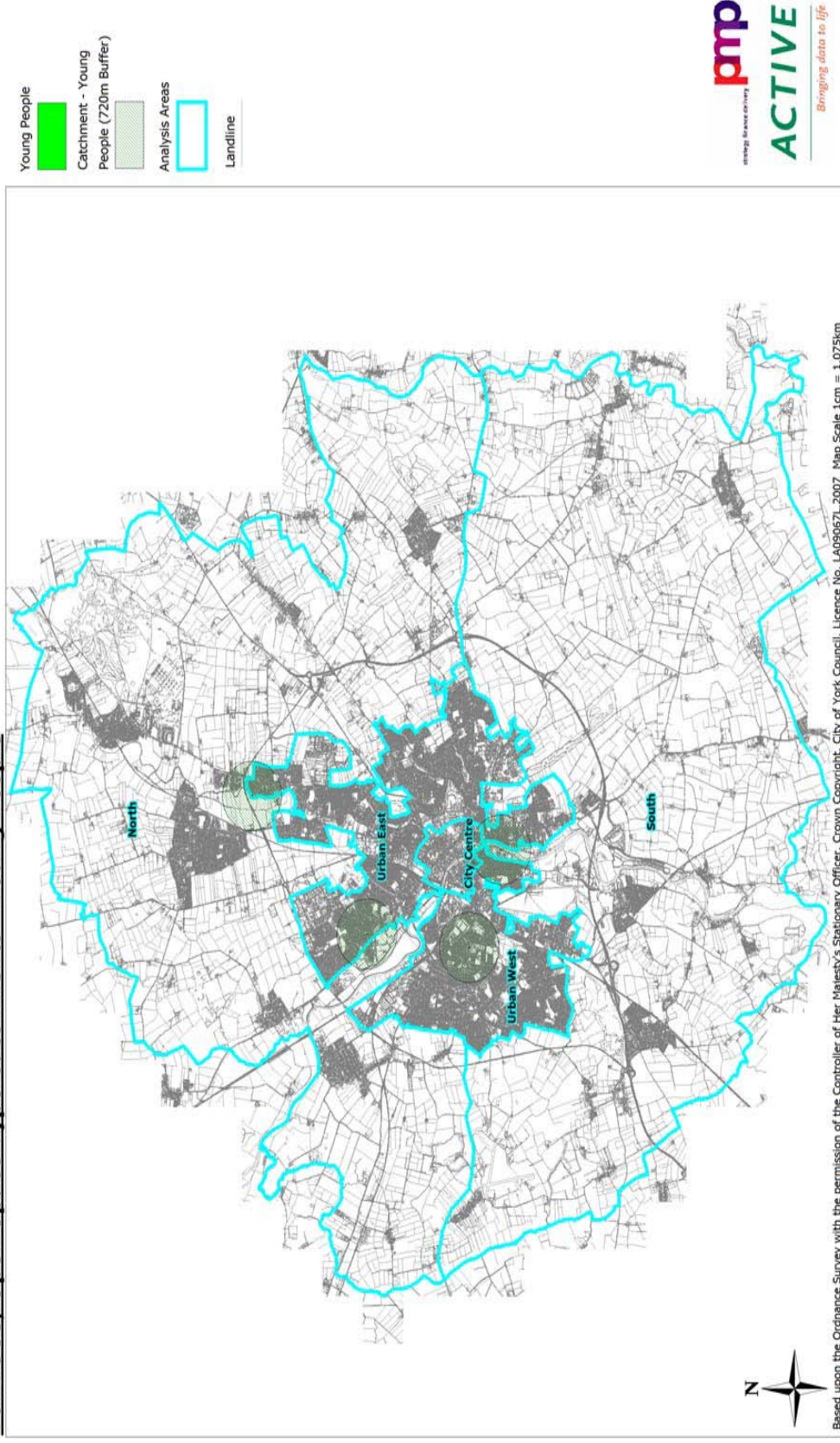
8.24 Similar to children, consideration of natural barriers is particularly important when analysing provision for young people, as main roads and rivers present safety issues and prevent usage of sites that may otherwise be used. Cost of use also represents a further barrier to use of facilities by young people.

8.25 The role of informal provision for young people was highlighted as being equally important to the delivery of equipped facilities.

**SECTION 8 – PROVISION FOR TEENAGERS**

**Map 8.1 - Provision of facilities for young people**

**York OSS, Open Space Type Catchments - Young People**



## SECTION 8 – PROVISION FOR TEENAGERS

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- 8.26 As can be seen, mapping the distribution of parks and amenity spaces in addition to facilities for young people highlights areas where there is limited provision of any typology. Future provision should be a priority in the areas that are currently not served young peoples facilities, parks or amenity green space.
- 8.27 While the quantity of provision was the overriding theme of consultations, the quality of provision was also considered to be important, and many existing facilities were criticised for the lack of innovative and exciting equipment. The location of the site was perceived to be important and the suitability of the site for the target user group was also highlighted to be a key issue. Involvement in the decision making process of young people was highlighted as instrumental in the development of a successful, well used and well respected site.

<b>TEEN1</b>	Promote and encourage the involvement of local young people to ensure that facilities meet the needs of their target audience. This is also a key theme of the City of York Council Play Strategy.
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- 8.28 The quality of existing facilities is consistent across the City although it compares unfavourably to some other typologies, where significantly higher site scores were allocated.

<b>TEEN2</b>	Any new facilities should meet the recommended quality standard.
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- 8.29 As illustrated, analysis of the distribution of facilities for young people highlights areas of deficiency. It is essential to consider the application of the quantity and accessibility standards in parallel.
- 8.30 Like the provision for children, the greatest deficiency in quantitative terms is located in the Urban East analysis area, where deficiencies currently equal 0.57 hectares. The low level of provision in this area is exacerbated by the fact that the two facilities on this side of the City (Vesper Walk and Rawcliffe Lane MUGA) were considered to be the two poorest quality facilities in the City.
- 8.31 Not surprisingly, given that there are only two facilities, analysis of the accessibility catchments highlights large clusters of residents outside of the area for provision for young people (see Figure 8.1 overleaf). These deficiencies are accentuated by the location of the two existing facilities at the far extremes of the Urban East analysis area.

**Figure 8.1 - Areas of deficiency to the east of the City**



- 8.32 It can be seen that there are similar levels of deficiency in the Urban West analysis area with only provision in Rowntree Park and West Bank Park. Areas outside of the catchment are highlighted in Figure 8.2 below.

**Figure 8.2 - Areas of deficiency to the west of the City**



- 8.33 The facility at Rowntree Park meets the needs of many of the residents of the City centre analysis area. There are no facilities catering for young people in any of the rural settlements.
- 8.34 In light of the extent of the identified deficiencies in both qualitative and quantitative terms, it is clear that new provision will be required City wide over the LDF period.
- 8.35 In the first instance, it will be important to ensure an equitable distribution of sites across the City area to ensure that all residents are within a reasonable distance of a facility. As highlighted within the recommended accessibility standards, there are opportunities to provide facilities by locating sites within City and local parks. Provision of facilities in all of these sites would ensure a strategic distribution of sites across the City (City Centre, Urban East and Urban West analysis areas).

## SECTION 8 – PROVISION FOR TEENAGERS

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<b>TEEN3</b>	Consider the provision of new facilities for young people in City and local parks to ensure a strategic network of facilities.
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- 8.36 While this would ensure an even distribution across the more central areas of the City, the outlying edges of the City, along with the rural areas would still remain undersupplied.
- 8.37 Provision for young people in these areas will be particularly important where residents do not have access to either parks or amenity spaces ie there are no informal opportunities for young people at all. These areas include Acomb, Fishergate/north Fulford and Heworth.

<b>TEEN4</b>	Seek opportunities for new provision in those areas of the City where there is an overall shortage of amenity green space, facilities for young people and parks. Such areas include Acomb and Heworth.
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- 8.38 As highlighted, provision of facilities for young people is sparse across the City and there is no provision in the rural settlements. Providing cost effective provision for young people in these areas is challenging. Effective public transport links/footpath/cycle route network to sites for young people will therefore be instrumental in these areas.

<b>TEEN5</b>	Enhance the quality of public transport/footpath and cycle route networks to maximize access to facilities for young people in smaller settlements.
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- 8.39 As illustrated in Section 6 (amenity green space) the overall provision of informal facilities within York North and York South analysis areas is good and most settlements have at least one site of varying size and quality. When considering the larger rural settlements, the only notable exception to this would be Wheldrake. Access to at least one area of informal open space is essential for young people.
- 8.40 Application of the quantity standard would suggest that based on the average size of existing facilities within York, facilities for young people should be provided when the population of a village exceeds 2000. This excludes the majority of villages. The application of the local standard should be treated as a starting point only and facilities will only be required where there is expressed demand.

<b>TEEN6</b>	Support Parish councils in the provision of facilities for young people where there is sufficient population and where local demand is expressed.
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- 8.41 Consideration could be given to the collocation of facilities at school sites, in order to maximise both use of the facility and resources.



## SECTION 8 – PROVISION FOR TEENAGERS

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<b>TEEN7</b>	Consider the appropriateness of co-location of facilities at school sites.
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- 8.42 In order to ensure appropriate access for all, the provision of a mobile facility that could be hired and transported to different settlements could also be considered. Provision for young people should also be considered in the context of wider services (such as youth clubs) that are discussed within the City of York Play Strategy.

### **Summary and recommendations**

- 8.43 A lack of facilities for young people, and the negative impact that this can generate for other open spaces was one of the key areas discussed throughout consultations. As a result, the recommended local standards address these issues, setting challenging criteria that can be used to identify priority areas.
- 8.44 In light of the existing low levels of provision, the application of both quantity and accessibility standards highlight significant areas of deficiency. The quality of existing sites is reasonably consistent across York.
- 8.45 In light of the extent of deficiencies, it is clear that new provision is required. It is suggested that the location of facilities within larger parks is considered within the first instance and then priority is given to areas devoid of any informal open space.
- 8.46 Effectively providing facilities in the York South and York North analysis areas is an important challenge and it will be essential to ensure that public transport links and footpath and cycle route networks are maximised.
- 8.47 Any new facilities should be developed in conjunction with their target user group.

### Outdoor sports facilities

#### Definition

- 9.1 PPG17 guidance considers the provision of both indoor and outdoor sports facilities. This study includes only outdoor sports facilities. Indoor facilities have been considered separately as part of the Councils' Sport and Recreation Strategy.
- 9.2 Outdoor sports facilities is a wide-ranging category of open space, which includes both natural and artificial surfaces for sport and recreation that are either publicly or privately owned. Examples include playing pitches, athletics tracks, bowling greens and golf courses with the primary purpose of participation in outdoor sports.
- 9.3 Outdoor sports facilities are often a focal point of a local community, functioning as a recreational and amenity resource in addition to a formal sports facility. This is particularly true of pitches, which often have a secondary function of a local dog walking and kickabout area. Likewise, amenity green space sites often provide informal sporting opportunities.

**Figure 9.1 – Shipton Road Rugby and Cricket Club**



#### Strategic context and consultation

- 9.4 Table 9.1 overleaf considers the strategic context for outdoor sports facilities across the City of York.

## SECTION 9 – OUTDOOR SPORT FACILITIES

**Table 9.1 - Strategic context – outdoor sports facilities**

Document reviewed	Summary	Links to open space, sport and recreation study
<p>Yorkshire and Humber Plan – Regional Spatial Strategy (Consultation Draft December 2005)</p>	<p>Policy ENV10 states that development plans will maintain and enhance a range of landscapes and related assets of regional, sub-regional and local importance including historic landscapes, parks and gardens.</p>	<p>The audit undertaken as part of this study will provide a detailed understanding of existing provision. The subsequent analysis and application of local standards will guide the protection and enhancement of future open spaces.</p>
<p>City of York Development Control Local Plan</p>	<p>On a local level, the Local Plan further emphasises the importance of amenity green space in York, particularly in new developments. Policy L1c seeks to ensure that all new housing developments and commercial proposals over 2500m<sup>2</sup> gross, contribute to the provision of amenity space to ensure that the needs of future occupiers are met. Commuted sums towards off site provision will be required in developments of less than 10 dwellings.</p> <p>For sites of 10 or more dwellings, an assessment of existing open space provision accessible to the proposed development site including its capacity to absorb additional usage will be undertaken. This is to ascertain the type of open space required and whether on-site or a commuted sum payment for off-site provision is more appropriate (this will include the cost of land purchase), based on individual site circumstances.</p> <p>The policy states that 1.7ha per 1000 population outdoor sports facilities will be required.</p> <p>Policy 1d identifies a number of locations as potential areas for recreation opportunity and development of new amenity green space.</p> <p>Policy L1b protects against the loss of leisure facilities, stating that development leading to the loss of leisure facilities will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) a need for the leisure facility no longer exists; or</li> <li>b) appropriate alternative facilities exist within the catchment area.</li> </ul> <p>Policy 1e encourages proposals for the development of golf courses, and/or driving ranges on the assumption that the proposal would not have an adverse effect on the landscape, the dominant features of which should be retained; and</p>	<p>This open space study will provide a detailed understanding of the quality and quantity of existing provision. The study will also provide new local standards specific to the provision of outdoor sports facilities within the City of York.</p> <p>This standard will complement the work undertaken as part of the playing pitch strategy and should be used to guide the provision of outdoor sports facilities in new development as well as inform the provision of new or improved sport and recreation facilities across the City of York.</p>

## SECTION 9 – OUTDOOR SPORT FACILITIES

Document reviewed	Summary	Links to open space, sport and recreation study
<p>City of York Council Playing Pitch Strategy</p>	<p>a) new buildings are kept to the minimum in line with the operational requirements of the activity; and  b) proposals would not lead to the loss of existing public rights of way and would exploit the opportunity to provide new public access to the countryside; and  c) the proposal does not involve development on the best and most versatile agricultural land (defined as grades 1, 2, or 3a); and  d) the proposal would not be visually intrusive due to the use of floodlighting or extensive fencing.</p> <p>The Playing Pitch Strategy considers the provision of pitches for football, cricket, rugby and hockey both on a local authority wide level and also within each of the four action zones.</p> <p>The study concluded that the City currently has a shortage of mini and junior soccer pitches (31 and 9 respectively) and junior rugby league pitches (16). In light of population growth, these deficiencies are expected to increase. The study also identified a number of other pitches in the city which are not currently available for community use, many of which are located on school sites.</p> <p>Statistical analysis indicates that the City has a surplus of cricket pitches and the bulk of these are at community accessible school sites.</p> <p>In addition to quantitative shortfalls, issues regarding the quality of both pitches and ancillary accommodation were also identified. The Playing Pitch Strategy also identifies a series of key actions within each of the four areas of the city.</p>	<p>This study will complement the Playing Pitch Strategy and provide a wider evidence base regarding other outdoor sports facilities.</p>

### **Consultation**

9.5 Consultation undertaken as part of the study highlighted the following key issues:

- of the five facility types surveyed, residents were dissatisfied with two (synthetic turf pitches 28.1% and tennis courts 28.1%), stating there was not enough provision. The remaining three areas; grass pitches 51.5%, bowling greens 47.1% and golf courses 36.7% indicated that the levels of provision were about right. This contrasts with the findings of the Playing Pitch Strategy, which suggest that there are insufficient pitches. This reflects the demand led nature of outdoor sports provision.
- the view that there are shortfalls of pitches was also reflected in workshops and drop in sessions, where it was suggested that there are particular shortfalls in provision for junior teams and of training facilities. It was also felt that community use of school sites would significantly advance the level and quality of provision across the City.
- the urban areas surrounding the City Centre have the lowest levels of provision per 1000 population
- consultation indicated that the quality of outdoor sports facilities in York is considered to be average by 50% of household survey respondents. A higher percentage of people stated that they were poor (28%) as opposed to being good (23%).
- the modal response across all geographical areas of the City analysis areas was average. It was perceived that facilities were of higher quality outside of the urban areas.
- when asked what prevented respondents from using outdoor sports facilities, many residents commented on the poor quality of the facilities and also the limited size of the specific sites, both of which have contributed to poor quality ratings
- the household survey reveals that York residents would expect to walk to grass pitches (66%), tennis courts (52%) and bowling greens (55%), whereas the majority of respondents would expect to drive to golf courses (69%). Synthetic turf pitches shows a fairly even distribution of results between walking (32%), driving (38%) and cycling (23%).

### **Setting provision standards – quantity**

9.6 The recommended local quantity standard for outdoor sports facilities has been summarised overleaf. Full justifications are provided within Appendix F.

## SECTION 9 - OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

**Quantity Standard (see appendices F and I – standards and justification, worksheet and calculator)**

Existing level of provision	Recommended standard
1.91 ha per 1000 population	1.92 ha per 1000 population
Justification	
<p>Golf courses have been removed from all figures due to their size and subsequent tendency to skew figures. Although many school sports sites are not accessible at the current time, they are identified as important resources throughout the consultations. School facilities have been included within the calculation, to ensure that they are protected. The Building Schools for the Future and extended schools programmes may offer opportunities to address future shortfalls of provision and ensure additional facilities are available for community use. This may be critical if participation targets are achieved, particularly in terms of providing facilities for peak day activity.</p> <p>In reflecting the demands placed on outdoor sports, and the nature of this standard, it has been recommended that it is set marginally above the current level of provision (1.91 ha) at 1.92 ha per 1,000 population. Additional consultation should inform where this demand is needed most, however results from the local consultation suggest there are demands being placed on STPs, tennis courts and bowling green. Based on the findings of the audit, the greatest requirement for facilities will be within the urban analysis areas.</p>	

### **Current quantity position**

- 9.7 The provision of outdoor sports facilities across the City is summarised in Table 9.2 overleaf.

## SECTION 9 - OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

**Table 9.2 – Provision of outdoor sports facilities in York (excluding golf courses)**

Analysis Areas	Current Provision	Number of sites	Smallest site (Hectares)	Largest site (Hectares)	Provision per 1000 population	Current Balance Against Local Standard (1.92 hectares per 1000 population)	LDF Population (2029)	Provision per 1000 population (2029)	Future Balanced Against Local Standard (1.92 hectares per 1000 population)
City Centre	0	0	0	0	0	-11.39	6,911	0	-13.27
Urban East	90.83	59	0.06	7.04	1.26	-47.50	83,954	1.08	-70.36
Urban West	58.6	30	0.05	6.68	1.11	-43.15	61,755	0.95	-59.97
York South	135.81	30	0.07	70.3	6.14	93.32	25,790	5.27	86.29
York North	85.08	32	0.1	11.47	2.10	7.33	47,190	1.80	-5.52
Overall	370.37	151	0.05	70.3	1.91	-1.39	225,600	1.64	-62.83

9.8 The key issues emerging from Table 9.2 above include:

- the current overall level of provision is equivalent to 370.32 hectares spread across 151 sites across the City, which equate to an average site size of 2.45 hectares
- there is limited provision for sports within the City Centre area (1 site) although the Urban East area contains the highest number of sites
- in light of the population growth, by 2029 it is likely that there will be deficiencies in most areas of the City. This will be particularly apparent to the east of the City Centre area (-70.36 against the local standard of 1.92 hectares per 1000 population).

### Setting provision standards – quality

9.9 The recommended local quality vision for outdoor sport facilities has been summarised overleaf. Full justification is provided in Appendix G.

**Quality Standard**

<b>Recommended standard</b>
<i><b>“A well-planned, clean and litter free sports facility that sits in harmony with its surroundings. The site should be well maintained to an appropriate match play standard, with good grass coverage and well-drained quality surfaces. Appropriate ancillary facilities should be provided at sites with consideration given to providing toilets, changing rooms, car parking, and meeting places. The site should be managed appropriately ensuring community safety and provide a local amenity that is close to people’s homes, encouraging residents to participate in physical activity”</b></i>
<b>Justification</b>
<p>The key issues identified with existing sites specifically vandalism and graffiti; poor maintenance (drainage) and poor quality changing facilities are reflected within the vision. Cleanliness and maintenance of facilities was perceived to be particularly important throughout consultations. The standard incorporates "appropriate management" to ensure that where appropriate, management issues are addressed. Community safety is also incorporated to reflect NPFA design guidelines. It is also important that outdoor sport facilities are well drained, and are fit for purpose. Given that general satisfaction regarding outdoor sports facilities is fairly low, it is important that careful consideration is giving to delivering aspirations for outdoor sports facilities. Some quantitative issues can also be addressed through improved quality of pitches (and subsequently increases the capacity of pitches for the match play). This increases the importance of meeting this quality vision.</p> <p>Given that the majority of sites will be of substantial size, it is important that sites are designed with careful consideration to their context – this is reflected in the quality vision. The importance of ensuring that sports facilities are accessible to all was also highlighted as a key issue, with many young people enjoying informal use of outdoor sports facilities.</p>

**Current provision – quality**

- 9.10 The quality of existing provision for outdoor sports facilities in the City is summarised in table 9.3 below. It is important to note that site assessments are conducted as snapshot in time and may not always been reflective of the quality of the site.

**Quality benchmarking**

- 9.11 The application of the upper percentile score (70% on the site assessment for outdoor sports facilities) provides an indication of the desired level of quality at each site and enables a comparison of sites across the City. It highlights sites, which currently meet the visionary standard, and those sites falling below and consequently where improvement is required. A full list of site scores can be found in the outdoor sports facilities section of appendix D.
- 9.12 The median score is 65.7% and the lower quartile score is 58%. A selection of assessment results have been included in the table below to illustrate the distribution of scores.



**Table 9.3 – Selection of quality assessments results for outdoor sports facilities**

Above upper quartile	70%+	(80%) - Upper Poppleton Sports Ground – York North – Site ID 651 (78%) – Heslington Sportsfield – York South – Site ID 555
Median – Upper quartile	65.7%-69%	(66%) – Huntington Sports Club – Urban East – Site ID 171 (66%) – Glen Gardens Bowling Green – Urban East – Site ID 89
Lower quartile - median	58%-65.7%	(60%) – Askham Lane Cricket Ground – Urban West – Site ID 84 (64%) – Hopgrove Playing Fields – York North – Site ID 87
Less than lower quartile	Below 58	(56%) – Howard Road Playing Field – York North – Site ID 745 (54%) – Glen Gardens Tennis Courts – Urban East – Site ID 91

9.13 The key issues emerging from Table 9.3 include:

- the range of quality of outdoor sports facilities is wide, with sites achieving contrasting high and low scores – this indicates that some residents may only be served by facilities of poor quality
- three sites scored extremely highly (including Clifton Park – site ID 117) and can be considered to be examples of good practice
- the aspiration should be for all outdoor sports facilities to fall within the upper quartile category and achieve the quality vision
- sites considered to be of high quality but with no or low/insignificant usage should be investigated further. Options to address this include re-designation to other open space types to increase its value.
- nine sites scored 50% or below. These sites should be prioritised for enhancement to help achieve the quality vision set for this type of open space.

**Setting provision standards – accessibility**

9.14 The recommended local accessibility standards for provision of outdoor sports facilities has been summarised overleaf. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix H.

**Accessibility Standard**

<b>Recommended standard</b>
<p>15-minute walk (720m) to local outdoor sports (eg grass pitches, tennis courts or bowling greens)</p> <p>20-minute drive (8km) to synthetic turf pitches and golf courses – The use of public transport (as opposed to private car) should be promoted.</p>
<b>Justification</b>
<p>There are several factors to consider in setting a standard for outdoor sports facilities. In particular, the range of facilities that lie within this typology makes it difficult to set a meaningful standard that can be applied across the board as per PPG17 requirements. For example, residents have significantly different expectations for synthetic turf pitches (for which they are willing to travel further) than they do for grass pitches (where there is a presumption of more localised provision).</p> <p>Given the findings from the local consultation, it is suggested that two standards are set, one for grass pitches, tennis courts and bowling greens, and a separate standard for STPs and golf courses to reflect local expectations regarding driving and walking to outdoor sport facilities. The 75% threshold level for those who expect to walk to grass pitches, tennis courts or bowling greens range is 15 minutes. As a consequence, a 15 minute walk time to these “local” outdoor sports facilities is considered an appropriate standard that will ensure quantitative improvements whilst also focusing on improving the quality of existing provision. This is in line with ensuring sustainable transport choices and accounts for the wide mix of facilities types within the standard to meet user expectations.</p> <p>The 75% threshold level for those who expect to drive to STPs and Golf Courses are both 20 minutes. Given the more specialist nature of these facilities, and the fact they are usually built in strategic locations to incorporate local demand, a 20-minute drive time standard is recommended. The use of public transport (as opposed to private car) should be promoted and sites should be easily accessed by public transport.</p> <p>The use of school facilities for community use will be particularly important in the rural areas if the recommended standard is to be delivered.</p>

**Current provision - accessibility**

- 9.15 Accessibility at each site was also assessed through a detailed site visit and the completion of a detailed pro forma that takes into account issues including whether the entrance to the site is easily accessible, the condition of the roads, paths and cycleways, where there is disabled access, how accessible is the site by public transport, bicycle or walking, and whether there are clear and appropriate signs to the site.
- 9.16 The accessibility of existing outdoor sports facilities in the City is summarised in Table 9.4 below. It is important to note that site assessments are conducted at a snapshot in time and may not always be reflective of the accessibility of the site throughout the year.
- 9.17 Based on the accessibility scores obtained, the upper quartile score was 70%. The median was 67%, and the low quartile was 53%.

**Table 9.4 – Selection of accessibility assessments results for outdoor sports facilities**

Above upper quartile	70%+	(80%) - Lakeside Primary School – Urban East – Site ID 484 (77%) - Upper Poppleton Sports Ground – York North – Site ID 651
Median – Upper quartile	67%-69%	(67%) – Heworth Cricket Club – York North – Site ID 88 (67%) – Bootham School – Urban East – Site ID 462
Lower quartile - median	53%-66%	(60%) – Wigginton Playing Field – York North – Site ID 93 (53%) – Strensall Park Playing Field – York North – Site ID 752
Less than lower quartile	Below 53	(50%) – New Earswick Sports Club – York North – Site ID 576 (37%) – Craven Sports Ground – Urban West – Site ID 85

9.18 The key issues emerging from Table 9.4 include:

- similar to the quality of outdoor sports facilities, there is a significant variation in the scores for accessibility to outdoor sports facilities
- those sites scoring below the average accessibility score should be prioritised for improvement. Seven sites scored below 45%. A space that is inaccessible is almost irrelevant to potential users and therefore may be of little value, irrespective of its quality.

#### **Applying provision standards – identifying geographical areas**

9.19 In order to identify geographical areas of importance and those areas with required local needs the quantitative provision of outdoor sport facilities across the City of York should be considered alongside the recommended local standard for accessibility. The quantity standards enable the identification of areas that do not meet the minimum provision standards, while the accessibility standards will help determine where those deficiencies are of high importance. Applying the standards together is a much more meaningful method of analysis than applying the standards separately and therefore helps with the prioritisation of sites.

9.20 Only provision in York South is sufficient to satisfy local need in quantitative terms (up to 2029). There are very significant quantitative shortfalls across the remainder of York. The application of standards provides a means of understanding the existing distribution of sports facilities and identifying areas where provision is insufficient to meet local need.

## ***SECTION 9 - OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES***

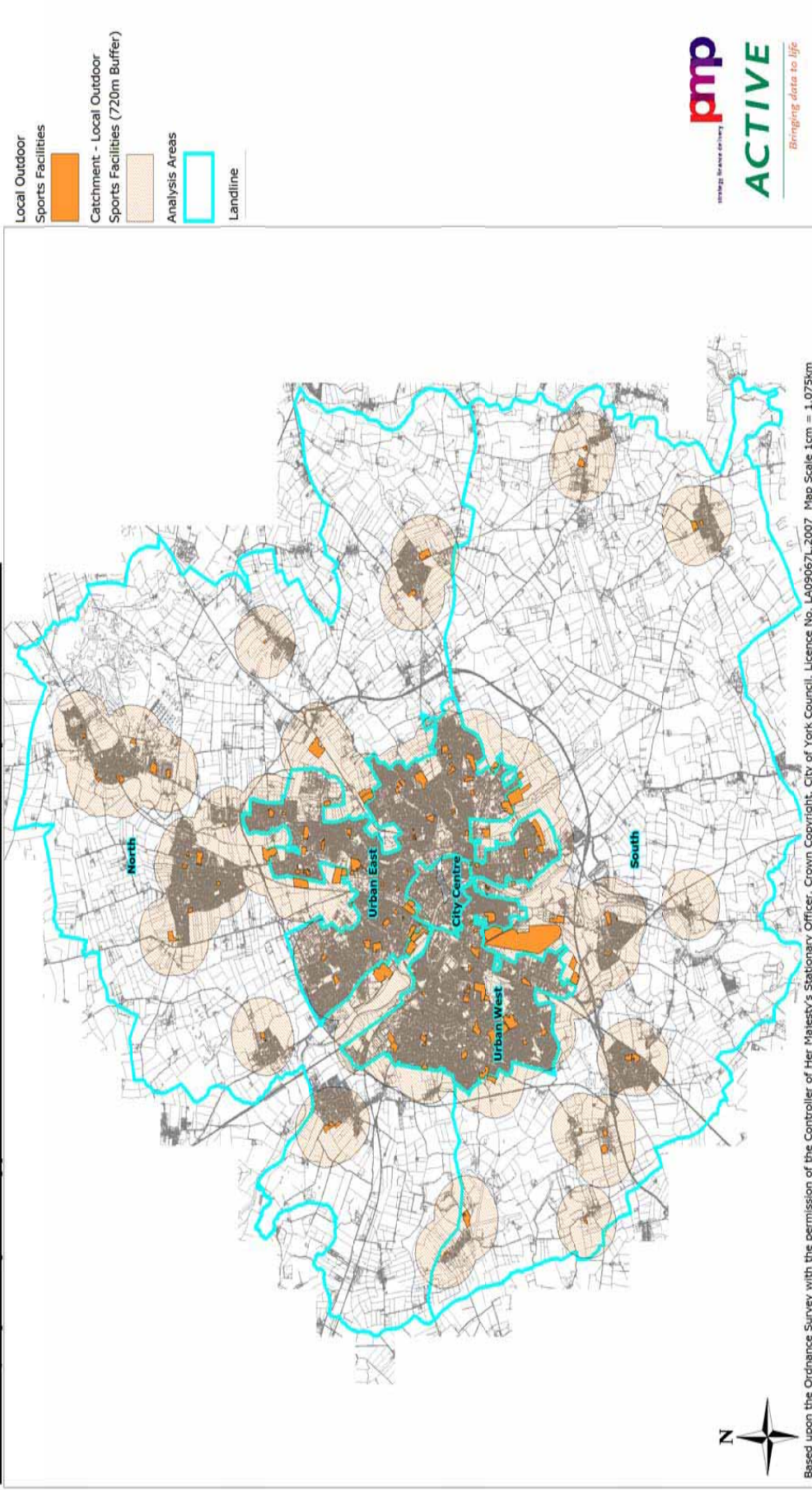
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- 9.21 Even where there is sufficient provision, in light of the variation in the type of facilities included within this typology, there may still be dissatisfaction with the level of provision of one or more types of facility.
- 9.22 The application of the local accessibility standards for outdoor sports facilities is set out in Map 9.1 overleaf. Map 9.2 breaks down the provision of different types of outdoor sports facility in more detail.

## SECTION 9 – OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

Map 9.1 - Provision of outdoor sports facilities

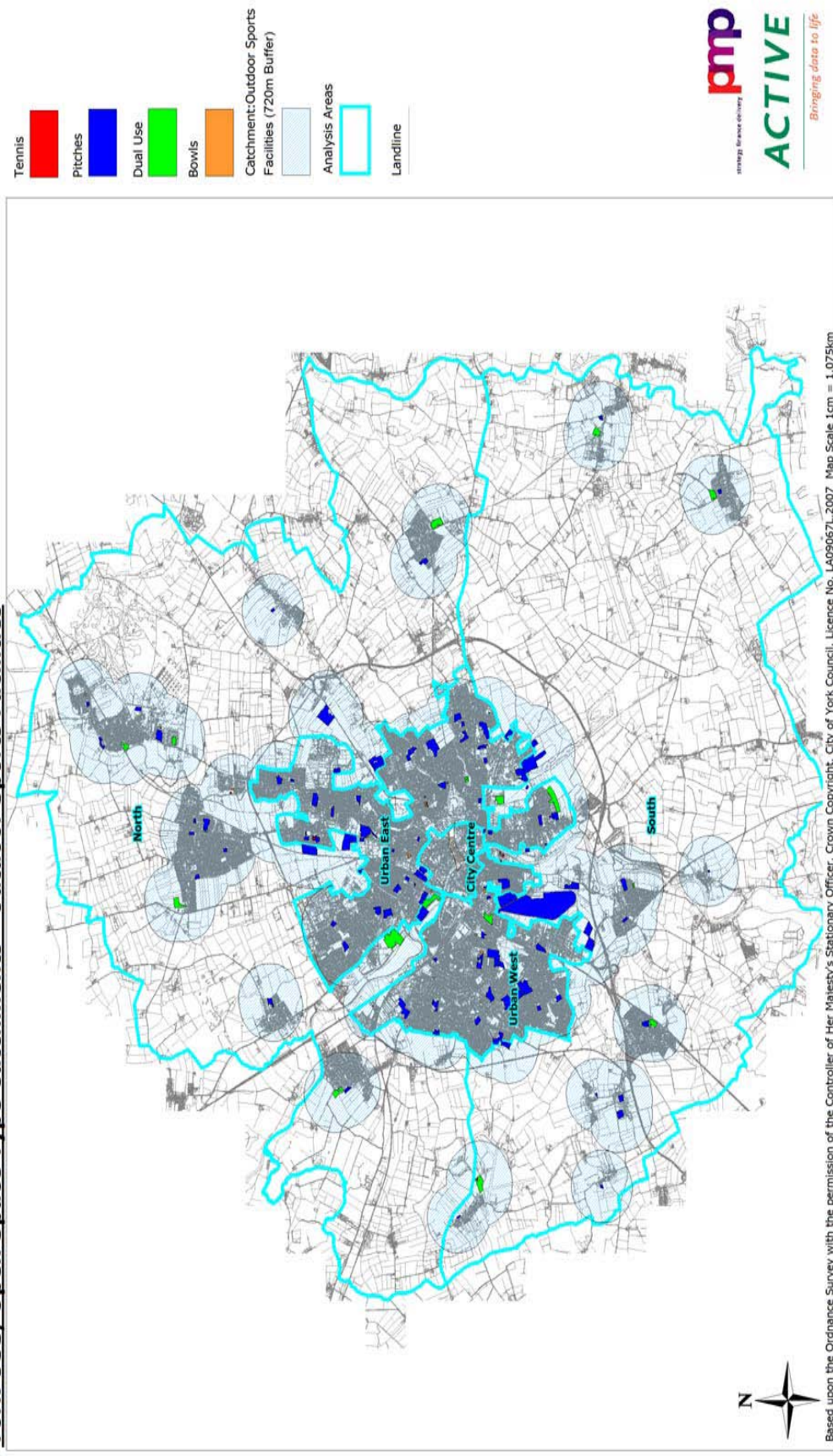
### York OSS, Open Space Type Catchments - Local Outdoor Sports Facilities



## SECTION 9 – OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

Map 9.2 - Distribution of outdoor sports facilities

### York OSS, Open Space Type Catchments - Outdoor Sports Facilities



## **SECTION 9 – OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES**

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- 9.23 The key issues arising from the accessibility mapping regarding the distribution of sites include:
- there is a good distribution of outdoor sport facilities across all areas. Indeed all residents within the City Centre, Urban East and Urban West are able to access at least one local facility (bowling green/tennis court/pitch) and the majority of those in the York North and York South settlements are also within the recommended distance.
  - all residents are also within the suggested 20 minute drivetime of a strategic site and it can be seen that these facilities are equitably distributed across the authority. Two synthetic facilities are located in York North and a further two in York South. Golf courses are also located sporadically within the green belt and the periphery of the urban area.
  - despite the equitable distribution of sites, school facilities have restricted accessibility and in some instances are not accessible at all. The importance of enhancing access to school facilities was raised throughout consultations and is also a key theme of the playing pitch strategy.
  - analysis of the spread of different outdoor sports facilities indicates that pitches and bowling greens are evenly distributed. Larger dual use facilities are also well distributed with facilities provided in the City Centre, Urban East and Urban West analysis areas and the larger settlements in York North and York South.
  - the application of the accessibility catchment for all facility types shows that all key settlements within York are within the recommended threshold of at least one type of outdoor sports facility.
- 9.24 Consultation highlighted that there are perceived to be locational deficiencies of tennis and bowls sites. There are shortfalls of pitches, supported by the playing pitch strategy.
- 9.25 The playing pitch strategy places an emphasis on improving the quality of existing facilities (in terms of both ancillary accommodation and pitch quality) and increasing access to existing facilities. Where possible, new facilities should be provided through the expansion of existing sites.
- 9.26 It is therefore clear that while the quantity of facilities is problematic in some areas, there is a real need to improve the quality of many existing sites. This was reflected through the significant variation in the quality of facilities, ranging from 44% - 80%. As there are few accessibility deficiencies, the initial focus should be on the enhancement of existing facilities. This may involve improvements to both the quantity and quality of facilities.
- 9.27 Consultation highlighted that the quality of the Knavesmire was perceived to be particularly problematic, given that the site also functions as amenity area for local residents. This highlights the conflict between formal sports provision and amenity areas.

## SECTION 9 – OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

<b>OSF1</b>	Strive to improve the quality of outdoor sports facilities, to achieve 70% (the score required to fall within the top quartile). This should ensure that all are fit for their intended purpose.
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- 9.28 In addition to the quality of outdoor sports facilities, consultation highlighted that the quantity of provision in some areas is problematic. In many cases, qualitative improvements will increase the capacity of sites and thus address quality issues.
- 9.29 The quantitative analysis has revealed a requirement for further provision up to 2029 in all of the areas with the exception of York South analysis area.
- 9.30 The good distribution of facilities illustrated on Map 9.1 suggests that on the whole, quantity issues relate to the capacity of existing facilities to accommodate the level of demand from local residents. Quantitative issues may relate to access to facilities (or to the specific type of facility required) rather than an overall shortfall.
- 9.31 This reinforces the need to maximise the number of sites that are accessible to local residents, in particular focusing on access to school facilities for local residents. This is particularly critical in the urban area (City Centre, Urban West and Urban East), given that there are deficiencies in provision and limited availability of land to address this. The extended schools and Building Schools for the Future programme will facilitate the use of school sites for community activity.

<b>OSF2</b>	In locations where there is expressed demand for further sporting provision, and where school facilities could be made available to the public but aren't currently, the Council should consider the feasibility of formalising community-use agreements at school sites prior to seeking delivery of new outdoor sport facilities. Opportunities to increase provision through the negotiation of community use sites were highlighted in all areas of the City in the playing pitch strategy.
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- 9.32 As highlighted, access to facilities is particularly problematic across York. In addition to maximising opportunities at school sites, it will be essential to ensure that residents are able to access sites through effective transport links, public rights of way and cycle routes. A linked network of sports facilities will be essential in the achievement of increased usage of sustainable means of transport.

<b>OSF3</b>	Enhance the quality of public transport links, cycle routes and public footpaths to facilitate access to sports facilities.
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- 9.33 In order to address locational quantitative issues, in the section that follows, consideration is given to the opportunities for new provision within the different areas of the City. However the emphasis should remain with qualitative improvements to existing facilities. This is supported by the application of the accessibility standards, which highlights that all residents are within the appropriate distance of at least one facility.
- 9.34 As illustrated, while there are significant quantitative issues in all areas with the exception of the York South, given that access to facilities is high, new facilities



## SECTION 9 – OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

should be demand led. Specific demand for increased pitch provision (over and above that which can be gained through the negotiation of community use agreements) has been expressed in:

- Bishopthorpe
- Fulford
- Heslington
- Skelton
- Strensall
- New Earswick
- Copmanthorpe
- Dringhouses

<b>OSF4</b>	In light of expressed demand, identify opportunities for new provision in the above areas.
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- 9.35 Consultation further highlighted that there is a perceived unmet demand for tennis facilities. Analysis of the current distribution of these sites across the local area indicates that only residents within the Urban East, Urban West and City Centre analysis area have access to a facility. Residents located in the York North and York South analysis area do not have access to a tennis or bowls facility.

<b>OSF5</b>	In light of the perceived unmet demand and poor distribution, consider locating publicly accessible tennis facilities in the larger rural settlements of the City.
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- 9.36 In light of the demand led nature of sports facilities, demand should be monitored on an ongoing basis.

<b>OSF6</b>	Monitor the demand for sports facilities on an ongoing basis.
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### Summary

- 9.37 Outdoor sports facilities is a wide-ranging category of open space which includes both natural and artificial surfaces for sport and recreation that are owned and managed by town and parish councils, sports associations, schools and individual sports clubs. Examples include playing pitches, athletics tracks, bowling greens and golf courses with the primary purpose of participation in outdoor sports.
- 9.38 This PPG17 study considers the provision of all the different types of outdoor sport facilities as one and does not break down the typology into more detailed assessments for each sport. City of York's playing pitch strategy considers current and future pitch provision in detail as a bespoke element of outdoor sport facilities. It is recommended that a similar approach be taken with other outdoor sports.
- 9.39 Consultation highlights issues with both the quantity and quality of facilities. Analysis of the existing provision supports this. There is significant variation in the quality of facilities across the City, with site assessment scores ranging significantly. Quality issues included vandalism, drainage and poor ancillary accommodation.

## **SECTION 9 – OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES**

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- 9.40 The distribution of outdoor sport facilities across the City is even. Despite this there is a large difference in the amount of land dedicated to these facilities, which is reflective of the type of facilities in each area. To some extent this determines the level of quantitative shortfall/surplus in an area. Analysis of the application of the accessibility standards highlights few deficiencies.
- 9.41 Improvements to the quality and accessibility of existing facilities should therefore be prioritised and new provision should be delivered through the expansion of existing sites and enhanced access to sites that do not currently permit community use.

## **Allotments**

### **Definition**

- 10.1 This includes all forms of allotments with a primary purpose of providing opportunities for people to grow their own produce as part of the long-term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion. This type of open space may also include urban farms.
- 10.2 Like other open space types, allotments can provide a number of wider benefits to the community as well as the primary use of growing produce. These include: -
- bringing together different cultural backgrounds
  - improving physical and mental health
  - providing a source of recreation
  - wider contribution to green and open space.

**Figure 10.1 - Allotments West of Dunnington**



- 10.3 The strategic context of allotments is set out in Table 10.1 overleaf.

## SECTION 10 – ALLOTMENTS

Table 10.1 – Strategic context - allotments

Document reviewed	Summary of key strategic drivers	Links to open space, sport and recreation study
<p>City of York Council Allotment Strategy</p>	<p>The purpose of this strategy is to create an efficient, flexible, effective Allotments Service that reflects best practice in allotment management. This will enable Council allotment sites to be used to their full potential, whilst improving the service offered to allotment tenants.</p> <p>To deliver the Strategy, 10 aims have been identified. The aims have been drawn up in accordance with 'Growing in the Community - A Good Practice Guide for the Management of Allotments' and the Green Flag Park Award scheme. The intention is to use current best practices for green spaces and open areas and incorporate them in the management of allotment sites. The aims are in turn supported by a range of Objectives. How each objective will be delivered is then set out in the 5-year Action Plan through a series of actions and initiatives to be undertake over the 5-year period.</p>	<p>The Allotment Strategy highlights the need to safeguard and improve existing provision of allotments. This follows through from community-needs and will be built on through the consultation within this study.</p>
<p>City of York Development Control Local Plan</p>	<p>The Local Plan states that allotments are an important resource within the community, especially for those people with small gardens, or who lack a garden altogether. In addition, they can have a significant amenity and nature conservation role.</p>	<p>The nature of this typology is very much demand led. Any enhancement to existing provision should be matched with sufficient demand in order to sustain a high quality site.</p>

### Consultation

10.4 Consultation specific to allotments was undertaken using a variety of research techniques and findings have been used to inform the local standards ensuring they are reflective of local needs. Key themes emerging from consultations include:

- in total, 36% of the population felt that the level of provision of allotments was about right within York
- attendees at the workshops felt that there was a distinct lack of provision across the City –with some sites containing waiting lists exceeding 2 – 3 years. Some plots have now been split into two in order to provide more residents with the opportunity to participate.
- 14% of people responding to the household survey would be interested in renting an allotment in York, indicating a demand for allotment provision
- the majority of residents in York perceive the quality of allotments to be average (55%). 35% feel the sites are good and 10% would rate them as poor.
- residents attending drop in sessions felt that the quality of allotments was varying. It was considered that regular inspections were essential to ensure that sites were of a good quality. New Lane Allotments, off Hamilton Drive were mentioned as an example of a well-maintained allotment. In contrast, there are perceived to be security concerns at Holgate and Glen Allotments, off Fourth Avenue allotments. At the workshops it was indicated that the quality of fencing, security and ancillary facilities at allotment sites is considered to be poor.
- some attendees at workshops commented on the use of allotments at school sites and the positive messages that this conveys. Despite this, there was still perceived to be a lack of awareness of the facilities provided.
- it was suggested at workshops that each allotment site should include the development of a community garden area, where all residents of the community can enjoy the benefits of allotments
- 66% of respondents to the household survey stated that walking would be the most popular travel method when visiting allotments. The majority of respondents would expect to travel up to 10 minutes to reach an allotment site (67%).

### Setting provision standards - quantity

10.5 The recommended local quantity standards for allotments has been summarised overleaf. Full justification for the local standards is provided within Appendix F.

**Quantity Standard**

Existing level of provision	Recommended standard
0.28 ha per 1000 population total	0.28 ha per 1000 population total
Justification	
<p>Allotment provision is unevenly spread, with the highest levels evident in the York South. More generally, consultation suggests that the current level of supply is becoming insufficient across York, with 14% of survey respondents interested in owning/managing an allotment and more generally 18% of respondents thinking that the level of provision is not enough. This is further exacerbated by waiting lists at a number of sites (at the current time, there are less than 50 available full plots on the 15 directly managed City of York sites and approximately 150 people on waiting lists. A similar number of people are waiting for plots at parish and independent sites). As a consequence, the local standard has been set at the existing level of provision. When applied in the context of the accessibility standard and existing waiting lists, this will highlight further areas for investigation and enable locational deficiencies to be pinpointed.</p>	

**Current quantity provision**

10.6 The provision of allotments in the City is summarised below in Table 10.2.

**Table 10.2 – Provision of allotments in York**

Analysis Areas	Number of sites	Smallest site	Largest site	Current Provision per 1000 population	Current Balance Against Local Standard (0.28 hectares per 1000 population)	LDF Population (2029)	Provision per 1000 population (2029)	Future Balanced Against Local Standard (0.28 hectares per 1000 population)
City Centre	0	0	0	0.00	-1.66	6,911	0.00	-1.94
Urban East	11	0.13	3.65	0.14	-10.01	83,954	0.12	-13.35
Urban West	6	0.67	4.04	0.18	-5.04	61,755	0.16	-7.49
York South	14	0.28	5.48	1.02	16.35	25,790	0.87	15.33
York North	11	0.12	2.9	0.27	-0.52	47,190	0.23	-2.39
Overall	42	0.12	5.48	0.28	-0.88	225,600	0.24	-9.84

## SECTION 10 – ALLOTMENTS

10.7 The key issues emerging from Table 10.2 include:

- the level of provision across the analysis areas varies substantially. The lowest level of provision per 1,000 population is found in the City Centre, where there is currently no provision. In contrast, York South has 0.87 hectares per 1,000 population.
- based on the local standard of 0.28 hectares per 1,000 population, all areas are predicted to have a quantitative deficiency by 2029 apart from York South. This analysis area contains the largest site in the City – Knavesmire Allotments that are 5.48 hectares in size.

**Table 10.3 – Provision of allotments by ward (wards with a deficiency only)**

Ward	Population	Provision of allotments (hectares)	Local Standard (ha/1000)	Per 1000 population current	TOTAL Requirement	Surplus / Deficiency
Clifton Ward	13437.22	1.03	0.28	0.08	3.76	-2.73
Haxby and Wigginton Ward	13941.52	1.20	0.28	0.09	3.90	-2.70
Hull Road Ward	9246.26	0.00	0.28	0.00	2.59	-2.59
Westfield Ward	15307.94	1.99	0.28	0.13	4.29	-2.30
Dringhouses and Woodthorpe Ward	12001.47	1.24	0.28	0.10	3.36	-2.12
Guildhall Ward	7465.00	0.00	0.28	0.00	2.09	-2.09
Strensall Ward	8791.16	0.49	0.28	0.06	2.46	-1.97
Acomb Ward	8642.44	0.77	0.28	0.09	2.42	-1.65
Wheldrake Ward	4359.80	0.00	0.28	0.00	1.22	-1.22
Osbalwick Ward	3521.16	0.00	0.28	0.00	0.99	-0.99
Heworth without Ward	4233.44	0.21	0.28	0.05	1.19	-0.98
Heslington Ward	4609.15	0.58	0.28	0.13	1.29	-0.71
Rural West York Ward	11501.64	3.02	0.28	0.26	3.22	-0.20

10.8 The key issues emerging from Table 10.3 include:

- a total of six wards have a shortfall greater than two hectares when assessed against the local quantity standards – with the largest shortfall being in Clifton ward
- four of the wards with a quantitative shortfall do not have any allotments at the current time – Hull Road, Guildhall, Wheldrake and Osbalwick.

**Setting provision standards - quality**

- 10.9 The recommended local quality vision for allotments is summarised below. Full justification for the local standard is provided in Appendix G.

**Quality Standard**

<b>Recommended standard</b>
<i><b>‘A well-kept, well managed and secure site that encourages sustainable development, bio-diversity, healthy living and education with appropriate ancillary facilities (eg provision of water and toilets) to meet local needs, clearly marked pathways and good quality soils. The site should be spacious providing appropriate access for all and should be promoted to ensure local community awareness’.</b></i>
Provision of allotments is demand driven. However, in times when the wider health agenda is important such sites need to be promoted. Good quality allotments with appropriate ancillary facilities that promote sustainable development will help attract more people to allotment sites.

**Current provision – quality**

- 10.10 The quality of existing allotments in the City is summarised in Table 10.3. It is important to note that site assessments are conducted as a snapshot in time and may not always been reflective of the quality of the site throughout the year.
- 10.11 The application of the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile standard (set at a score of 72% on the site assessment of allotments) provides an indication of the desired level of quality suggested at each site and enables a comparison at sites across the City. Sites falling below and consequently where improvement is required. A full list of site scores can be found in the provision of allotments section of Appendix D.
- 10.12 The 5 highest and 5 lowest scoring sites are highlighted in Table 10.4 overleaf. The median value is 67% and the lower quartile score is 60%.



**Table 10.4 – Selection of quality scores for allotments**

Above upper quartile	72%+	(86%) Pit Lane Allotments – York North - Site ID 759  (74%)– Clifton (Without) and Rawcliffe Allotments York North – Site ID 820
Median – Upper quartile	67%-72%	(70%) – Knavesmire Allotments – York South – Site ID 692  (68%) – Rufforth Allotments – York South – Site ID 777
Lower quartile - median	60%-67%	(66%) – Low Lane Allotments – York South – Site ID 719  (66%) – Hempland Lane, Heworth Allotments – Urban East - Site ID 711
Less than lower quartile	Below 60%	(48%) Cross Lane Allotments – York South – Site ID 732  (44%) Wigginton Allotments – York North – Site ID 695

10.13 The key issues arises from the table above are:

- there is a large variation in the quality of allotment sites across York that ranges from sites scoring 44% to 86%
- three of the top five quality allotment sites are located in the York North analysis area. However, it also contains two of the lowest five scoring sites.
- Pit Lane allotments are the highest scoring site – achieving 86%.

**Setting provision standards – accessibility**

10.14 The recommended local accessibility standards for allotments has been summarised overleaf. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix H.

**Accessibility Standard**

<b>Recommended standard</b>
<b>15 MINUTE WALK TIME (720 metres)</b>
<b>Justification</b>
<p>The provision of allotments is very much a demand led typology and this should be reflected in the application of the accessibility and quantity standards. As such any deficiencies that are highlighted through the application of the study should be assessed further to indicate if there is any demand in that area.</p> <p>However, as a guide a standard has been set at 15 minutes walk time. Residents responding to the household survey indicated that they would expect to walk to allotments and a walk time has therefore been used in line with living a healthy lifestyle and targets to reduce the reliance on private transport. Given the 75% threshold level is for a 15 minute work, setting a standard at this level is in accordance with the PPG17 Companion Guide. This standard should be applied consistently across the rural and urban areas.</p>

**Current provision – accessibility**

- 10.15 Accessibility at each site was also assessed through a detailed site visit and the completion of a detailed pro forma. This takes into account issues including whether the entrance to the site is easily accessible, the condition of the roads, paths and cycleways, whether there is disabled access, how accessible is the site by public transport, bicycle or walking, and whether there are clear and appropriate signs to the site.
- 10.16 The accessibility of existing provision is summarised in Table 10.5 overleaf.

**Table 10.5 – Selection of accessibility scores of allotments in York**

Above upper quartile	60%+	(76.7%) Knavesmire Allotments – York South – Site ID 692 (67.7%) Pit Lane Allotments – York North – Site ID 759
Median – Upper quartile	56.7%-60%	(60%) Rufforth Allotments – York North – Site ID 777 (60%) Albemarte Road Allotments – York South – Site ID 705
Lower quartile - median	51.65%-56.7%	(53.3%) Huntington Road Allotments – Urban East – Site ID 189 (53.3%) Low Lane Allotments – York South – Site ID 726
Less than lower quartile	Below 51.65%	(46.7%) Cross Lane Allotments – York South – Site ID 732 (43.3%) Wigginton Allotments – York North – Site ID 695

10.17 Key issues from the assessment of site specific accessibility in York include:

- the median score was 56.7%. The upper quartile score was 60%, and the lower quartile score was 51.65%. This illustrates that the accessibility of allotments sites is relatively consistent across the 42 sites.
- Knavesmire allotments obtained the highest accessibility score of all the sites assessed (76.7%), and can be considered to be an excellent example of an accessible allotment. Sites with high accessibility scores, especially sites achieving scores within the upper quartile percentile should be protected, specifically if they have high/significant usage.
- those sites scoring in the lower quartile should be prioritised for improvement. Three sites scored below 45%. These sites should be prioritised for enhancement. A space that is inaccessible is almost irrelevant to potential users and therefore may be of little value, irrespective of its quality.

#### **Applying provision standards – identifying geographical areas**

10.18 In order to identify geographical areas of importance and those areas with required local needs the quantitative provision of allotments should be considered alongside the recommended local standard for accessibility. The quantity standards enable the identification of areas that do not meet the minimum provision standards, while the accessibility standards will help determine where those deficiencies are of high importance. Applying the standards together is a much more meaningful method of analysis than applying the standards separately and therefore helps with the prioritisation of sites. Map 10.1 overleaf illustrates the distribution of allotments and the application of the accessibility standards.

## **SECTION 10 – ALLOTMENTS**

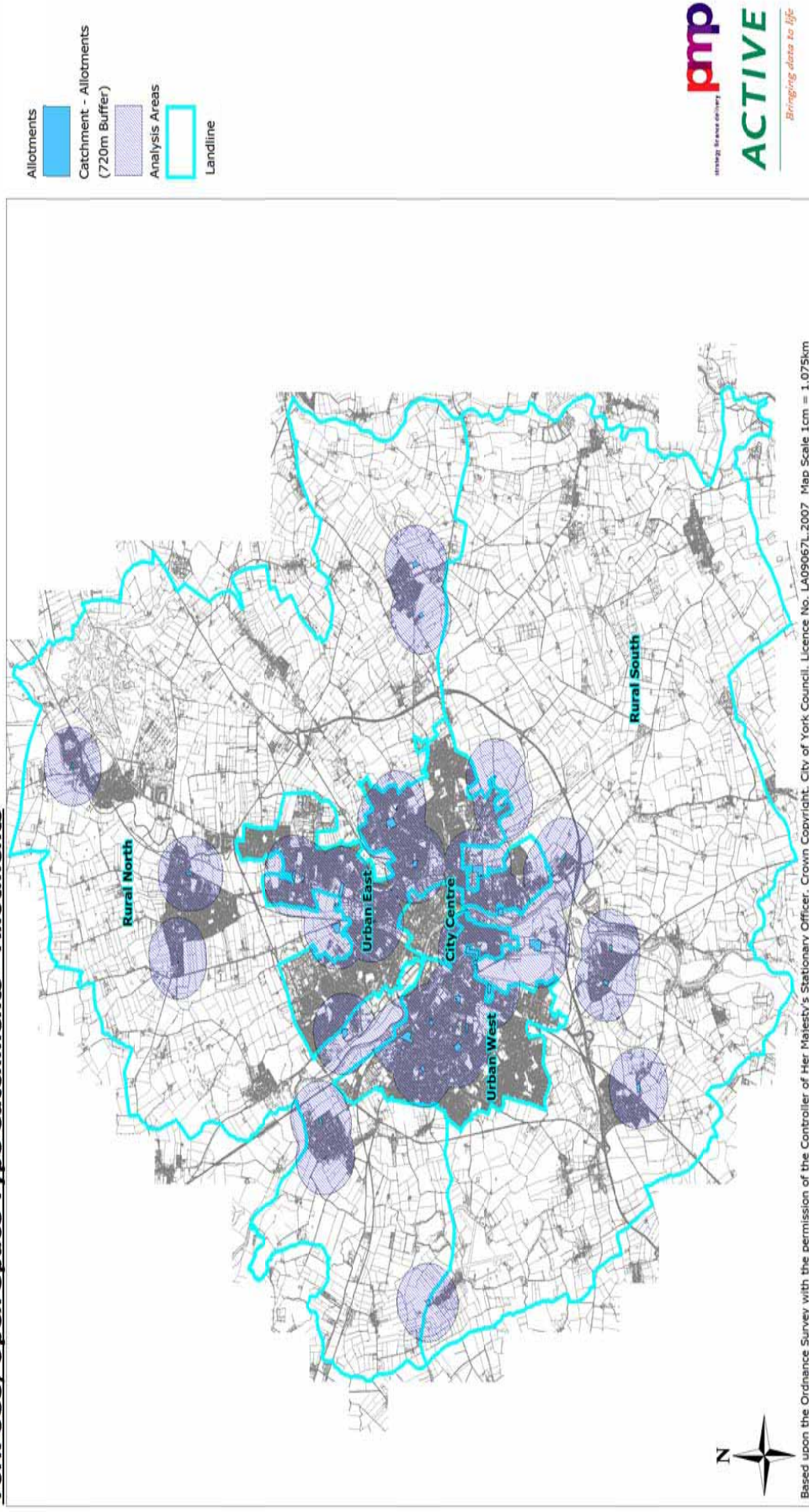
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10.19 Application of the quantity standards indicates all areas of the City are expected to have a shortfall in provision by 2029 with the exception of the York South analysis area, which will have sufficient provision to meet the recommended minimum standard. Deficiencies in six wards would exceed two hectares.

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### Map 10.1 - Provision of allotments

#### York OSS, Open Space Type Catchments - Allotments



## SECTION 10 - ALLOTMENTS

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10.20 The key issues arising from the accessibility mapping regarding the distribution of sites include:

- allotments are well distributed across the urban area (Urban East and Urban West), although there remain some deficiencies within these analysis areas. The City Centre analysis area is also devoid of allotment provision.
- although most allotments are located within the more urban areas of the City the majority of larger settlements in York North and York South have access to a site.

### Applying provision standards – identifying geographical areas

10.21 In light of the demand led nature of allotments, application of the quantity, quality and accessibility standards should be treated as a starting point only, with detailed research and monitoring undertaken prior to the development of new allotments.

<b>ALL1</b>	Regularly review, investigate and monitor demand for allotment provision and look for opportunities in areas where demand is increasing.
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10.22 The breakdown of provision in the different areas of the City has previously highlighted that only the York South analysis area contains sufficient open space to meet the recommended quantity standard. This indicates that there is likely to be insufficient capacity within the existing sites to adequately meet the needs of local residents.

10.23 The level of development in each area and the density of development that takes place will influence the likely future demand. Residents living in properties with no or limited garden space are potentially more likely to desire access to an allotment than those who have access to a vast array of garden space.

10.24 Consideration of demand will be particularly important where it is anticipated that there will be high population growth/new development, for example in the Guildhall, Micklegate and Acomb wards.

<b>ALL2</b>	Ensure that demand for allotments is routinely assessed when considering the implications of planning applications for new development.
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10.25 In light of the increasing demand for allotment provision, there are greater pressures at existing sites reinforced by the presence of waiting lists at a number of sites. While there are some sites with partially overlapping catchments, given the high level of demand for new plots all sites can be considered to be valuable to local residents.

<b>ALL3</b>	Consider the inclusion of a policy protecting allotments from development within the Local Development Framework.
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10.26 Parish Councils and volunteers play a key role in the delivery of allotments across the City of York. While Parishes both provide facilities and organise the administration of

## SECTION 10 - ALLOTMENTS

allotments, volunteers are instrumental in their dedication to the day to day running of the site.

<b>ALL4</b>	Continue to work in partnership and provide support and advice to providers of allotments and volunteers and promote the value of allotments to local residents.
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- 10.27 As highlighted, analysis of the quantity of allotment provision indicates that the only area where provision meets requirements is York South. This is a predominantly rural area and in light of the relatively dispersed population, it may be expected that despite the quantitative surplus, some residents are outside of the recommended catchment area. In order to meet the recommended accessibility standards, in rural areas it is often necessary to significantly exceed the recommended minimum quantity of provision. One of the areas outside of the recommended catchment area for provision is illustrated in Figure 10.2 below.

**Figure 10.2 - Deficiencies in Wheldrake**



- 10.28 While it is perhaps unrealistic to expect that allotments are provided in all small settlements, residents in the larger settlement of Wheldrake do not have access to a site. This is reinforced by the application of the quantity standards at a ward level, which highlights that the existing level of provision is below the suggested level of provision in this area (-1.22 ha).

<b>ALL5</b>	Investigate the potential demand for allotments in Wheldrake.
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- 10.29 Additionally, residents living to the west of Copmanthorpe are also outside of the recommended catchment of a site. This is due to the location of the only site in the vicinity (Temple Lane Allotments) to the far east of the village. Residents of Bishopthorpe are well served in terms of the provision for allotments, with two sites owned by Bishopthorpe Parish Council.
- 10.30 In contrast to the surplus of provision in the York South analysis area, there are shortfalls of provision in York North analysis area in quantitative terms. This is also reflected through the application of the accessibility standards, although as with the

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York South area, it must be noted that the dispersed population means that it is untenable to ensure that all residents are within the appropriate catchment. Despite this, it can be seen that some residents within Haxby and Wigginton have only limited access to allotments (only Haxby Allotments containing 29 plots is located in this area) and this is further reflected by the application of quantity standards at ward level. The deficiency across the York North area is equivalent to 2.39 hectares (which takes into account both surpluses and deficiencies), within the Haxby and Wigginton ward there is a deficiency of 2.7 hectares. The deficient area in Haxby is highlighted in Figure 10.3 below.

**Figure 10.3 - Deficiencies in Haxby**



<b>ALL6</b>	Investigate the potential demand for additional allotments in Haxby.
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10.31 The largest quantitative deficiency is found in the Urban East analysis area (-13.35 ha). Despite this, the existing sites in this area are evenly distributed and there are few areas where residents are outside of the recommended catchment area for allotments. Localised provision is of particular importance in the Urban East analysis area in light of the presence of a significant road and river network that restricts access on foot. These are highlighted overleaf in Figure 10.4.



**Figure 10.4 - Deficiencies to the east of the City**



10.32 Analysis of the application of the quantity standard on a ward basis highlights that there are deficiencies in Heworth Without, Osbaldwick, Heslington and Hull Road. The shortfalls in Osbaldwick are of particular importance in light of the application of the accessibility catchments, which highlights that residents are outside of the recommended distance catchment in this area. Shortfalls in the other areas suggest that there may be capacity issues at existing sites in light of the population they are expected to serve. There are few vacancies remaining at existing sites. Furthermore, the A1036 acts as a physical barrier to residents in the Heworth area, therefore restricting access.

<b>ALL7</b>	Further investigate the potential demand for allotments in Osbaldwick.
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10.33 The shortfalls in the Urban West analysis area are perhaps of greater significance in light of the anticipated growth in this area. While the growth provides challenges in terms of the likely influx of additional residents, regeneration schemes will provide an opportunity to locate new sites to meet local needs. There will be particular growth in the Acomb area as part of the York North West regeneration site. The York College Tadcaster Road site is also likely to increase the population within the Dringhouses and Woodthorpe area. Furthermore, the A59 bisects this area, reducing the level of access to allotments for local residents.

10.34 Analysis of the existing distribution of sites highlights that in addition to the quantitative shortfalls there are large sectors of the community outside of the catchment area for local allotment provision, particularly in Dringhouses and the eastern edge of Westfield.

<b>ALL8</b>	Investigate the demand for the provision of allotments to the west of York, focusing in Dringhouses, Acomb and Westfield.
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10.35 The City Centre area will see significant growth in the number of residents over the coming years and will also be the focus of a regeneration scheme, to be outlined in the York Northwest AAP. The City is enclosed by the ring road and this barrier will therefore inhibit access to allotments outside of this area.

10.36 Figure 10.5 below highlights deficiencies across the City Centre area, further reinforced by the application of the quantity standard, suggesting that the Guildhall ward is one of the areas currently deficient in provision (-2.09 ha). In light of the anticipated density of the housing in the City Centre area, provision of allotments should be considered. However, it is recognised that issues such as land value, brownfield land and archaeological remains may preclude the use of land in this area for allotment use.

**Figure 10.5 - Deficiencies of allotments across the City centre area**



<b>ALL9</b>	Monitor the demand for allotment provision within the City centre as the population in the area increases.
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10.37 Allotments can play a key role in increasing levels of physical activity, providing an alternative to formal sporting activities. In light of the recognised need for additional provision of allotments across York, innovative approaches to the provision of allotments should be considered, including links and partnerships with schools. The value of allotments to local residents as a social opportunity and alternative option for exercise was emphasised through consultation.

10.38 In addition to considering the demand for new provision, some existing sites may benefit from investment. The allotment strategy targets the provision of well maintained, safe and secure sites. These features also emerged as central to the aspirations of current and future allotment holders.

<b>ALL10</b>	Use the quality assessment scores as a baseline for identifying sites that may benefit from future investment and strive to achieve the quality standard set.
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**Summary and recommendations**

10.39 There are currently 42 allotment sites across York equating to 0.28 hectares per 1000. Several sites have waiting lists and it is evident that demand is increasing both nationally and locally.

10.40 Allotment users highlight increasing levels of demand and growing waiting lists. It was also indicated that existing provision is of varying quality. The work of Parish

## **SECTION 10 - ALLOTMENTS**

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Councils, allotment associations and volunteers is of particular importance in the delivery of the allotment service in York.

- 10.41 The majority of residents indicated that they would expect to walk to an allotment and hence an accessibility standard equivalent to a 15 minute walk has been set. This reflects the expectation for local provision and highlights areas of deficiency.
- 10.42 Toilets, security and good access were perceived to be key for high quality allotments and ancillary accommodation and safety were perceived to be the key areas where sites could be improved.
- 10.43 Application of the recommended local standards highlights a number of deficiencies, particularly focusing in areas of potential growth (the City Centre and York North West Regeneration Area).

## **Cemeteries and churchyards and green corridors**

- 11.1 Cemeteries and Churchyards and Green Corridors are all open space typologies recommended by the PPG17 Companion Guide for inclusion within a local audit and needs assessment.
- 11.2 For each of these typologies, it is not possible to produce a full range of quantity, quality and accessibility standards and as a consequence they have been included within the same section of this report.
- 11.3 The explanations as to why some local standards cannot be produced for these typologies are discussed in more detail below.

### **Cemeteries and churchyards - introduction**

- 11.4 Many historic churchyards provide important places for quiet contemplation, especially in busy urban areas, and often support biodiversity and interesting geological features. As such many can also be viewed as amenity green spaces. Unfortunately, many are also run-down and therefore it may be desirable to enhance them. As churchyards can only exist where there is a church, **the only form of provision standard that will be required is a qualitative one.**
- 11.5 For Cemeteries, PPG17 Annex states "every individual cemetery has a finite capacity and therefore there is steady need for more of them. Indeed, many areas face a shortage of ground for burials. The need for graves, for all religious faiths, can be calculated from population estimates, coupled with details of the average proportion of deaths which result in a burial, and converted into a quantitative population-based provision standard."

**Figure 11.1 - Church to west of River Foss**



### **Cemeteries and churchyards - consultation**

- 11.6 Consultation on the provision of churchyards and cemeteries in York was undertaken through a variety of methods. The emerging findings, which contribute to the formation of the local quality standard and value assessment include:

## SECTION 11 – CEMETERIES AND CHURCHYARDS AND GREEN CORRIDORS

- 55% of respondents to the household survey do not use churchyards and cemeteries. However, 11% of respondents use them more than once a month and they are the most frequently used open space for 3% of residents.
- 41% of respondents to the household survey believe that the quality of churchyards and cemeteries is good, with a further 51% thinking that the quality is average. This means that only 8% of respondents think that sites are poor.
- for those residents who visit cemeteries and churchyards more regularly than any other typologies, the majority currently drive to facilities and travel between 5 and 10 minutes. The most commonly mentioned ideal features are well kept grass, clean/litter free and flowers/trees.

### Cemeteries and churchyards – current position

11.7 There are currently 48 churchyards and cemeteries in York.

**Table 11.1 - Current provision of cemeteries and churchyards**

Analysis Areas	Current Provision	Number of sites	Smallest site (Hectares)	Largest site (Hectares)
City Centre	0.7	5	0.09	0.23
Urban East	1.18	5	0.13	0.33
Urban West	0.2	2	0.08	0.12
York South	29.38	16	0.1	9.6
York North	10.71	19	0.11	2.47
Overall	42.17	47	0.08	9.6

- the overall level of provision equals 42.17 hectares, producing an average site of 0.89 hectares per cemetery and/or churchyard. The size of sites varies significantly across the analysis areas, ranging from 0.08 hectares to 9.6 hectares.
  - current provision is predominantly located in York South and York North – which contain 73% of sites.
- 11.8 The quality of each site has been assessed through a detailed site visit and the completion of a detailed pro forma. It is important to note that the quality score represents a snapshot in time and records only the quality of the site at the time of the site visit. The median score was 78%. The upper quartile level is equivalent to a score of 82.5%, and the lower quartile level is 70%.
- 11.9 The quality of cemeteries across the City is set out in Table 11.2 overleaf.

**Table 11.2 – Selection of quality scores for cemeteries and churchyards in York**

Above upper quartile	82.5%+	(92%) St Everilda’s Church, Nether Poppleton – York North – Site ID 780  (92%) St Mary’s Church, Strensall – York North – Site ID 740
Median – Upper quartile	78%-82.5%	(80%) Fordlands Road Cemetery, Fulford – York South – Site ID 731  (80%) All Saints Church, Rufforth – York South – Site ID 775
Lower quartile - median	70%-78%	(70%) St Wilfreds Garrisons Church, Strensall – York North – Site ID 749  (76%) Holy Trinity Church, Stockton On The Forest – York North – Site ID 754
Less than lower quartile	Below 70%	(56%) York Cemetery, Fishergate – York South – Site ID 718  (52%) Haxby and Wigginton Cemetery, Wigginton – York North – Site ID 735

11.10 The key issues arises from the table above are:

- there is a large variation in the quality of cemeteries and churchyard sites across York that ranges from sites scoring 52% to 92%
- four of the top five quality cemetery and churchyard sites are located in York North analysis area. However, it also contains two of the bottom five scoring sites.
- St Everilda’s Church, Nether Poppleton and St Mary’s Church, Strensall are the highest scoring sites – each achieving 92%.

### **Cemeteries and churchyards - setting provision standards**

#### **Quantity standard**

11.11 No quantity standards have been set for cemeteries and churchyards. PPG17 Annex states: "*many historic churchyards provide important places for quiet contemplation, especially in busy urban areas, and often support biodiversity and interesting geological features. As such many can also be viewed as amenity green spaces. Unfortunately, many are also run-down and therefore it may be desirable to enhance them. As churchyards can only exist where there is a church, the only form of provision standard which will be required is a qualitative one.*"

11.12 For cemeteries, PPG 17 Annex states "*every individual cemetery has a finite capacity and therefore there is steady need for more of them. Indeed, many areas face a shortage of ground for burials. The need for graves, for all religious faiths, can be calculated from population estimates, coupled with details of the average proportion*

*of deaths which result in a burial, and converted into a quantitative population-based provision standard." This does not relate to a quantitative hectare per 1,000 population requirement.*

- 11.13 In setting local standards for churchyards and cemeteries, it is only appropriate to set a quality vision and take into account any national or local standards. Full indication of consultation and justifications for the recommended local standards are provided within Appendix G. The recommended local quality standard has been summarised below.

**Quality Standard (see Appendix G)**

<b>Recommended standard – CEMETERIES AND CHURCHYARDS</b>
<i><b>“A clean and well-maintained site providing long-term burial capacity, an area of quiet contemplation and a sanctuary for wildlife. Sites should have clear pathways, varied vegetation and landscaping and provide appropriate ancillary accommodation (eg facilities for flowers litter bins and seating.) Access to sites should be enhanced by parking facilities and by public transport routes where possible, particularly in urban areas”</b></i>
Cemeteries and churchyards can provide an important open space function - particularly in rural areas where they may be the only open space in the village. However, it is essential that sites are regularly maintained with clear footpaths so as to increase the ease of access and safety for those who visit the sites. The wildlife benefits of these sites were widely recognised across consultations.

**Accessibility standards**

- 11.14 With regards to accessibility there are no definitive national or local standards for cemeteries and churchyards. There is no realistic requirement to set catchments for such typologies as they cannot easily be influenced through planning policy and implementation.

**Applying provision standards – identifying geographical areas**

- 11.15 Given that it is not appropriate to set any local quantity or accessibility standards it is also not appropriate to state areas of deficiency or need or examine the spatial analysis of these sites.
- 11.16 It is however important to consider the quality of the provision of cemeteries and churchyards and the value of the current provision and to strive to achieve the quality criteria set for all churchyards and cemetery sites.
- 11.17 Sites scoring well in terms of quality should be considered examples of good practice.

<b>CC1</b>	Stakeholders should recognise and promote the nature conservation value of closed cemeteries and churchyards and consider working towards developing more awareness of ecological management of cemeteries and churchyards.
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11.18 In areas of limited open space provision (or where churchyards are the only open space type), churchyard and cemetery sites are of particular importance. In these areas, enhancement is particularly important to ensure local residents value them. This is particularly the case in the York North and York South analysis areas where the provision of other types of open space is limited.

<b>CC2</b>	In areas of limited open space provision, churchyard and cemetery sites are of particular importance. Enhancements to the accessibility and quality should be prioritised in these areas.
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**Summary**

11.19 Cemeteries and churchyards can be a significant open space provider in some areas, particularly in York North and York South. In other areas they can represent a relatively minor resource in terms of the land required, but are important for nature conservation.

11.20 Local standards for accessibility and quantity have not been set. Despite this, it remains important to consider the future delivery of cemeteries and churchyards anticipating future demand as well as assessing the current level of provision.

11.21 The quality vision set within the local standards should guide the future development and improvement of cemeteries and churchyards across the City. The quality of cemeteries and churchyards in the City is currently good. To an extent, this is reflected in the findings of the household survey, with 42% of respondents thinking that the quality of sites is good, however 51% of respondents also felt that the quality was average.

11.22 In some instances cemeteries and churchyards are the only type of open space within a village, making them a particularly valuable element of the rural green space network. The enhancement to the accessibility and quality should be prioritised in these areas.

11.23 The wider benefits of churchyards are key and it is wrong to place a value on churchyards and cemeteries focusing solely on quality and accessibility. In addition to offering a functional value, many cemeteries and churchyards have wider benefits including heritage, cultural and landscape values.

**Green corridors – introduction**

11.24 The Green Corridors typology encompasses towpaths along canals and riverbanks, cycleways, rights of way and disused railway lines. Green corridors have a primary purpose of providing opportunities for walking, cycling and horse riding whether for leisure purposes or travel and opportunities for wildlife migration.

11.25 In addition to providing recreational routes in their own right, green corridors play an important role in linking open spaces together, providing a green infrastructure network across the City. Green corridors are an important resource linking the urban areas with accessible countryside.



11.26 The Local Plan (2005) states in policy NE8 that planning permission will not be granted for development, which would destroy or impair the integrity of green corridors and stepping stones. Conversely, development that ensures the continuation and enhancement of green corridors for wildlife will be favoured.

### **Green corridors - consultation**

11.27 Consultation on the provision of green corridors in York was undertaken through a variety of methods. The emerging findings, which contribute to the formation of the local quality standard and value assessment include:

- 69% of respondents to the household survey use green corridors more than once a month – illustrating their importance to local residents. Furthermore, 16% of respondents use green corridors more regularly than any other type of open space.
- 37% of respondents to the household survey believe that the quality of green corridors is good, with a further 50% thinking that the quality is average. This means that only 13% of respondents think that sites are poor.
- other consultation highlighted concerns that the sites are often frequented by young people, (relating back to a lack of provision for this age group), this can act as a barrier for people wanting to access green corridors who view their presence of young people as intimidating. Addressing this problem may further increase the current rate of usage. This point also relates to the problems experienced by residents who rated green corridors as their most frequently used open space.
- for those residents who use green corridors more regularly than any other typologies, the majority currently walk to facilities and travel less than five minutes. The most commonly mentioned ideal features are clean and litter free, natural features and footpaths.

### **Green corridors - setting provision standards**

#### **Quantity standard**

11.28 The linear nature of green corridors means it is inappropriate to measure the area and assess these spaces. Nevertheless their importance within the City should not be undermined as they provide an essential linkage between open spaces and increase the accessibility of other sites.

11.29 The Annex A of PPG17 – Open Space Typology states:

*“the need for Green Corridors arises from the need to promote environmentally sustainable forms of transport such as walking and cycling within urban areas. This means that **there is no sensible way of stating a provision standard**, just as there is no way of having a standard for the proportion of land in an area which it will be desirable to allocate for roads”.*

11.30 It is therefore recommended that no provision standard should be set. PPG17 goes onto to state that:

*“Instead planning policies should promote the use of green corridors to link housing areas to the Sustrans national cycle network, town and city centres, places of employment and community facilities such as schools, shops, community centres and sports facilities. In this sense green corridors are demand-led. However, planning authorities should also take opportunities to use established linear routes, such as disused railway lines, roads or canal and river banks, as green corridors, and supplement them by proposals to ‘plug in’ access to them from as wide an area as possible”.*

**Accessibility standard**

- 11.31 There is no requirement to set catchments for green corridors as they cannot be easily influenced through planning policy and implementation.

**Quality standard**

- 11.32 In setting local standards for green corridors, it is only appropriate to set a quality vision and take into account any national or local standards. Full indication of consultation and justifications for the recommended local standards are provided within Appendix G. The recommended local standard has been summarised below.

**Quality Standard (see appendix G)**

<b>Recommended standard – GREEN CORRIDORS</b>
<i>“Linear open spaces should be clean and litter-free, safe and convenient corridors with clear pathways, linking major residential areas, open spaces, urban centres, leisure facilities and employment areas, that promote sustainable methods of transport. Appropriate ancillary facilities such as litter, dog bins and seating in appropriate places with signage to and within the sites should be featured to encourage access for all. The corridor should also seek to encourage biodiversity and wildlife habitats, enabling the movement of both wildlife and people between open spaces, linking in specifically with natural areas of open space.”</i>
It is important that any new provision meets this local quality standard that incorporates all Council visions and public aspirations. While green corridors have an important recreational role, it is important to ensure that there is a balance between recreational and wildlife/biodiversity to maximise the role these assets play. This was recognised by local residents, particularly when considering the value of local linkages between natural and semi natural areas. It is important that green corridors are promoted, as a lack of awareness was raised as a key barrier to the usage of facilities. If sites are not maintained properly, it is likely to discourage people from using them.

**Applying provision standards**

- 11.33 Given that it is not appropriate to set any local quantity or accessibility standards, it is also not appropriate to state areas of deficiency or need.
- 11.34 The aim is to provide an integrated network of high quality green corridors linking open spaces together and opportunities for informal recreation and alternative means of transport. Consideration should also be given to the provision of effective wildlife corridors, enabling the migration of species across the City.

**Summary and recommendations**

- 11.35 Green corridors provide opportunities close to peoples home's for informal recreation, particularly walking and cycling, as part of every day activities, for example, travel to work or shops. The development of a linked green corridor network will help to provide opportunities for informal recreation and improve the health and well being of the local community. In this way, green corridors can be integral to the achievement of targets for increased active recreation.
- 11.36 There are already a large number of footpaths and green corridor networks within the study area and consultation indicates that they are well used.
- 11.37 The City of York transport plan highlights the importance of increasing the use of sustainable forms of transport and gives priority to enhancing the provision of facilities for walking and cycling.
- 11.38 Future development needs to encompass linkages between large areas of open space, create opportunities to develop the green corridor network and utilise potential development sites. Development should consider both the needs of wildlife and humans.
- 11.39 A network of multi-functional green space will contribute to the high quality natural and built environment required for existing and new sustainable communities in the future. An integrated network of high quality green corridors will link open spaces, helping to alleviate other open space deficiencies and provide opportunities for informal recreation and alternative means of transport.

<b>GC1</b>	Prepare a green infrastructure study to maximise the linkages of open spaces with green corridors and help create a network of multi-functional green space in York. This should serve as an extension to this PPG17 Study.
<b>GC2</b>	Linking existing green corridors with open spaces in the City should be a key priority for the Council. This will provide opportunities for informal recreation and alternative means of transport, using all types of open spaces as reflected in the City of York transport plan.
<b>GC3</b>	City of York Council should work in tandem with the partners to maximise the use of green corridors in the City.
<b>GC4</b>	Providers of green corridors in York should aspire to achieve the quality vision.

## **Strategy, key priorities and planning implementation**

### **Introduction**

- 12.1 This section sets out a vision for the future delivery of green space across City of York, summarising the key issues and priorities and ensuring that the wider benefits of open spaces are maximised.
- 12.2 The vision, issues and priorities are derived from an assessment of open space, outdoor sport and recreation facilities across the City and consultations considering local needs and aspirations.

### **Why are the green open spaces of York important?**

- 12.3 There has been a national recognition in recent years of the continuing importance of parks and green spaces. Various policies and strategies have shown a commitment to renewal of this vital part of our heritage including Government Planning Policy Guidance and the CABI Green Space Report. The role that green spaces can have in meeting policy objectives linked to other agendas, such as education, diversity, health, safety, environment and regeneration is also recognised. The Improving Green Spaces Report (DTLR May 2002) highlighted that parks and open spaces:
- contribute significantly to social inclusion because they are free and accessible to all
  - can become a centre of community spirit
  - contribute to child development through scope for outdoor, energetic and imaginative play
  - offer numerous educational opportunities
  - provide a range of health, environmental and economic benefits.
- 12.4 At the local level, the importance of parks is highlighted by a whole range of policies and initiatives to increase and enhance green space both within the City and the surrounding area. In particular, the effective provision of green spaces will contribute to wider corporate objectives of improving health and lifestyles, enhancing the local environment and the creation of sustainable, safe, healthy and inclusive neighbourhoods. These are key priorities of the community strategy, which looks to remove barriers and enhance the quality of life for residents of York. Furthermore, in climate change terms, green spaces play an important urban cooling role.

### **The City of York context**

- 12.5 The City of York is made up of the densely populated urban area and surrounding rural settlements. The City is a central destination for residents living in the outlying villages as well as for people living in surrounding districts. As one of the UK's most frequently visited tourist destinations, provision of green space is important not only to local residents, but to the many visitors that flock to the City.
- 12.6 Pressures on land for development, traffic and other activity are high. Protection of greenspace (to ensure there is sufficient to meet local needs) is consequently of high importance in light of its identified importance to residents and visitors.

- 12.7 A population increase of 21% by 2029 is expected, a proportion significantly above the national average (as noted in 2.48, this figure may exceed current proposed build rates as identified in the latest Regional Spatial Strategy). In the light of the increasing pressure on land for development it is critical that demand for various open space, sport and recreation facilities is met.
- 12.8 Analysis of the profile of the current population in York highlights a greater proportion of residents over 65, and lower proportions of residents under 14 than the national average. There is also a higher proportion of young adults aged 20 – 24, reflective of the student population and a lower proportion of households with children in comparison to the national average. This suggests that local aspirations may differ from other areas, and it is essential to ensure that the open space, sport and recreation facility stock meets the needs of residents across the age spectrum.
- 12.9 Over the LDF period these demographic profiles are expected to change, with a proportional increase in residents over 65 and a decrease in the number of teenagers. This will potentially impact on the needs of local residents.

***The importance of landscape character***

- 12.10 The significance and value of areas of green and open space across the City extends well beyond that of merely providing an accessible recreational and amenity resource to the inhabitants. In particular, larger areas of green space can have a collective contribution to make towards defining the character of the local environment. Of the PPG 17 typologies natural and semi-natural spaces, amenity spaces and green corridors, in particular, can have a valuable wider contribution to make to the landscape. Their strategic contribution to the wider environment can include:
- contributing to defining the local landscape character
  - providing an appropriate context and setting for built development and infrastructure
  - helping to achieve a softer interface between urban and rural environments
  - emphasising the presence of particular natural features within the landscape such as river valleys, ridgelines etc
  - supporting habitats and local wildlife.
- 12.11 For the purposes of this study, consideration has been given to the different types of open space, sport and recreation facilities on a typology-by-typology basis as documented in the preceding sections of the report. Each typology section clearly identifies:
- an introduction and definition of the individual typologies
  - the context, based on the findings of the local needs assessment and strategic review
  - the current position in terms of the quantity, quality and accessibility, identified through the audit and site assessments
  - the setting of local quantity, quality and accessibility standards with supporting evidence and the justification of the standards recommended

## **SECTION 12 – STRATEGY, KEY PRIORITIES AND PLANNING IMPLEMENTATION**

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- the application of the quantity, quality and accessibility standards resulting in series of recommendations on a geographical basis, combined with City wide recommendations
  - a summary for the individual typologies based on the typology specific analysis both in terms of current position and that at 2029.
- 12.12 Prior to the application of local standards and the development of priorities, consultation was undertaken on the recommended local standards, the audit of provision and the analysis and interpretation of local need.
- 12.13 Supplementary to the typology specific analysis in the previous sections of the report, this section sets out the provision of all open space, sport and recreation provision across the City of York. The rationale for this is as follows:
- supporting an urban renaissance – local networks of high quality and well managed and maintained open spaces, sports and recreational facilities help create urban environments that are attractive, clean and safe
  - promoting more sustainable development – by ensuring that open spaces sport and recreational facilities are easily accessible by walking and cycling and that more heavily used or intensive sport and recreation facilities are planned for locations well served by public transport. This is particularly important in urban areas. Analysis of all open spaces in York will allow for initial consideration of their relationship with public transport networks.
  - maintaining an adequate supply of open space, sports and recreation facilities – an overview of all types of open spaces provides an initial indication of priorities in different areas of the City
  - ensuring consistent quality of spaces – providing an indicative analysis of the open spaces and sport and recreation facilities most in need of enhancement.

### **Current position**

- 12.14 The quantity of provision across York is summarised in Table 12.1 overleaf, with all open spaces shown on Map 12.2. Consultation regarding the quantity of different types of open space in York highlights that:
- there is a general perception that the quantity of City parks is about right. Residents in the more urban areas of the City have higher expectations in terms of provision and are more likely to suggest that there are insufficient parks in their locality. Maintaining and enhancing the quality of the parks is perceived to be of greater importance than increasing the overall quantity of facilities.
  - there are variations in the perceptions of the quantity of natural and semi natural open space across the City and this is mirrored by the uneven distribution of these sites. A standard equivalent to the local level of provision was set.
  - perceptions regarding the quantity of amenity green space were varied and a standard was set marginally above the existing level of provision in order to identify locational deficiencies as well as providing opportunities to enhance the quality of provision. Amenity spaces were perceived to be particularly

important for the qualities that they bring to the landscape and character of the local area.

- the quantity of provision for children and young people was the overriding themes of the consultation with the majority of residents highlighting that the quantity of provision is poor. This was consistent across the whole authority and the recommended local standard reflects this, facilitating the delivery of additional facilities.
- analysis of demand for allotments highlights that some sites are nearing capacity and that there are waiting lists at some existing facilities, highlighting locational variation in demand. The standard has been set above the existing level of provision to highlight these areas of deficiency where new provision may be required.
- there is a high level of demand for outdoor sports facilities across York and the existing facilities are of varying quality. An increase in the level of provision will be required over the LDF period to 2029 to facilitate higher levels of participation in sports. There is potential for this to be delivered to an extent through community use at school sites.

**SECTION 12 – STRATEGY, KEY PRIORITIES AND PLANNING IMPLEMENTATION**

**Table 12.1 - Quantity of provision across City of York (current position)**

Area	Population	Parks	Natural Open Space	Amenity Space	Provision for Children	Provision for Young People	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Allotments	Total Provision	Provision required to meet local standard	Shortfall / Surplus	Comment
City Centre	5,930	5.01	1.05	10.11	0.1	0	0	0	16.27	31.54	-15.27	Overall deficiency in the City Centre analysis area
Urban East	72,045	9.63	30.03	37.63	3.21	0.15	90.83	10.16	181.64	383.27	-201.63	Overall deficiency in the Urban East analysis area
Urban West	52,995	4.46	54.14	24.25	2.11	0.08	58.6	9.8	153.44	281.93	-128.49	Overall deficiency in the Urban West analysis area
York South	22,132	12.05	72.06	48.88	1.77	0.06	135.81	22.55	293.18	117.74	175.44	Overall more than sufficient in the York South analysis area
York North	40,497	4	188.95	82.79	2.47	0	85.08	10.82	374.11	215.44	158.67	Overall more than sufficient in the York North analysis area
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>193,599</b>	<b>35.15</b>	<b>346.23</b>	<b>203.66</b>	<b>9.66</b>	<b>0.29</b>	<b>370.32</b>	<b>53.33</b>	<b>1018.64</b>	<b>1029.92</b>	<b>-11.28</b>	<b>Overall deficiency in provision - quantitative terms</b>

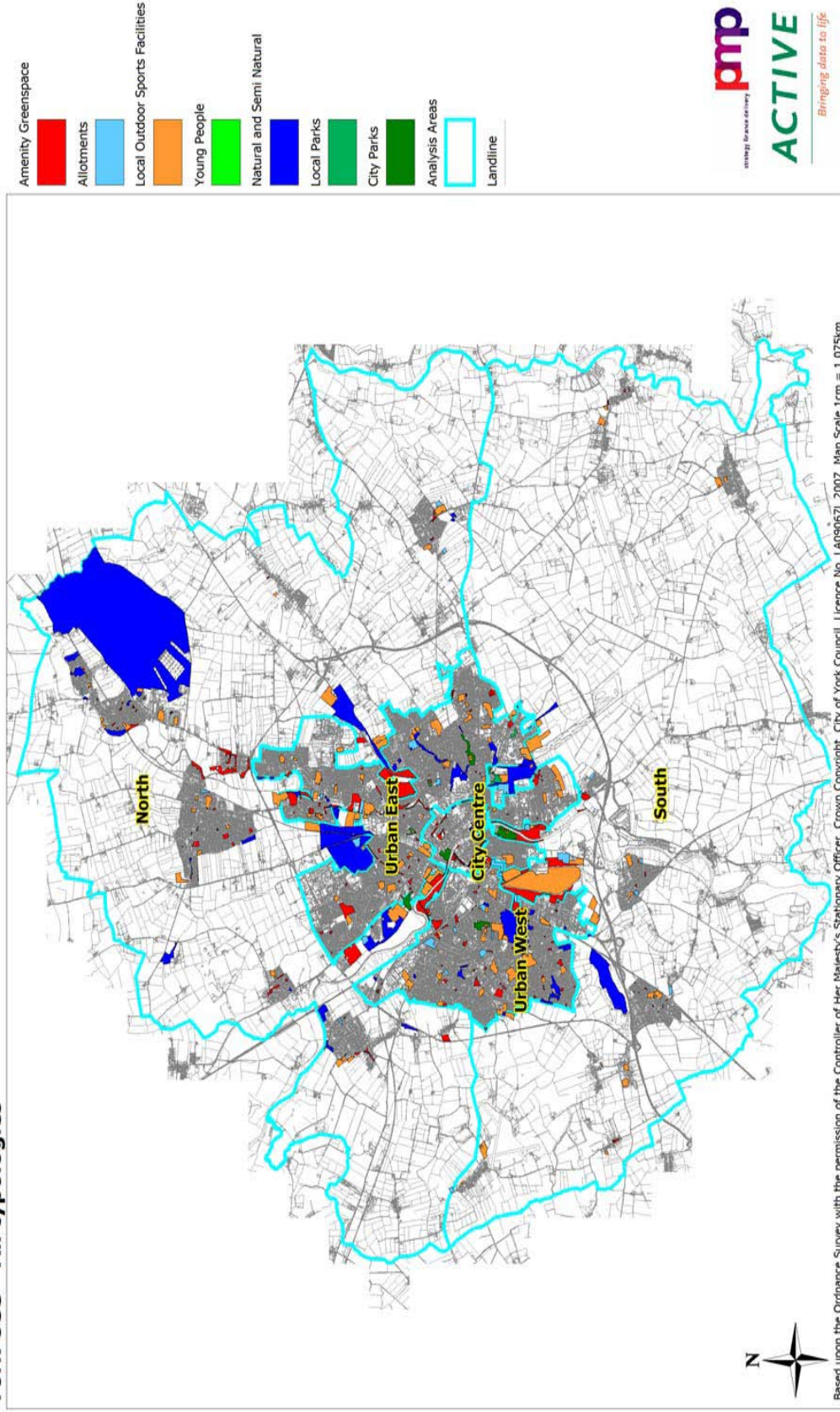
Those results shown in red indicate a deficiency when measured against the local standard. Further discussion can be found within the relevant section of the report.



**SECTION 12 – STRATEGY, KEY PRIORITIES AND PLANNING IMPLEMENTATION**

**Map 12.1 - Open space, sport and recreation provision across City of York**

**York OSS - All typologies**



12.15 When considering Table 12.1, the main findings linked to the quantity of provision are as follows:

- when all the local quantity standards are considered collectively the York South and York North analysis areas are the only two where the current level of provision is greater than the provision required to meet the cumulative local quantity standard
- the City Centre, Urban East and Urban West analysis areas all have deficiencies in the overall provision of open space. The analysis area that would require the largest increase in provision to satisfy the cumulative open space quantity standard is the Urban East analysis area – which would require a 53% increase in the existing level of provision. The main contributing factors are the large population located within this analysis area and the corresponding undersupply of natural and semi natural open space, amenity green space and outdoor sports provision compared to the surrounding areas.
- across all typologies the greatest quantitative shortfall is in provision for young people, which require in the region of a 85% increase across the analysis areas to meet the quantity standard for this typology
- overall the City has a slight shortfall of open space, sport and recreation provision in quantitative terms, however as specified throughout the report, the quantity standards need to be applied in conjunction with the accessibility standards.

### **Current provision – quality**

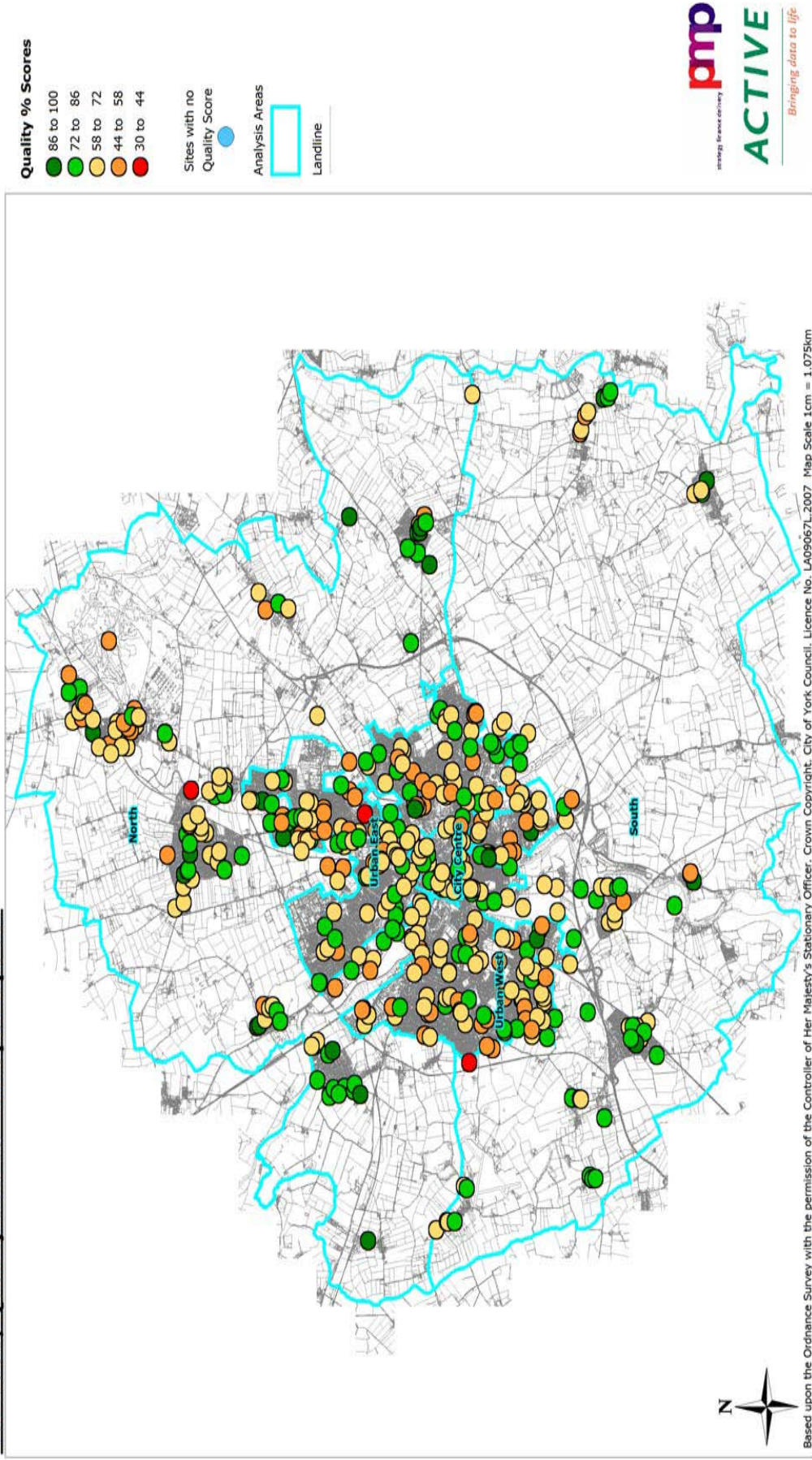
12.16 The quality of all open space sites is displayed overleaf (Map 12.2). This illustrates that in general the quality of open spaces is good. However, there are areas of the City which have a concentration of average and poor sites. Issues arising from the assessment of the quality of provision include:

- the quality of parks is perceived to have improved over recent years, reinforced the by the achievement of several green flag awards across the City. Residents highlighted that improvements to the ancillary provision with parks would further enhance their quality. Drainage at parks was also perceived to be of particular concern.
- the quality of natural sites was perceived to be particularly important to residents and the wider benefits of these sites were recognised. Natural sites were perceived to have a particularly important role in enhancing biodiversity and developing habitats.
- there is a greater variation in the quality of amenity green spaces than any other type of open space with analysis of the quality scores indicating that sites range from 30% to 90%. This was also reflected within the consultation.
- although there were numerous issues relating to the quantity of provision for children and young people several issues regarding the quality of existing provision also emerged. The majority of comments focused around the need for provision to be more challenging and innovative.
- the quality of allotments is varying with site scores ranging from 44% to 86%.

**SECTION 12 – STRATEGY, KEY PRIORITIES AND PLANNING IMPLEMENTATION**

**Map 12.2 – Quality of all open space sites across York**

**York OSS, Quality Scores - All Open Spaces**



### **Current provision – accessibility**

12.17 The accessibility of all open space sites is discussed throughout the report. In summary this highlights that:

- on the whole there is a good level of access to the parks within the urban areas of the City, with City and local parks equitably distributed across all areas. There are greater access issues for residents in the outlying settlements, who are unable to reach a park on foot.
- access to natural and semi natural open space is high across both the urban area and the rural settlements. In addition to smaller sites, there are numerous larger sites such as Bootham Stray in close proximity to residential areas. The urban area is surrounded by smaller settlements and green belt, ensuring access for residents to areas of nearby countryside.
- the distribution of amenity space is uneven across the City. While there is good provision in the City Centre, there are deficiencies across both the Urban East and Urban West areas. Despite this, many residents devoid of amenity space have access to a park. Provision of amenity space in smaller settlements is good, with the majority of settlements containing at least one site.
- despite the emphasis placed on the lack of local facilities for children, the distribution of sites is even across the City although some deficiencies were identified. While play areas are more sporadically distributed in the rural settlements, many residents have access to facilities.
- analysis of access to facilities for young people highlights that there are few residents within the recommended catchment of a facility. This is unsurprising, given that there are few facilities across the City. The achievement of this standard will represent a significant challenge for the Council.
- while the distribution of both local and strategic sports facilities is good, access to facilities at school sites presents the greatest issues to residents, with many schools permitting no community use at the current time. Enhanced access to existing facilities would reduce pressure on existing sites and ensure that all residents have genuine access to local facilities.
- the distribution of allotments is sporadic and there are many residents outside of the catchment area for facilities. This is compounded by the waiting lists that are evident at existing sites.

### **Priorities for the LDF to 2029**

12.18 The application of standards has highlighted a number of issues and priorities relating to the current and future provision through the LDF period to 2029 for each area of the City. The future issues and priorities for each area of the City (to 2029) are summarised overleaf.

### **City centre area**

12.19 Overall there is a small shortfall of open space in the City Centre (-15.27 ha). This area of York is lacking the provision for children and young people, allotments, natural and semi natural open space and outdoor sports facilities. Shortage of space in the city centre will mean that enhancement of existing facilities will be a key priority in future years. Opportunities for new open spaces should be seized. The future provision of open space for each typology is outlined below.

#### ***Parks***

- the application of the quantity standards highlights the City Centre is sufficient in the provision of parks, now and in the future. However, residents in the north of the area have limited access to a local park. Future priorities should focus on enhancing the quality of existing provision.

#### ***Natural and semi natural spaces***

- the current deficiency of natural and semi natural open spaces will increase to -11.32 ha by 2029. Application of the accessibility standard indicates the majority of residents are within the recommended threshold of this typology. However, residents located close to the northern boundary of this area do not have access to a natural or semi natural open space. There is however, scope to open up access to the riverside.

#### ***Amenity green space***

- the City Centre has sufficient provision of amenity green space to meet current and future demand. Nearly all residents have access to an amenity green space within the recommended accessibility standard. Efforts should therefore focus on the enhancement of existing facilities.

#### ***Provision for children***

- the increase in population up to 2029 highlights an overall shortfall of provision for children (-0.38 ha). Residents located in the north of this area have limited access to a children's play area and this is further compounded by a lack of local amenity green space in the same area.

#### ***Facilities for young people***

- measured against the local standard, there will be a deficiency of -0.37ha over the LDF period. Furthermore, not all residents within this area have access to a teenage facility within the recommended local accessibility standard.

#### ***Outdoor sports facilities***

- there is a lack of provision of outdoor sports facilities within the City Centre. This is highlighted by the application of the quantity standard that shows this area will have a deficiency by 2029 (-13.27ha). Access to outdoor facilities is good with all residents able to access a facility within the recommended travel time. Opportunities for new provision within the city centre are likely to be limited and the focus should be enhancing the quality of provision.

### **Allotments**

- there are a number of deficiencies within the City Centre. Application of the recommended standards reinforces this, specifically highlighting a lack of provision in the Guildhall ward. In light of the anticipated density of the housing in the central area, provision of allotments should be considered.

### **Urban East**

12.20 Overall, the current provision of open space in the Urban East analysis area is insufficient. The typologies with a significant lack of provision are natural and semi natural open space, amenity green space, provision for children and young people, allotments and outdoor sports facilities. There are several lower quality sites located immediately east of the city centre and like the other urban areas, provision of new spaces can often be challenging, although opportunities may arise from the identification of additional development areas through the LDF core strategy. Enhancement of existing sites should therefore be a key priority going forward. The future provision of open space for each typology is outlined below.

### **Parks**

- based on 2029 population projections the Urban East analysis area will have the largest shortfall of parks in York (-5.62 ha). Despite this, access to parks is reasonable and the majority of local parks are distributed around the south eastern area of the city. The provision of amenity green space in this area will be particularly important to residents who do not have access to a park.

### **Natural and semi natural spaces**

- the current large shortfall in provision is accentuated by future population growth, highlighting a significant deficiency in the Urban East analysis area by 2029 (-120.25ha). Despite insufficient provision, the majority of residents in this area have access to a natural or semi natural open space, highlighting an even distribution of sites. Provision of new natural and semi natural open space will be largely opportunity led, and enhancement to existing sites and better access to surrounding countryside should be prioritised where new provision is not appropriate.

### **Amenity green space**

- a shortfall of – 52.20ha is expected by 2029. This is further highlighted through the application of the accessibility standard that shows a large number of residents in the Urban East analysis area do not have access to an amenity green space. The key area of deficiency is located to the east of the City Centre. Many residents in this area are within the appropriate catchment of a park.

### **Provision for children**

- future population increases suggest the Urban East analysis area will have a lack of children's provision by 2029 (-2.66ha). This is the largest deficiency of all areas of York and is reinforced by the application of the accessibility standards, which highlights several areas where residents are outside of the appropriate catchment.

### ***Provision for young people***

- consistent with provision for children, the Urban East analysis area has the greatest current and future shortfall of teenage provision. The majority of residents cannot access a teenage facility in this area and furthermore it is within this area where the two poorest quality facilities in the City are located. Existing facilities would therefore benefit from investment and opportunities should be taken to provide new facilities.

### ***Outdoor sports facilities***

- the largest deficiency is found within the Urban East analysis area (-70.36ha). However, facilities in this area are well distributed, meaning the majority of residents have access to an outdoor sports facility within their locality. Opportunities for new provision should therefore be taken and access to existing facilities, particularly at school sites, should be maximised.

### ***Allotments***

- the largest quantitative deficiency is found in the Urban East analysis area (-13.35ha). Despite this, the existing sites in this area are evenly distributed and there are few areas where residents are outside of the recommended catchment area for allotments.

### **Urban West**

12.21 The Urban West analysis area has the second greatest shortfall of open space in York (-128.49ha), as shown in Table 12.1, with all typologies (when measured against the quantity standards) having a significant lack of provision. The future provision of open space is discussed below.

### ***Parks***

- the current and future provision of parks in the Urban West analysis area has the greatest shortfall of all areas of York. It is calculated that by 2029 there will be a deficiency of -6.75ha of parks. Application of the accessibility standards indicates that the majority of residents in this area of York do not have access to a park. Specifically no residents are within the recommended catchment of a local park. The redesignation of amenity spaces could provide more formal parks in this area of the City.

### ***Natural and semi natural spaces***

- taking into account future population growth, there will be a shortfall of -40.72ha by 2029. This is the second greatest deficiency in the City, however regardless of this all residents have access to a natural or semi natural open space within the 15 minute walk time. This highlights that while the focus should be on enhancing the quality of existing natural and semi natural open spaces, new opportunities should be taken where appropriate. Enhancing access to existing natural sites may also improve the existing levels of provision.

### ***Amenity green space***

- the provision of amenity green space is insufficient to meet current and future demand in quantitative terms. Population projections indicate there will be a large shortfall of amenity green space by 2029 (-41.83ha). These deficiencies are highlighted by the application of the accessibility standard that shows residents in a number of areas are unable to access amenity green space. Amenity spaces to the far west of the Urban West analysis area are particularly important as residents are outside of the appropriate catchment area for a park.

### ***Provision for children***

- within the Urban West analysis area there will be a shortfall of -2.21ha of provision for children by 2029. Accessibility to children's facilities in this area is good, with the majority of residents able to access a children's play area. However, there remain residents located outside of the accessibility catchment and shortfalls have been identified.

### ***Provision for young people***

- the estimated population growth coupled with existing shortfalls is likely to generate a future shortfall of teenage provision (-0.54ha). Access to teenage facilities is limited with only a small number of residents located in the east of the Urban West analysis area within the recommended catchment. The amenity spaces are therefore of particular value to local residents.

### ***Outdoor sports facilities***

- application of the quantity standard shows a lack of provision in the Urban West analysis area (-59.97ha). The distribution of facilities is even and all residents have access to a local pitch. However, access to larger dual use sites is poor, with only one facility located to the east of the area. In addition to seizing opportunities for new and improved provision, existing resources should be maximised through the negotiation of community use agreements at school sites.

### ***Allotments***

- application of the quantity standard highlights a large deficiency in the Urban West analysis area by 2029 (-7.49ha). Analysis of the existing distribution of sites highlights that in addition to the quantitative shortfalls there are large sectors of the community outside of the catchment area for local allotment provision, particularly in Dringhouses and the eastern edge of Westfield.

### **York South**

12.22 The current overall provision of open space in the York South analysis area is sufficient to meet demand. Teenage facilities are the only typology where there is a shortfall in supply. Enhancements to existing provision may need to be delivered in partnership with other providers. Future open space provision is discussed below.

### ***Parks***

- the future provision of parks is sufficient to meet demand. However, the application of the accessibility standard shows the majority of residents are



outside the recommended catchment. It would be unrealistic to provide formal parks and gardens within every small settlement and it is therefore essential to enhance the links between existing parks and the smaller settlements. Consideration should also be given to the development of pocket parks within more rural settlements.

### ***Natural and semi natural open space***

- the application of the quantity standard indicates there is sufficient current and future provision to meet demand. Accessibility to natural and semi natural open space is poor, with a number of large settlements unable to access this typology within the 15 minute walk time. Despite this, the majority of residents in this area have good access to areas of nearby countryside. Enhancing access to sites in close proximity to the settlements and facilitating access through the development of green corridors and linkages will be essential in this area.

### ***Amenity green space***

- the current provision of amenity green space is sufficient to meet current and future demand. Nearly all residents in the York South analysis area are able to access an amenity green space within the recommended local standard. In addition to the provision of amenity space within the urban area, smaller settlements may also benefit from local amenity spaces. In particular, residents of Wheldrake cannot access this typology.

### ***Provision for children***

- population projections indicate by 2029 there will be a small shortfall of children's provision (-0.03ha). Within the York South analysis area there is a good distribution of facilities, resulting in the majority of residents being able to access a children's play area within the recommended accessibility threshold.

### ***Provision for young people***

- current provision is insufficient to meet future demand (-0.20ha). This is further reflected through the application of the accessibility standard, which highlights all residents are outside the recommended accessibility catchment of a teenage facility.

### ***Outdoor sports facilities***

- the York South analysis area is the only area of the City where there is sufficient provision of outdoor sports facilities. Facilities in this area are well distributed with all residents in the larger settlements having access to a facility within the recommended 15 minute walk time. However, residents do not have access to a tennis or bowls facility. In light of the demand led nature of outdoor sports facilities it will still be essential to consider specific demand for each type of facility. The Playing pitch strategy identified some specific deficiencies in this area and these opportunities to meet these should be taken.

### **Allotments**

- the York South analysis area is the only area in the City sufficient in the provision of allotments based on the application of the quantity standards. Despite a surplus of provision some residents are outside the recommended accessibility standard, specifically those residents located in Wheldrake.

### **York North**

- 12.23 Current provision in the York North analysis area is sufficient to meet demand. The typologies that this area is deficient in are parks, children and young people and allotments. Like the southern area, provision of open spaces in smaller settlements can be challenging and should be delivered in partnership with other providers. Future open space provision is detailed below.

### **Parks**

- the current provision of parks is insufficient to meet demand and this is further extended by 2029, resulting in a shortfall of -4.57ha. Access to parks in the York North analysis area is limited. Like the York South analysis area which is characterised in particular by smaller settlements, it would be unrealistic to provide formal parks and gardens within every small settlement and it is therefore essential to enhance the links between existing parks and the smaller settlements. Consideration should also be given to the development of pocket parks within more rural settlements. This may be of particular importance in light of the distribution of the existing gap in provision of parks to the north of the City.

### **Natural and semi natural spaces**

- the current supply of natural and semi natural open spaces is sufficient to meet future demand. All residents located in the York North analysis area are able to access this typology within the recommended local standard. The majority of residents in this area also have good access to areas of nearby countryside. Enhancing access to sites in close proximity to the settlements and facilitating access through the development of green corridors and linkages should be prioritised, as well as enhancing existing natural and semi natural open spaces.

### **Amenity green space**

- within the York North analysis area provision is sufficient to meet the demand generated by future population growth. Application of the accessibility standard indicates nearly all residents can access an amenity green space within the recommended 5 minute walk time.

### **Provision for children**

- the provision for children is insufficient to meet current and future demand. Despite this, the majority of residents do have access to a children's play area within the recommended accessibility catchment. Opportunities for new provision should be taken and all settlements containing over 1714 residents should have a facility for children. A partnership approach may be required to deliver these facilities.

***Provision for teenagers***

- similar to provision for children, the current supply of teenage facilities is insufficient to meet future demand. Accessibility to teenage facilities is also poor with no residents in the York North analysis area able to access a teenage facility within the recommended 15 minute walk time. While it may be inappropriate to provide facilities in all small settlements, effort should be made to enhance and maximise transport links to existing and future sties.

***Outdoor sports facilities***

- a small lack of provision is located in the York North analysis area (-5.52ha). Despite this lack of provision, nearly all residents have access to an outdoor sports facility within the recommended accessibility standard. However, residents in this area of York do not have access to a tennis or bowls facility. The Playing pitch strategy identified some specific deficiencies in this area and opportunities to meet these should be taken.

***Allotments***

- within the York North analysis area there are quantitative shortfalls in provision (-2.39ha). Application of the accessibility standard further highlights this shortfall, with residents in Haxby and Wigginton only having limited access to allotments.

**The wider benefits of open space**

- 12.24 The wider benefits of open space, sport and recreation facilities are well documented and include social, educational, recreational and cultural and heritage benefits. Open space also promotes a series of significant environmental benefits including combating climate change, providing habitats and promoting and increasing biodiversity.
- 12.25 The remainder of this section sets out a strategy for the future delivery of green space arising from consultation and the findings of the local needs assessment and outlines some key priorities for the delivery of open spaces across York.
- 12.26 The City of York Council community strategy sets out a series of aims and objectives designed to shape the future of York. The vision for York over the next 20 years is defined as:

**York – A City Making History**

*Making our mark by:*

- Building confident, creative and inclusive communities
- Being a leading environmentally-friendly City
- Being at the forefront of innovation and change with a prosperous and thriving economy
- Being a world class centre for education and learning for all
- Celebrating our historic past whilst creating a successful and thriving future

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12.27 The York Local Area Agreement (LAA) identifies four building blocks that are instrumental in the achievement of this vision and represent the priority areas for change in York. These four building blocks are:

- Children and Young People
- Stronger and Safer Communities
- Healthier Communities and Older People
- Economic Development and Enterprise.

12.28 The effective provision of green space can play a key role in the delivery of targets within these four areas. Table 12. 2 below and overleaf summarises the contributions that achievement of some of the key objectives arising from the assessment of local needs and existing provision.

**Table 12.2 - Achievement of wider City of York Council objectives through the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities**

<b>Children and young people</b>	<b>Stronger and safer communities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• addressing identified deficiencies in the provision for children and young people in quantitative terms. The recommended increase in the provision of amenity space will also provide more informal opportunities for children and young people</li> <li>• ensuring that the quality of facilities and the type of facilities meet the needs of local young people</li> <li>• maximising the involvement of children and young people in the day to design and planning of facilities for children and young people.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promoting and encouraging community involvement in the provision, maintenance and management of open spaces</li> <li>• enhancing the safety of open spaces and the perception of safety of open space sites through the promotion of good quality design and planning</li> <li>• addressing identified deficiencies to ensure that all residents have access to high quality open spaces.</li> </ul>
<b>Economic development and enterprise</b>	<b>Healthier communities and older people</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• delivering attractive places and enhancing local identity and image through investment in the quality of facilities</li> <li>• maximising opportunities through regeneration to enhance the quality of open spaces and provide open spaces of the right type and in the right place</li> <li>• ensuring that new development results in positive change in the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities across the City.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maximising use of open spaces and sports facilities for physical activity</li> <li>• investing in the quality of sports facilities to increase access to local residents and ensuring that all residents have access to local facilities</li> <li>• promoting the wider benefits of open space on physical and mental health</li> <li>• ensuring that open spaces meet the needs of all sectors of the community.</li> </ul>

### ***Linking green spaces***

- 12.29 As highlighted, the provision of appropriate high quality green space results in an array of benefits that far exceed the recreational value that these sites offer to residents. Linkages between green spaces further enhance the benefits that can be achieved.
- 12.30 Green Infrastructure (GI) comprises a network of multi-functional greenspace set within, and contributing to a high quality natural and built environment. Green Infrastructure is widely considered to be an essential requirement for the enhancement of quality of life, for existing and future generations, and to be an integral element in the delivery of 'liveability' for sustainable communities. Its provision, and importantly, its connectivity is relevant at every level from county wide rural landscapes down to a local level both within larger urban areas as well as small rural settlements. It also provides the framework for supporting a wide range of 'environmental processes'.
- 12.31 This PPG17 study provides a starting point for understanding the wider green infrastructure across York and the benefits that this can bring to the local community.
- 12.32 The audit illustrates that access to green spaces on foot is generally satisfactory for most typologies across the City. As perhaps might be expected, parks and gardens, children's' play areas, and cemeteries are amongst the most accessible types of open space, whereas the natural and semi-natural open space typology, received much lower ratings. Analysis of the distribution of open spaces highlights that the majority of residents are within close proximity to at least one open space across the City.
- 12.33 A number of man-made and natural barriers cross the City can impede accessibility. Most notably amongst these is the ring road network, which surrounds the central urban network and the River Ouse and Foss.
- 12.34 City of York prides itself on being a cycling friendly City, and there are a variety of off road cycling paths. These routes enhance the connectivity of open spaces. The LTP2 highlights the importance of increasing the use of sustainable forms of transport and gives priority to enhancing the provision of facilities for walking and cycling.
- 12.35 An effective green infrastructure considers not just the linkages for humans but also takes into account opportunities for maximising biodiversity and wildlife. Linked open spaces provide opportunities for the creation of wildlife corridors. Although not considered within this study, private gardens are also important in the overall green infrastructure of the local area.

### **Delivering and enhancing green spaces through the planning system**

#### **The plan led system**

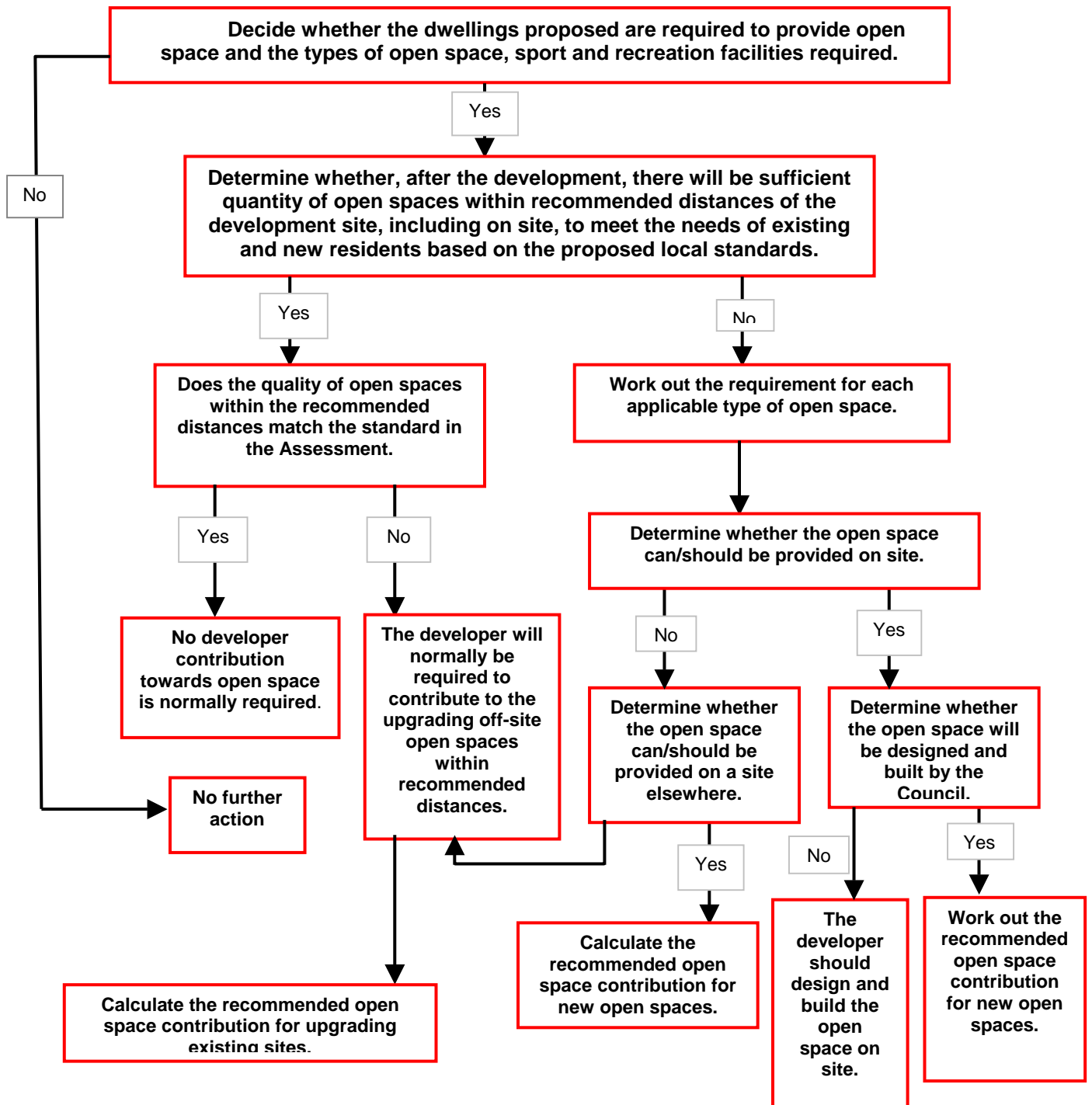
- 12.36 The plan led system ensures that local planning authorities clearly define requirements for contributions and the type of development that will be permissible.
- 12.37 This PPG17 study should be used as a supporting evidence base for Local Development Documents and the policies within them. The key findings from the local consultation and audit of provision have been used to inform the Core Strategy and Allocations DPD's.

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- 12.38 Development Plan Documents (DPDs), open space designations and allocations should include general policies on open space, sport and recreation facilities that are supported by the findings of this study and other relevant documents.
- 12.39 DPDs should also consider the principles and use of planning obligations. For example, matters to be covered by planning obligations and factors to take into account when considering the scale and form of contributions. This will be particularly important in the planned Development Control DPD, which will take into account the protection of open space and the collection of developer contributions.
- 12.40 Planning obligations can be in kind or in the form of financial contributions. Policies on the types of payment, including pooling and maintenance payments, should be set out within Local Development Frameworks and developers should be able to predict as accurately as possible the likely contributions they will be asked to pay. Many local authorities now include a S106 contributions calculator on their website ensuring that the system is transparent to all developers. The potential introduction of "Green Bonds" would act as a financial retainer to ensure that S106 Agreements and planning conditions related to open space and the natural environment are implemented.
- 12.41 More detailed policies applying the principles set out in the Development Plan Document, for example, specific localities and likely quantum of contributions, ought to then be included in Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD). Dependent of the scope of the SPD, the Council may wish to also consider the development of codes of practice in negotiating planning obligations, so as to make clear the level of service a developer can expect.
- 12.42 The findings of this PPG17 study will also inform the Area Action Plan DPDs for the City centre and York Northwest, providing an indication of the quality, quantity and access to open space expected in the local area.
- 12.43 City of York Council adopted the document "Commutated sum Payments in New Developments - A Guide to Developers" on 26th April 2007. This document sets out the suggested approach to determining commuted sums and gives consideration to the requirements for open space.
- 12.44 The flow diagram overleaf (see Figure 12.1) provides more detail on the process for determining developer contributions using the local standards recommended as part of this study. It is based on a review of best practice and national guidance and builds upon current elements of the approach City of York Council currently takes and highlights how the standards developed as part of this study. A worked example is provided at the end of the Section.

**Figure 12.1 - Example process for determining open space requirements**



**1. Determine whether the dwellings proposed are required to provide open space**

- 12.45 The first stage in the flow diagram is to determine whether the dwellings proposed are required to provide open space and which types of open space, sport and recreation facilities will require developer contributions.
- 12.46 Policy L1c of the City of York Local Plan considers the provision of open space within new housing developments and commercial development over 2500m<sup>2</sup>. This policy uses national standards to determine the required contribution, specifically: 0.9ha per 1000 population amenity greenspace, 1.7ha per 1000 population sports pitches and 0.7ha per 1000 population provision for children and young people.
- 12.47 In general the approach taken to affordable housing is to include a statement within the guidance stating that affordable housing schemes will require the same level of open space provision as open market housing but where it can be demonstrated that this would lead to the scheme being unviable, the level of provision required can be reduced.
- 12.48 Policy L1c in the Local Plan and requires contributions towards the provision of open space from employment development.
- 12.49 Based on a review of best practice guidance and the successes of the current approach adopted in City of York it is recommended that the following approach be adapted :
- continue to base the nature and scale of obligations sought from development on the size of development and the impact on open space, sport and recreation provision. Ensure that all developments make a contribution, regardless of the number of dwellings that are created.
  - devise a matrix approach to clearly state the types of housing mix that will be required to contribute to open space. This can be broken down to indicate the types of open space different housing types will be required to contribute to (see Table 12.3).
  - continue to require contributions from employment development towards the provision of open space and outdoor sport and recreation facilities.

**Table 12.3 - Best Practise Approach**

Category	Open market housing/flats	Affordable housing	Housing for the active elderly
Playing fields	✓	✓	<b>X</b>
Local play areas	✓	✓	<b>X</b>
Neighbourhood play areas	✓	✓	<b>X</b>
Community centres/meeting halls	✓	✓	✓
Local parks	✓	✓	✓
District parks	✓	✓	✓

Category	Open market housing/flats	Affordable housing	Housing for the active elderly
Swimming pools	✓	✓	✓
Sports halls	✓	✓	✓
Allotments	✓	✓	✓



**2. Determine whether, after the development, there will be sufficient quantity of open spaces within the recommended distances of the development site, including on site, to meet the needs of existing and new residents based on the proposed local standards. Does the quality of open spaces within the recommended distances match the standard in the assessment?**

- 12.50 The determination of shortfalls/surplus relies on the use and application of appropriate standards of provision. The national standards currently incorporated within the City of York local plan should be replaced by the standards derived from the analysis of local needs and audit of existing provision undertaken as part of this report. The Council should determine for which types of open space they would like to receive contributions and should set out these local standards within the Local Development Framework. This should include quantity, quality and accessibility standards.
- 12.51 The use of these locally derived standards ensures that contributions requested are directly in line with proven local need and that there is full justification and rationale for the standards set.
- 12.52 These standards should then be used to determine the contributions required. In order to ensure that the requirement on developers is fair and consistent, contributions should be applied based on the increased level of demand only. This ensures that the developer is paying directly for the associated impact of the development rather than it being dependent on what open space happens to be around the development. It is still essential to consider the existing provision within the area in order to understand the impact that the new development will have.
- 12.53 If there is no quantitative or accessibility deficiency there may be a qualitative deficiency that needs to be addressed.
- 12.54 To identify the level of quantitative, qualitative and accessibility deficiency within the area of the development, the PPG17 study should be applied for each of the types of open space. In simple terms, this is as follows:
- estimate the number of residents living in the proposed development (being explicit about assumed occupation rates)
  - calculate the existing amount of open space within the agreed accessibility threshold of the new development. For example, there may be an existing quantitative undersupply of parks and gardens, provision for young people and children and allotments in the area of the development site.
  - estimate the existing population within the relevant accessibility threshold and combine this with the estimated population of the new development
  - compare the existing amount of open space and the total population with the quantity standards developed for that typology in the PPG17 study to decide if after the development there will be sufficient quantity within recommended distances of the development site to meet local needs.
- 12.55 If when assessed against the relevant PPG17 quantity standards, there is a sufficient amount of that type of open space in the local area to meet the needs of the total population, the Council may expect developer contributions to enhance the quality of open spaces within that accessibility threshold.

12.56 Where it has been decided that a contribution is required to improve provision locally, reference should be made to the quality standards for each typology and the assessment against these standards. Contributions should only be considered necessary where the quality of local provision is considered below the quality standard as outlined in the PPG17 assessment.

<b>PLAN1</b>	<p>Set out the local standards produced within the PPG17 document within the LDF. These should be used as a basis for determining the contributions required.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to the production of updated guidance for developers setting out the application of the new standards for open space, sport and recreation facilities. This may be in the form of updated guidance or SPD.</p>
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<b>PLAN2</b>	<p>Apply these local standards to decide whether the development creates a need for new open space or a need to improve the quality of existing open space in the local area</p>
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**3. Determine whether the open space can/should be provided on site.**

12.57 In instances where a quantitative deficiency has been identified, it is necessary to determine whether the open space should be provided on site. A new area of open space should be required where the existing amount of open space is insufficient to cater for the needs of the total population. The requirement should only cover the needs of the people who will be living in the new housing development.

12.58 If a housing development generates a need for new open space then wherever possible this should be provided on-site. However, in some circumstances it will not be possible to achieve this. It is recommended that minimum size standards for each typology are developed to ensure that provision is useable and can be viably maintained. If the quantitative need for a type of open space is equivalent to or above the minimum size threshold then new provision should be required on site.

<b>PLAN3</b>	<p>Identify appropriate minimum size thresholds for on-site provision for each typology. Develop a matrix approach to determine the threshold of dwellings for on-site versus off-site provision as a guide only. A case-by-case approach will still be required.</p>
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12.59 If it is not possible to provide the open space required on site, then contributions should be sought towards the new provision or enhancement of that type of open space within the accessibility threshold. It must be proven that the contribution will be used to improve or provide new provision that is directly related to the development in question.

***Pooled contributions***

12.60 Where the combined impact of a number of developments creates the need for infrastructure, it may be reasonable for the associated developer contributions to be pooled. In addition, where individual development will have some impact but is not sufficient to justify the need for a discrete piece of infrastructure, local planning

authorities may seek contributions to specific future provision. This can be determined through the application of the quantity standards and the agreed accessibility thresholds developed in study. However, a degree of certainty is needed that cumulatively sufficient developments will come forward in that locality within an agreed time frame or else the contributions will need to be returned to the developer. This should be closely linked to emerging Local Development Framework work on site-specific allocations and knowledge of areas of significant development. Pooled contributions may also be of particular benefit within the more rural areas of the City.

- 12.61 Alternatively, in cases where an item of infrastructure necessitated by the cumulative impact of a series of developments is provided by a local authority before all the developments have come forward, the later developers may still be required to contribute the relevant proportion of costs.

**4. Calculate the recommended open space contribution for new open spaces.**

- 12.62 The level of developer contributions for off-site provision will depend on whether it includes the costs of land acquisition. Standards costs towards the enhancement of existing open space and provision of new open spaces (across all typologies) should be clearly identified and revised annually. They should be based on local circumstances.
- 12.63 The cost of open space can be difficult to determine based on what elements of open space provision to include within the costing. For example, whether the cost of a facility should include site preparation, eg levelling, drainage, special surfaces and what ancillary facilities to include within costings, what level of equipment and land costs. A guide can be found on the Sport England website: [http://www.sportengland.org/kitbag\\_fac\\_costs.doc](http://www.sportengland.org/kitbag_fac_costs.doc) and the NPFA Cost Guides for Play and Sport.

**Worked example – calculating the requirement for new provision from a development in City of York**

- 12.64 A worked example, detailing the calculation required to determine the contribution towards amenity green space, is provided as follows:
- a housing development for 70 dwellings has been submitted to the Council. The development consists of 30 four-bed dwellings, 30 three-bed dwellings and 10 two-bed dwellings. This will result in 230 additional residents living in the locality.
  - the agreed accessibility catchment for amenity green space is a 5 minute walk time or 240 metres. Within this distance of the housing development there is currently 0.70 hectares of provision.
  - the estimated population within 240 metres of the housing development is 800 people. Combined with the estimated population from the new development (230), this gives a total population of 1030.
  - the quantity standard for amenity green space is 1.07 hectares per 1000 population. Multiplied by the total population (1030) produced a requirement for 1.102 hectares of amenity greenspace. The existing amount of amenity greenspace is 0.70 hectares.

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- 0.70 hectares of amenity green space within 280 metres is a lower level of provision than the required 1.102ha. The developer will therefore be required to provide further provision.
- the size requirement can be calculated by multiplying the quantity standard per person by the population of the new development. In this example this represents 0.00129 hectares per person multiplied by 230 people, producing a requirement for 0.30 hectares. Given the shortfall in provision is 0.41 hectares, in order to meet the needs of the people who will be living in the new housing development; the full quantity of provision should be secured. The developer should only be asked to provide 0.30 hectares, as they can not be asked to make up existing deficiencies.
- reference should be made to the agreed minimum size standards to determine whether the requirement should be on site or off site. In this example the minimum acceptable size is 0.2 hectares, so either there should be on site provision of a single piece of land at least 0.2ha in area, or a contribution towards off site provision should be sought.

12.65 It is unreasonable to ask the developer to fund the entire shortfall in the area, and the contribution can only seek to obtain a contribution for the impact of the additional housing.

- if the open space were to be provided off-site, the estimated cost for the provision of amenity greenspace is £8,200 on the basis of a site being 0.2ha (2000m<sup>2</sup>) in size. For the purpose of this example, the cost per hectare is assumed to be £41,000.
- the agreed local standard for provision is 1.07 ha per 1000 population, or 0.00107 ha per person
- using the formula set out above, the contribution required for a 70 dwelling development is:
  - 230 (number of people in development in terms of increased demand over capacity within accessibility catchment of the development) X 0.00107 (requirement per person) X £41,000 (cost of provision per hectare)
  - the contribution required towards amenity greenspace is **£10,090**.

12.66 The application of this formula ensures that the level of provision required from developments is worked out proportionally as to the level of increased demand the development incurs.

12.67 The above methodology should be repeated for each type of open space for which contributions are required.

<b>PLAN4</b>	Use a formula for the calculation of the provision of open space requirement. Update costings regularly.
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<b>PLAN5</b>	Utilise the methodology above to assess the impact of major growth against agreed quantity standards to proactively plan for emerging open space, sport and recreation needs.
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12.68 Maintenance sums are also an important element of any Section 106 process. Where appropriate, new developments should therefore make contributions towards the capital expenditure required to provide/enhance areas of open space and for its on going maintenance. Statements regarding this policy should be included within the LDF.

12.69 Where facilities for open space are to be provided by the developer and will be adopted by the Council:

- the Council should normally adopt and maintain properly laid out open space within residential areas subject to the payment, by the developer, of a commuted sum to cover the cost of future maintenance
- it is anticipated that the developer will be required to maintain the open space for 12 months, or other reasonable period for 'establishment'
- a commuted sum payment is payable on transfer of the land covering cost of maintenance for a defined period. From the review of existing supplementary planning policy maintenance periods are normally between five and 25 years.
- the commuted maintenance sum should be calculated using current maintenance prices to manage open space, multiplied to allow for inflation of prices and the interest received on the diminishing average annual balance of the sum.

<b>PLAN6</b>	Set out maintenance (commuted sums) required and update these regularly.
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<b>PLAN7</b>	Detailing the approach towards open space developer contributions in an SPD, ensuring that the system is fair, transparent and consistent.
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12.70 In addition to the use of the recommended local standards for determining the required level of developer contributions, these standards should also be used to determine the recreational value of an open space site and inform decisions on individual planning applications and priorities for investment.

12.71 The same process can also be used to determine the level of open space, sport and recreation facilities required in major new urban extensions as well as within smaller new housing developments.

12.72 This will be particularly important to inform the development of the Area Action Plans for the City centre and York North West. Consideration should be given to the current level of provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities in the area and the impact on the demand generated by new development. The regeneration of these areas provides a significant opportunity to ensure that the current and future supply of open space, sport and recreation facilities meet the needs of local residents.

### **Summary**

12.73 The provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities offers benefits wider than recreational amenities to local residents including educational, social, cultural and ecological benefits.

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- 12.74 Enhancement of the links between open space will be instrumental in both maximising the benefits of the network of open space and also in achieving the wider sustainable transport objectives.
- 12.75 The open space, sport and recreation study is also an invaluable tool in the formulation and implementation of planning policies. This relates to both the protection and enhancement of existing open space and the framework for developing planning obligations.
- 12.76 The study provides the tools in which the value of an open space can be assessed on a site-by-site basis, as and when a development proposal is submitted for an existing piece of open space. Similarly, this approach can be the basis for determining what type of open space provision is appropriate to be provided within a housing development and for pre-empting growth implications as part of the LDF. The study will be essential in maximising the effect of the regeneration opportunities in the City Centre and York Northwest areas of the authority.
- 12.77 The use of a standard formula for open space provision in new housing developments based on the cost of provision will greatly aid the negotiation process and provide a transparent approach in line with Circular 05/2005. This formula should be based on the recommended local standards contained within this report.