



Evidence Base

City of York

LDF

Local
Development
Framework

Open Space,
Sport and
Recreation Study
Main report

June 2007

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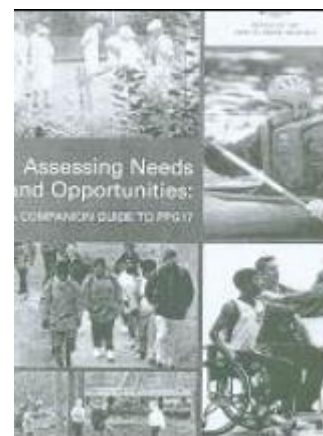
Introduction and background

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, together with an assessment of local needs and the production of local standards.
- 1.2 This report is intended to outline the proposed local standards, so that they can be scrutinised by the Council's LDF working group. The agreed local provision standards will form an important element of the Council's LDF and will directly inform the Core Strategy Issues and Options.
- 1.3 Once the local standards have been finalised, further work will be undertaken to develop a comprehensive Open Space Strategy to ensure that the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities will be adequate to meet present and future needs across the City of York. The strategy 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:

- 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.

1.11 This report provides justification for the local standards recommended, detailing current provision and setting out local community need.

1.12 Following scrutiny by the Council's LDF working group. The agreed local provision standards will be applied to current provision across the City of York, enabling the identification of geographical priorities and site-specific issues. This will form the basis of the open space strategy and this is explained in further detail in Section 12.

Why public open space?

1.13 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.



1.14 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

1.15 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.

SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.16 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.
- 1.17 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.
- 1.18 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.
- 1.19 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

- 1.20 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.
- 1.21 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.
- 1.22 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.
- 1.23 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.
- 1.24 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.
- 1.25 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

- 1.26 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.
- 1.27 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, the recommended quantity, quality and accessibility standards and a short summary of key issues emerging. This information is intended to inform the LDF Core Strategy Issues and Options consultation.
- 1.28 The next steps, following the adoption of the recommended local standards are outlined in brief in section 12, the Way Forward. This subsequent work will inform further, more detailed stages in the LDF such as the Council's Key Allocations DPD.
- 1.29 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 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 Freeman 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 Freeman resident in their

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Ward. However, by 1858, the Freeman 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
City Parks	<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"> • strategically significant • large effective catchment • accessed by public transport or car • large and more expensive • planning using national data and strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • informal recreation • community events.
Local Parks	<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"> • locally significant • smaller effective catchment • accessed on foot or bicycle • smaller/cheaper • planned using local data/ views • local objectives • voluntarily managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • informal recreation

SECTION 2 – UNDERTAKING THE STUDY

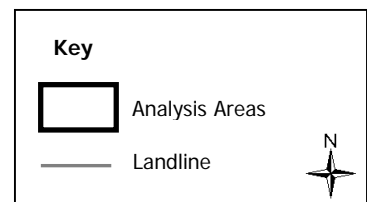
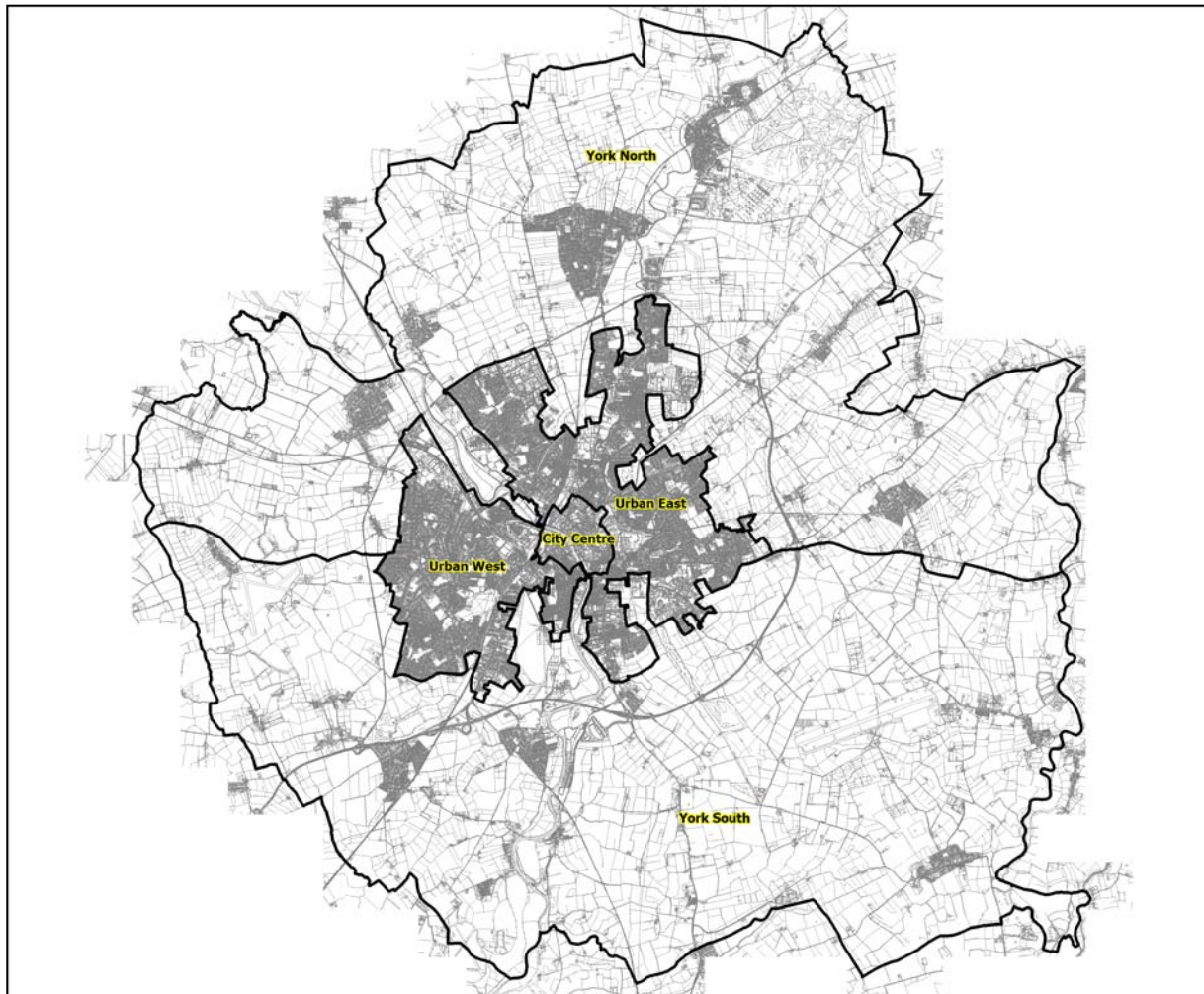
Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspaces	Includes publicly accessible woodlands, urban forestry, scrub, grasslands (e.g. downlands, commons, meadows), wetlands and wastelands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> wildlife conservation, biodiversity environmental education and awareness.
Amenity Greenspace	Most commonly but not exclusively found in housing areas. Includes informal recreation green spaces and village greens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> informal activities close to home or work children's play enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas
Provision for Children	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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children's play
Provision for young people	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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> teenage shelters skateboard Parks BMX tracks Multi Use Games Areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> activities or meeting places for young people
Outdoor Sports Facilities	Natural or artificial surfaces either publicly or privately owned used for sport and recreation. Includes school playing fields. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> outdoor sports pitches tennis and bowls golf courses athletics playing fields (including school playing fields) water sports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> facilities for formal sports participation
Allotments	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"> growing vegetable, fruit and flowers (drop root crops)
Cemeteries & Churchyards	Cemeteries and churchyards including disused churchyards and other burial grounds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> burial of the dead quiet contemplation
Green Corridors	Includes towpaths along canals and riverbanks, cycleways, rights of way and disused railway lines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> walking, cycling or horse riding leisure purposes or travel opportunities for wildlife migration.

The geographical area

- 2.9 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.
- 2.10 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.
- 2.11 Following adoption of the local standards, the application of the accessibility standard will enable analysis and interpretation of the distribution of open spaces without reference to the analysis area in which the site is located.

SECTION 2 – UNDERTAKING THE STUDY

Figure 2.1 - Analysis Areas



PPG 17 – 5 step process

- 2.12 The PPG17 Companion Guide sets out a five step logical process for undertaking a local assessment of open space. This report covers steps 1 to 3 as set out below. Following agreement of the local standards, steps 4 and 5 will be undertaken, which will lead to the production of a open space strategy.
- 2.13 Although presented as a linear process below, in reality, steps 1 and 2 were undertaken in parallel.
- 2.14 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

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

Step 1 - Identifying local needs

- 2.16 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.
- 2.17 Background is provided on each of the key elements of the consultation in the paragraphs that follow.

Household survey

- 2.18 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.
- 2.19 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.

- 2.20 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.
- 2.21 735 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%.
- 2.22 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

- 2.23 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 e mail, postal letter or telephone call.
- 2.24 Some ward committee meetings were attended by a Council Officer who provided more detailed background on the study verbally.

Neighbourhood drop in sessions

- 2.25 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.
- 2.26 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

- 2.27 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.
- 2.28 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.
- 2.29 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

- 2.30 Consultation with young people and children is traditionally difficult, however it is important to understand the views of this large sector of the community.
- 2.31 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.
- 2.32 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.
- 2.33 The information obtained through the distribution of these questionnaires is instrumental in the development of the local standards.

External Agencies Questionnaire

- 2.34 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.
- 2.35 Many external agencies also attended the workshops, which provided further opportunities for discussion.

Internal officers

- 2.36 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

- 2.37 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.
- 2.38 A total of 620 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.
- 2.39 Site assessments were then carried out to all sites identified through the audit process. 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.
- 2.40 A meeting was held with Council officers to discuss the audit and ensure that it was complete and accurate.
- 2.41 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.
- 2.42 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**
- 2.43 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.

SECTION 2 – UNDERTAKING THE STUDY

- 2.44 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 expectations of residents of City of York Council.
- 2.45 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.
- 2.46 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.
- 2.47 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 2004 subnational population projections. Future demand is projected up to 2029 in line with the core strategy.

Quantity

- 2.48 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.
- 2.49 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 perceived community need.
- 2.50 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.
- 2.51 Provision standards should then be applied, in conjunction with accessibility and quality standards to determine shortfalls, surpluses and priority areas for investment and improvement. This will form the next stage of work and will be the basis of the greenspace strategy.
- 2.52 Table 2.2 below summarises the process undertaken to set local quantity standards.

Table 2.2 – The key stages of setting local quantity standards

Process Stage	Methodology
National Standards	Analysis of any existing national standards for each typology. These are usually provided by national organisations e.g. 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

- 2.53 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).
- 2.54 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.
- 2.55 Distance thresholds (i.e. 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.
- 2.56 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.
- 2.57 Table 2.3 overleaf outlines the key stages in setting local accessibility standards.
- 2.58 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

Process Stage	Methodology
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

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	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

- 2.59 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.
- 2.60 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.
- 2.61 All sites assessed were given a score for a range of factors including:
- cleanliness and maintenance
 - security and safety
 - vegetation
 - ancillary accommodation.
- 2.62 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 (e.g. 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.
- 2.63 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.

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2.64 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.

2.65 The key steps to setting a quality vision are set out in Table 2.4 overleaf:

Table 2.4 – Setting a quality vision

Process Stage	Methodology
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.

2.66 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.

2.67 The application of the process for each typology, along with the agreed benchmark score can be found in typology specific Sections 4 – 11.

The way forward

2.68 The next steps will be outlined in Section 12.

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.

Document Reviewed	Summary	Links to Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study
<p><i>Yorkshire and Humber Plan – Regional Spatial Strategy (Consultation Draft December 2005)</i></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"> • “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” • “open spaces within settlements, all have a strong influence on the character and distinctiveness of many of the Region’s towns” and • “it is important that valuable habitats and open spaces are retained within settlements and that a vibrant mix of land uses is maintained”. <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"> • safeguarding and enhancing facilities for sports and recreation • increasing activity rates and opportunities to participate in sport and recreation. Measured by increasing participation by 1% per year. 	<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 Green Space, Sport and Recreation Study.</p>
<p><i>Our Region, Our Health (2004)</i></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</p>	<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>

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Document Reviewed	Summary	Links to Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study
	<p>particular relevance to this open space, sport and recreation study include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote the benefits of physical activity on a regional basis • create a regional strategic partnership to ensure a co-ordinated approach to attract and retain more public and private sector investment in physical activity • implement regular monitoring including levels of smoking, diet and physical activity • focus investment on increasing physical activity in the region • develop a coordinated approach to attract and retain more public and private investment in physical activity. 	

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Document Reviewed	Summary	Links to Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study
<p>Yorkshire Plan for Sport</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"> • improve health and wellbeing • increase participation • improve levels of performance • widen access • create stronger and safer communities • improve education. <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>
<p>City of York Development Control Local Plan (2005)</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 superseded 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"> • 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. • Policy NE2 prevents development where it is 	<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 greenspaces within York.</p> <p>This study will inform and support the revision of policies and the future policy direction for greenspaces 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>

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Document Reviewed	Summary	Links to Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study
	<p>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</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Policy L1c considers the provision of open space in new developments, detailing that developments above 2500m² will be expected to include contributions towards open spaces in line with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 0.9ha per 1000 population amenity greenspace - 1.7ha per 1000 population sports pitches - 0.7ha per 1000 population provision for children. • Policy L2 prevents against the loss of allotment sites unless it can be proven that they are surplus to requirements. 	<p>protected.</p>

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Document Reviewed	Summary	Links to Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study
<p>Local Development Framework</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>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.</p>	<p>In order for a Local Development Framework to be considered well founded, the strategies / policies / allocations must 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.</p>
<p>Without Walls – York Community Strategy 2004 - 2024</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"> • The Safer City – to be a safe city with a low crime rate, and to be perceived as such by residents and visitors • The Healthy City – to ensure that residents enjoy healthy lifestyles through the promotion of healthy living and easy access to health care services • A City of Culture – to build a culture that welcomes and inspires visitors and presents opportunities for all • 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 • The inclusive City – to ensure that all residents and visitors can take part in life in the city • 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 • The Sustainable City – ensure that the city has a quality built and natural environment with a modern and integrated transport scheme. <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"> • providing alternative social and recreational 	<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>

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Document Reviewed	Summary	Links to Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study
	<p>activities for young people to enjoy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• develop a healthy lifestyle strategy• increase participation in sport, play and active lifestyles• maximise the opportunities created by the presence of the river through the inauguration of the annual Festival of the Rivers• 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.	

Document Reviewed	Summary	Links to Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study
<p>Corporate Strategy – 2006 - 2009</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"> • improving the actual and perceived condition of the cities’ streets and open spaces • improving the health and lifestyles of residents in York. 	<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>Local Transport Plan 2006 - 2011</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"> • tackling congestion • improving accessibility for all • safer roads • improving air quality • improving culture, health and well-being • enhancing education and the local economy. 	<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

Document Reviewed	Summary	Links to Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study
	<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> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• development of new cycle and pedestrian routes which link to the local public transport network• improvements to the perceived and actual safety of cycle and pedestrian routes• improving public spaces through better maintenance of physical and cultural assets, such as footpaths, cycle routes, and public transport infrastructure• encouraging more physical activity by improving the walking and cycling networks• 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.	

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 e.g. 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 E.

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

Existing level of provision	Recommended standard – City and Local Parks
30.1 hectares, equivalent to 0.16 ha per 1000 population.	0.16 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 0.16 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>Qualitative improvements are particularly important given the limited prospect and opportunity to provide more parks within York. Moreover, given the population growth that will be experienced up to 2029, 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	Provision per 1000 population	Current Balance Against Local Standard (0.16 hectares per 1000 population)	LDF Population (2029)	Provision per 1000 population (2029)	Future Balanced Against Local Standard (0.16 hectares per 1000 population)
City Centre	5,604	5.01	0.89	4.09	6,785	0.74	3.89
Urban East	68,081	8.58	0.13	-2.62	82,426	0.10	-4.98
Urban West	50,079	4.46	0.09	-3.78	60,631	0.07	-5.51
York South	20,914	12.05	0.58	8.61	25,321	0.48	7.88
York North	38,269	0	0.00	-6.30	46,332	0.00	-7.62
Overall	182,947	30.10	0.16	0.00	221,495	0.14	-6.34

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 8.61 hectares per 1000 population
- leading into 2029, as population figures rise, the overall position moves to a undersupply of -6.34 hectares, unless there is further provision made to meet to local standard of 0.16 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)

Recommended standard – CITY PARKS
<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>
<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>

Recommended standard – LOCAL PARKS
<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>
<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</p>

intended to provide a greater degree of flexibility.

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” – Rural 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

SECTION 4 – PARKS AND GARDENS

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
- 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 overleaf. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix H.

Accessibility Standard

Recommended standard – CITY PARKS
20 MINUTE WALK TIME
Justification
<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>

Recommended standard – LOCAL PARKS
15 MINUTE WALK TIME
Justification
<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. This will be discussed in greater detail in Section 12 'The Way Forward'.

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 – Strensall Common



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 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
1.58 hectares per 1000.	1.59 hectares per 1000 population
Justification	
<p>Current provision across York is equivalent to 1.58 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 their inclusion would skew the findings and give a misleading picture as to the amount of amenity green 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)	LDF Population (2029)	Provision per 1000 population (2029)	Future Balanced Against Local Standard (1.59 hectares per 1000 population)
City Centre	0.76	2	0.3	0.47	6,785	0.11	-10.03
Urban East	29.98	22	0.24	9.24	82,426	0.36	-101.08
Urban West	15.00	11	0.23	4.09	60,631	0.25	-81.40
York South	86.64	7	0.34	41.82	25,321	3.42	46.38
York North	156.57	21	0.07	47.36	46,332	3.38	82.90
Overall	288.95	63	0.07	47.36	221,495	1.30	-63.23

5.8. The key issues emerging from Table 5.2 include:

- there are currently 63 natural and semi natural open spaces in York. The overall level of provision equals 288.95 hectares, producing an average site of 4.58 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 47.36 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 (2)
- 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 1.58 hectares per 1000 population.

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.

Table 5.3 – Provision of natural and semi natural open space by ward

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	13,690	1.84	1.59	0.13	21.77	-19.93
Haxby and Wigginton Ward	12,468	0.4	1.59	0.03	19.82	-19.42
Holgate Ward	11,564	0.83	1.59	0.07	18.39	-17.56
Micklegate Ward	10,994	0	1.59	0	17.48	-17.48
Clifton Ward	12,017	4.26	1.59	0.35	19.11	-14.85
Hull Road Ward	8,269	1.58	1.59	0.19	13.15	-11.57
Acomb Ward	7,729	2.65	1.59	0.34	12.29	-9.64
Dringhouses and Woodthorpe Ward	10,733	10.15	1.59	0.94	17.06	-6.92
Wheldrake Ward	3,899	0	1.59	0	6.20	-6.20
Bishopthorpe Ward	3,802	0	1.59	0	6.05	-6.05
Osbaldwick Ward	3,149	0	1.59	0	5.01	-5.01
Derwent Ward	3,540	1.28	1.59	0.36	5.63	-4.35
Guildhall Ward	6,676	9.17	1.59	1.37	10.62	-1.44
Heworth Ward	3,786	5.77	1.59	1.52	6.02	-0.25

5.10. The key issues emerging from Table 5.3 include:

- 6 wards have a shortfall of over 10 hectares for natural and semi natural open space
- 4 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

- 5.11. 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)

Recommended standard – NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL OPEN SPACE
<p><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>
<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>

Current provision - quality

- 5.12. 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.
- 5.13. The application of the 25th 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

SECTION 5 – NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL PROVISION

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 Back – 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

5.14. 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
- high quality sites, especially sites achieving scores within the upper quartile percentile should be protected, specifically if they have high/significant usage. The aspiration should be for all natural and semi natural areas to fall within this 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
- 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

- 5.15. 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
15 MINUTE WALK TIME
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 that 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

- 5.16. 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.
- 5.17. The accessibility of existing natural and semi natural open space in the city is summarised in Table 5.5 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.
- 5.18. 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 – Rural North - Site ID 652 (63%) - Burnholme Drive NSN – Urban East – Site ID 184
Median – Upper quartile	53%-59%	(53%) – Walmgate Stray – York North – Site ID 552 (53%) – Lakeside Gardens NSN – York North – Site ID 806
Lower quartile - median	43%-52%	(50%) – Ash Walk NSN – 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%) - NSN by River Foss – Urban East – Site ID 811

5.19. 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. 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. 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).

Applying provision standards – identifying geographical areas

5.20. 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. This will be discussed in greater detail in section 12 ‘The Way Forward’.

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 or / and 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
Yorkshire and Humber Plan – Regional Spatial Strategy (Consultation Draft December 2005)	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 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.
City of York Development Control Local Plan	<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 2500m² 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>	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.

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
1.27ha per 1000 population	1.29ha per 1000 population
Justification	
<p>The current level of provision is equivalent to 1.27 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 slightly 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 e.g. 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 (1.29 hectares per 1000 population)	LDF Population (2029)	Provision per 1000 population (2029)	Future Balanced Against Local Standard (1.29 hectares per 1000 population)
City Centre	5,604	10.11	1.80	2.88	6,785	1.49	1.36
Urban East	68,081	38.13	0.56	-49.69	82,426	0.46	-68.20
Urban West	50,079	60.33	1.20	-4.27	60,631	0.99	-17.88
York South	20,914	27.91	1.33	0.93	25,321	1.10	-4.75
York North	38,269	96.07	2.51	46.70	46,332	2.07	36.30
Overall	182,947	232.55	1.27	-3.45	221,495	1.05	-53.18

6.10. The key issues emerging from Table 6.2 include:

- the overall level of provision in York equals 232.55 hectares, which equates to a deficiency of -3.45 against the local standard (1.29 hectares per 1000 population)
- while the City Centre, and the 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 (-49.69) and Urban West (-4.27) 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 (-53.18 hectares against the local standard of 1.29 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 outdoor sports facilities (hectares)	Local Standard (ha/1000)	Per 1000 population current	TOTAL Requirement	Surplus / Deficiency
Acomb Ward	7,729	1.44	1.29	0.19	9.97	-8.53
Bishopthorpe Ward	3,802	0.34	1.29	0.09	4.90	-4.56
Clifton Ward	12,017	12.48	1.29	1.04	15.50	-3.02
Derwent Ward	3,540	1.24	1.29	0.35	4.57	-3.33
Dringhouses and Woodthorpe Ward	10,733	43.81	1.29	4.08	13.85	29.96
Fishergate Ward	7,921	15.43	1.29	1.95	10.22	5.21
Fulford Ward	2,595	2.92	1.29	1.13	3.35	-0.43
Guildhall Ward	6,676	5.42	1.29	0.81	8.61	-3.19
Haxby and Wigginton Ward	12,468	6.62	1.29	0.53	16.08	-9.46
Heslington Ward	4,122	1.36	1.29	0.33	5.32	-3.96
Heworth Ward	3,786	20.74	1.29	5.48	4.88	15.86
Heworth without Ward	3,786	6.86	1.29	1.81	4.88	1.98
Holgate Ward	11,564	19.73	1.29	1.71	14.92	4.81
Hull Road Ward	8,269	1.71	1.29	0.21	10.67	-8.96
Huntington and New Earswick Ward	12,089	20.2	1.29	1.67	15.59	4.61
Micklegate Ward	10,994	15.02	1.29	1.37	14.18	0.84
Osbalwick Ward	3,149	0.72	1.29	0.23	4.06	-3.34
Rural West York Ward	10,286	5.23	1.29	0.51	13.27	-8.04
Skelton, Rawcliffe and Clifton Without Ward	12,160	30.58	1.29	2.51	15.69	14.89
Strensall Ward	7,862	13.64	1.29	1.73	10.14	3.50
Westfield Ward	13,690	6.44	1.29	0.47	17.66	-11.22
Wheldrake Ward	3,899	0.61	1.29	0.16	5.03	-4.42

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)

Recommended standard – Amenity Green Space
<p><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></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.
- 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
- high quality sites, especially sites achieving the upper quartile score of 74% should be protected, specifically if they have high/significant usage. The aspiration should be for all amenity green spaces to fall within this 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

Recommended standard
5 minute walktime (420m)
Justification
<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. This will be discussed in greater detail in section 12 'The Way Forward'.

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 south of Dunnington.



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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.

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 2,500m² 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"> • raise the standards of play provision • encourage genuine communication and interactions between children and young people, individuals and services with interests in play • better manage play environments. <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 may 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.

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

Existing level of provision	Recommended standard
0.05 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)	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	6,785	0.01	-0.37
Urban East	3.21	30	0.02	0.31	82,426	0.04	-2.56
Urban West	2.11	17	0.04	0.44	60,631	0.03	-2.13
York South	1.77	11	0.02	0.53	25,321	0.07	0.00
York North	2.47	19	0.01	0.72	46,332	0.05	-0.77
Overall	9.66	79	0.01	0.72	221,495	0.04	-5.84

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.
- 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

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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 with the exception of York South are predicted to have an undersupply by 2029. The most significant undersupply can be found in Urban East with –2.56 against the local standard
- it is important to note that whilst it appears that York South analysis area has 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 and Teenagers by ward

Ward	Pop	Provision of children and teenagers (hectares)	Combined Local Standard (ha/1000)	Per 1000 population current	TOTAL Requirement	Surplus / Deficiency
Westfield Ward	13,690	0.5	0.11	0.04	1.51	-1.01
Haxby and Wigginton Ward	12,468	0.4	0.11	0.03	1.37	-0.97
Huntington and New Earswick Ward	12,089	0.42	0.11	0.03	1.33	-0.91
Acomb Ward	7,729	0.12	0.11	0.02	0.85	-0.73
Hull Road Ward	8,269	0.2	0.11	0.02	0.91	-0.71
Fishergate Ward	7,921	0.28	0.11	0.04	0.87	-0.59
Guildhall Ward	6,676	0.19	0.11	0.03	0.73	-0.54
Holgate Ward	11,564	0.84	0.11	0.07	1.27	-0.43
Bishopthorpe Ward	3,802	0	0.11	0	0.42	-0.42
Micklegate Ward	10,994	0.8	0.11	0.07	1.21	-0.41
Heworth without Ward	3,786	0.07	0.11	0.02	0.42	-0.35
Skelton, Rawcliffe and Clifton Without Ward	12,160	1.01	0.11	0.08	1.34	-0.33
Derwent Ward	3,540	0.08	0.11	0.02	0.39	-0.31
Heslington Ward	4,122	0.21	0.11	0.05	0.45	-0.24
Rural West York Ward	10,286	0.89	0.11	0.09	1.13	-0.24
Wheldrake Ward	3,899	0.21	0.11	0.05	0.43	-0.22
Dringhouses and Woodthorne Ward	10,733	1.03	0.11	0.10	1.18	-0.15
Osbalwick Ward	3,149	0.2	0.11	0.06	0.35	-0.15
Fulford Ward	2,595	0.17	0.11	0.07	0.29	-0.12
Clifton Ward	12,017	1.33	0.11	0.11	1.32	0.01
Strensall Ward	7,862	0.89	0.11	0.11	0.86	0.02
Heworth Ward	3,786	0.61	0.11	0.16	0.42	0.19

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 combined local standards for provision for children and young people. The largest requirement can be found in Westfield ward – where there is a requirement for a further hectare of provision to meet the local standard.
- only three wards have sufficient quantity to satisfy the local standard at the current time – Clifton, Strensall and Heworth.

Setting provision standards – quality

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

Quality Standard

Recommended standards
<p><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></p>
Justification
<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.</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 e.g. 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.

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7.18. The median score is 64.85% 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. 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	64.85%-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%-64.85%	(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 7.5 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.
- three sites 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
10 MINUTE WALK TIME
Justification
<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 7.6 overleaf.

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. This will be discussed in greater detail in section 12 'The Way Forward'.

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.

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

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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.

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Table 8.1 – Provision for Young People Local Strategic Context

Document Reviewed	Summary	Relevance to this open space, sport and recreation study
City of York Development Control Local Plan	<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 2,500m² 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 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>
Taking Play Forward – A Play Strategy for York	<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"> • raise the standards of play provision • encourage genuine communication and interactions between children and young people, individuals and services with interests in play • increase participation in play between children and young people • better manage play environments. <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

- 8.7. 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% think 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

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

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

Existing level of provision	Recommended standard
0.0043ha per 1000 population	0.04ha per 1000 population
Justification	
<p>The current level of provision is equivalent to 0.0043 hectares per 1000 population, which is 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

- 8.9. 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 (0.04 hectares per 1000 population)	LDF Population (2029)	Provision per 1000 population (2029)	Future Balanced Against Local Standard (0.04 hectares per 1000 population)
City Centre	5,604	0	0.0000	-0.22	6,785	0.0000	-0.27
Urban East	68,081	0.15	0.0022	-2.57	82,426	0.0018	-3.15
Urban West	50,079	0.57	0.0114	-1.43	60,631	0.0094	-1.86
York South	20,914	0.06	0.0029	-0.78	25,321	0.0024	-0.95
York North	38,269	0	0.0000	-1.53	46,332	0.0000	-1.85
Overall	182,947	0.78	0.0043	-6.54	221,495	0.0035	-8.08

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8.10. The key issues emerging from Table 8.2 include:

- the information displayed in the table 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 0.04 hectares per 1000 population
- the overall undersupply is equivalent to 6.54 hectares. The Urban East area has particularly high levels of under provision, equivalent to –2.57 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

8.11. 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
<p>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.</p> <p>A recent CABA 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.</p>

Current provision – quality

8.12. The quality of existing provision for teenagers in the City is summarised in Table 8.3. 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.

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- 8.13. The application of the 75th 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.
- 8.14. 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%	

- 8.15. 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

- 8.16. 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

Recommended standard
15 minutes walk (720m)
Justification
<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

- 8.17. 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.
- 8.18. 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%	(43%) - Acomb Moor by Ashmeade Close – Urban West – Site ID 313

- 8.19. Like the quality of provision for young people, the accessibility to sites for young people is relatively consistent across the City. The exception to this is the kickabout site at Acomb Moor which achieves an accessibility score of only 43%.

Applying provision standards – identifying geographical areas

- 8.20. 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. This will be discussed in greater detail in Section 12 ‘The Way Forward’ and will be encompassed within the next stage of work.

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



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

Table 9.1 - Strategic Context – Outdoor Sports Facilities

Document Reviewed	Summary	Links to open space, sport and recreation study
Yorkshire and Humber Plan – Regional Spatial Strategy (Consultation Draft December 2005)	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 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.
City of York Development Control Local Plan	<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 2500m² 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>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>

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	<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"> a) a need for the leisure facility no longer exists; or b) appropriate alternative facilities exist within the catchment area. <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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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>City of York Council Playing Pitch Strategy</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 the modal response 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.

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

Existing level of provision	Recommended standard
1.94ha per 1000 population	1.95ha 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 (1.94ha) at 1.96 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 below.

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)	LDF Population (2029)	Provision per 1000 population (2029)	Future Balanced Against Local Standard (1.95 hectares per 1000 population)
City Centre	0.16	1	0.16	0.16	6,785	0.02	-13.07
Urban East	90.7	59	0.06	7.04	82,426	1.10	-70.03
Urban West	58.6	30	0.05	6.68	60,631	0.97	-59.63
York South	115.72	30	0.07	50.32	25,321	4.57	66.34
York North	90.29	34	0.1	11.47	46,332	1.95	-0.06
Overall	355.47	154	0.05	50.32	221,495	1.60	-76.45

- 9.8 The key issues emerging from Table 9.2 above include:

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- the current overall level of provision is equivalent to 355.47 hectares spread across 154 sites across the City, which equate to an average site size of 2.3 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 (-70.03 against the local standard of 1.95 hectares per 1000 population).

Setting provision standards – quality

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

Quality Standard

Recommended standard
<i>“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”</i>
Justification
<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.

SECTION 9 – OUTDOOR SPORT FACILITIES

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. A full list of site scores can be found in the outdoor sport facilities section of Appendix D.

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%) – Huntingdon 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
 - high quality sites, especially sites achieving scores within the upper quartile percentile should be protected, particularly if they have high/significant usage. The aspiration should be for all outdoor sports facilities to fall within this category and achieve the quality vision

SECTION 9 – OUTDOOR SPORT FACILITIES

- 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 below. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix H.

Accessibility Standard

Recommended standard
15-minute walk (720m) to local outdoor sports (eg. grass pitches, tennis courts or bowling greens)
20-minute drive (8km) to synthetic turf pitches and golf courses
Justification
<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 walked 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, 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.</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

SECTION 9 – OUTDOOR SPORT FACILITIES

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%) – Wiggington 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
 - Sites with high accessibility scores, especially sites achieving scores within the upper quartile percentile should be protected, particularly if they have high/significant usage and are of good quality
 - 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. This will be discussed in greater detail in Section 12 'The Way Forward'.

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.

Table 10.1 – Strategic Context -Allotments

Document Reviewed	Summary of key strategic drivers	Links to open space, sport and recreation study
City of York Council Allotment Strategy	<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>	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.
City of York Development Control Local Plan	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.	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.

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 City
- 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
0.29 ha per 1000 population total	0.31 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	Current Provision per 1000 population	Number of sites	Smallest site	Largest site	LDF Population (2029)	Provision per 1000 population (2029)	Future Balanced Against Local Standard (0.31 hectares per 1000 population)
City Centre	0.8940	0	-	-	6,785	0.00	-2.10
Urban East	0.1260	11	0.13	3.65	82,426	0.12	-15.39
Urban West	0.0891	6	0.67	4.04	60,631	0.16	-9.00
York South	0.5762	14	0.28	5.48	25,321	0.89	14.70
York North	0.0000	11	0.12	2.9	46,332	0.23	-3.54
Overall	0.1645	42	0.12	5.48	221,495	0.24	-15.33

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 1000 population is found in the City Centre, where there is currently no provision. In contrast, York South has 0.89 hectares per 1000 population
- based on the local standard of 0.31 hectares per 1000 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

Ward	Pop	Provision of outdoor sports facilities (hectares)	Local Standard (ha/1000)	Per 1000 population current	TOTAL Requirement	Surplus / Deficiency
Clifton Ward	12,017	1.02	0.31	0.08	3.72	-2.70
Haxby and Wigginton Ward	12,468	1.2	0.31	0.10	3.86	-2.66
Hull Road Ward	8,269	0	0.31	0	2.56	-2.56
Westfield Ward	13,690	1.99	0.31	0.15	4.24	-2.25
Dringhouses and Woodthorpe Ward	10,733	1.24	0.31	0.12	3.33	-2.09
Guildhall Ward	6,676	0	0.31	0	2.07	-2.07
Strensall Ward	7,862	0.49	0.31	0.06	2.44	-1.95
Acomb Ward	7,729	0.77	0.31	0.10	2.40	-1.62
Wheldrake Ward	3,899	0	0.31	0	1.21	-1.21
Osbalwick Ward	3,149	0	0.31	0	0.98	-0.97
Heworth without Ward	3,786	0.2	0.31	0.05	1.17	-0.97
Heslington Ward	4,122	0.58	0.31	0.14	1.28	-0.70
Rural West York Ward	10,286	3.02	0.31	0.29	3.19	-0.17

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

Recommended standard
<i>‘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’.</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 25th 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 figure 10.3 below. 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 is 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

Recommended standard
15 MINUTE WALK TIME
Justification
<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%) Huntingdon 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. This will be discussed in greater detail in Section 12 ‘The Way Forward’.

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:

- 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	0.69	5	0.09	0.23
Urban East	2.06	6	0.13	0.89
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	43.04	48	0.08	2.47

- the overall level of provision equals 43.04 hectares, producing an average site of 0.9 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.

SECTION 11 – CEMETERIES AND CHURCHYARDS AND GREEN CORRIDORS

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 below:

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

Above upper quartile	82.5%+	(92%) St Everilda's Church – York North – Site ID 780 (92%) St Mary's Church – York North – Site ID 740
Median – Upper quartile	78%-82.5%	(80%) Fordlands Road Cemetery – York South – Site ID 731 (80%) All Saints Church – York South – Site ID 775
Lower quartile - median	70%-78%	(70%) St Wilfreds Garrisons Church – York North – Site ID 749 (76%) Holy Trinity Church – York North – Site ID 754
Less than lower quartile	Below 70%	(56%) York Cemetery – York South – Site ID 718 (52%) Haxby and Wigginton Cemetery – 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 allotment sites are located in York North analysis area. However, it also contains two of the bottom five scoring sites.
- St Everilda's and St Mary's Church are the highest scoring sites – each achieving 92%.

Cemeteries and Churchyards - Setting provision standards

11.11. 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 standard has been summarised overleaf:

Quality Standard (see Appendix G)

Recommended standard – CEMETERIES AND CHURCHYARDS
<i>“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 (e.g. 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”</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.

Green Corridors – Introduction

- 11.12. 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.
- 11.13. 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.
- 11.14. 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

- 11.15. 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 more 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

- 11.16. 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”
- 11.17. As a consequence, green corridors have not been audited as a separate typology, but have instead been included within the audit of natural and semi natural open spaces, due to the similarity between the two.
- 11.18. 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 overleaf:

Quality Standard (see appendix G)

Recommended standard – GREEN CORRIDORS
<p><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></p>
<p>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.</p>

Applying provision standards

- 11.19 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.

The Way Forward – PPG17 steps 4 and 5

Background

- 12.1 As detailed in Section 2, the PPG17 Companion Guide sets out a logical five-step process for undertaking a local assessment of open space.
- 12.2 This report and associated appendices summarise the key findings of stages 1 and 2, and culminating in the setting of provision standards:
- Step 1 – Identifying Local Needs
 - Step 2 – Auditing Local Provision
 - Step 3 – Setting Provision Standards
- 12.3 These standards are derived directly from the findings of the local needs assessment and audit and have been outlined in this report.
- 12.4 Steps 1-3, as undertaken, form the first phase in developing an open space strategy. It enables local standards to be agreed and will be used to inform the Core Strategy Issues and Options.
- 12.5 Once the local standards have been approved, further work will be undertaken in the form of Steps 4 and 5, to provide detailed information on the application of the provision standards, both in terms of quality and quantity, but also spatially:
- Step 4 – Applying Provision Standards; and
 - Step 5 – Drafting Policies – recommendations and strategic priorities.
- 12.6 The implementation of steps 4 and 5 will lead to the production of the open space strategy, which will identify future priorities for the delivery of open space across the City.
- 12.7 Completion of steps 4 – 5 will inform further, more detailed stages in the LDF and will be undertaken in due course.
- 12.8 The processes that will be followed as part of the production of the open space strategy (following adoption of the local standards) are set out below.

Step 4 - Applying the recommended local standards

- 12.9 Local standards have been recommended for quality, quantity and accessibility. Following agreement of these standards, these standards will be used to:

1) *Identify 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 ALL existing open spaces or sport and recreation facilities will be prioritised for new provision

2) Identify areas of quantitative deficiency or surplus

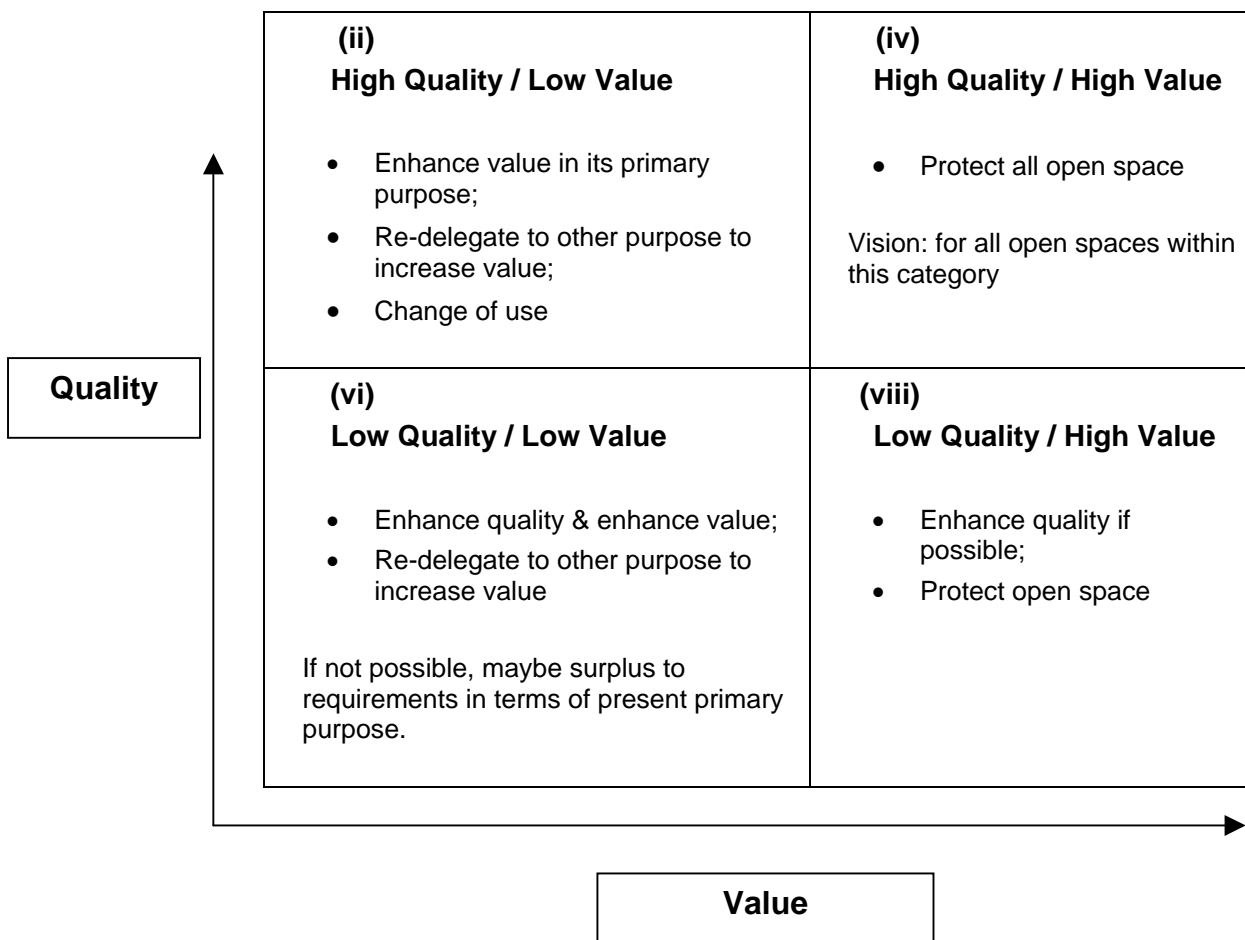
- areas of quantitative deficiency or surplus can be identified through the application of the quantity standard, either to a large geographical area, or more specifically to the population within the effective catchment of each different type of open space or sport or recreation facility for each form 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
- as noted in PPG17, **value** is an entirely different and separate concept from quality, and relates mainly to context (in terms of site accessibility and local quantity of provision, level and type of use and the wider benefits). The initial site assessments undertaken as part this study provide the majority of the information required in terms of wider benefits etc.
- 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.

12.10 Figure 14.1 below illustrates the various outcomes of combining value and quality and their implications that will be investigated as part of the development of the open space strategy.

Figure 12.1 – 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. This will be considered as part of the open space strategy.

5) Forecast Future Needs

- in order to complete stages 1-3 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). It is essential that the application of local standards considers future need in addition to existing unmet deficiencies and areas of surplus. This will include consideration of planned changes in provision and the likely location of future population growth.

Step 5 - Drafting Policies

12.11 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.

Funding opportunities – developer contributions

12.12 Whilst locally determined provision standards (as developed in stage 3) can be used as a basis for planning conditions or obligations in appropriate circumstances, it is only through the application of these standards that what is appropriate or otherwise can be determined.

12.13 PPG17 states that the need for either on site provision or developer contributions towards off-site provision requires the application of the adopted provision standards within the context of defined areas of accessibility, quality or quantity deficiency or

surplus in order to determine the need for either additional provision or the enhancement of existing provision.

- 12.14 In principle, planning authorities will be justified in seeking either on-site provision or contributions towards new off-site provision or the enhancement of existing off-site provision, for the full range of open spaces, sport and recreation facilities for which they have adopted provision standards. The relative priority of different forms of provision should be informed by the assessment of local needs and this is the main objective of stage 4 of the PPG17 process.

Summary

- 12.15 The completion of a local needs assessment and audit, and the subsequent use of the findings of these stages to produce local standards provides a sound basis upon which to develop an open space strategy.
- 12.16 The application of the standards will enable the identification of key issues and will drive the future delivery of open space provision across the City of York.

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