

Green spaces ... using planning



Assessing local needs
and standards

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

PARKS AND GREEN SPACES STRATEGY

BACKGROUND PAPER

GREEN SPACES...USING PLANNING:

ASSESSING LOCAL NEEDS AND STANDARDS

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 We need to consider whether we need standards for green spaces in Newcastle. What sort of standards, and how to apply them.
- 1.2 Without standards there is no baseline against which provision can be measured. It is difficult to make a case against a proposal to build on or change the use of existing open space or a case for open space to be included in a development scheme if there are no clear and agreed standards.
- 1.3 Standards are used to define how much open space is needed, particularly when planning new developments. Local authority planning and leisure departments have developed standards of provision and these have been enshrined in policy and guidance documents. These standards are predominantly for determining the quantity of open space. Having provision standards is a way to ensure that development proposals do not create a deficiency of open space and loss of amenity.
- 1.4 Efforts have been made in planning policies to consider the various types of open space, and standards have now started to appear differentiating between play provision, outdoor sports and certain other defined activities and uses.
- 1.5 The 1990 Town and Country Planning Act defines “open space” quite narrowly.
“Any land laid out as a public garden, or used for the purposes of public recreation, or land which is a disused burial ground”.
This seems inadequate and probably needs revision. Open space should by its very nature be land that is not built over but may be paved, grassed or have other vegetation. Thus not all open space is actually green space. Open space may be public or private. Public access may be total or restricted.
- 1.6 Access is an important issue. Having the right quantity of space is no good if it is too far from homes and communities. Thus attempts have been made to define catchments and minimum acceptable distances from the various types of open space. A hierarchy of levels of provision is often defined ranging from large scale regional or city-wide facilities down to the smaller and more local scale.
- 1.7 There has been debate particularly over the last 5 years or so about the decline in the quality of open space. The need to have standards for maintenance, facilities, appearance, safety and all the other aspects of spaces that make them pleasant and attractive to visit and to use is now recognised.

- 1.8** Newcastle has no current planning standards for the provision of woodland, natural or semi-natural green space or cemeteries. Nor are there standards on minimum acceptable dimensions of green space, minimum levels of facilities for say a district park or doorstep play area. It is therefore harder for the city council to argue that particular facilities are needed, in the absence of specific standards and evidence of demand or need.
- 1.9** There are different options for Newcastle that are explored in this paper. The main alternatives are as follows.

Do nothing. The Unitary Development Plan contains standards that have served a purpose in restricting loss of open space and allowing some new open spaces to be provided. Why change these? The answer is that doing nothing will not give Newcastle better green space provision. Past success has been on larger developments like the Great Park or where a developer chose to provide green space, as at Newcastle Business Park. There are many sites where green space benefits could have been negotiated but were not. Doing nothing will also not satisfy people who told us in our consultation exercises that green spaces need better protection.

No standards Are standards really needed or is this an outdated concept? Standards can serve a purpose in protecting and improving green spaces and public places – yet many of the UK's best parks were provided in Victorian and Edwardian times when there were no standards. Can we rely on creative urban design to provide a good range and quality of open space? The answer again is that some recent developments have provided good quality green space but not all. The quayside for example has little green space for the many new residents who will be living in the apartment blocks. Basic standards are needed: this need not stifle design or limit design quality.

Needs based standards If we follow current best practice guidance, a detailed needs assessment should allow us to develop standards that address our needs. Consultation is strongly recommended in the guidance to find out what people want to see provided or improved.

1.10 Conclusion

If we choose not to follow the best practice guidance we would have to be able to justify this decision. From all the strategy development work and consultation there is no obvious reason to depart from the guidance. The third option for needs-based standards is the most responsible way forward for Newcastle. This background paper will inform Newcastle's Green Spaces Strategy April 2004. It will also provide material for the City's statutory plans: the Community Strategy ("***The Newcastle Plan***") and the forthcoming Local Development Framework due to replace the Unitary Development Plan in 2007. A

key issues report on the Local Development Framework has also been published in April 2004 entitled “***Planning Newcastle: a chance to have your say.***”)

2 Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 (PPG17)

- 2.1** This was revised and re-issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in 2002 and represents a very clear and positive government response to the need for better protection and more improvement of open spaces. The guidance has focused on the need for better and locally determined standards justified by consultation and a comprehensive companion guide was issued in September 2002. Whilst the PPG and guidance offer much detailed advice and good practice they stop short of providing a tried and tested method for determining local standards. The guidance is very specific and key sections are quoted below.

2.2 Assess needs

“To ensure effective planning for open space, sport and recreation it is essential that the needs of local communities are known. Local authorities should undertake robust assessments of the existing and future needs of their communities for open space, sports and recreational facilities. “

- 2.3 Assess the different needs: different types of open spaces and different needs of people.**

“As a minimum, assessments of need should cover the differing and distinctive needs of the population for open space and built sports and recreational facilities. The needs of those working in and visiting areas, as well as residents should also be included.”

2.4 Audits of quantity as well as quality

“Local authorities should also undertake audits of existing open space, sports and recreational facilities ...Audits should consider both the quantitative and the qualitative elements of open space, sports and recreational facilities. Audits of quality will be particularly important as they will allow local authorities to identify potential for increased use through better design, management and maintenance.”

2.5 Identify deficiency and surplus

“Assessments and audits will allow local authorities to identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space, sports and recreational facilities in their areas. They form the starting point for establishing an effective strategy for open space, sport and recreation at the local level (tied into the local authority's Community Strategy), and for effective planning through the development of appropriate policies in plans.”

2.6 Strategies and planning policies

“Good quality assessments and audits, leading to clear strategies supported by effective planning policies, will provide vital tools for resolving the potential conflicts that arise between different uses and users of open space, sports and recreational facilities. The Government expects all local authorities to carry out assessments of needs and audits of open space and sports and recreational facilities in accordance with the paragraphs above.”

2.7 PPG 17 insists on a need for local standards

“The Government believes that open space standards are best set locally. National standards cannot cater for local circumstances, such as differing demographic profiles and the extent of existing built development in an area.”

2.8 Set standards by doing a needs assessment

“Local authorities should use the information gained from their assessments of needs and opportunities to set locally derived standards for the provision of open space, sports and recreational facilities in their areas. Local standards should include:

- i. quantitative elements (how much new provision may be needed);***
- ii. a qualitative component (against which to measure the need for enhancement of existing facilities)and***
- iii. accessibility (including distance thresholds and consideration of the cost of using a facility).***

2.9 Use standards to maintain an adequate supply

“Setting robust local standards based on assessments of need and audits of existing facilities will form the basis for redressing quantitative and qualitative deficiencies through the planning process. Standards should be included in development plans.”

“Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land should not be built on unless an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space or the buildings and land to be surplus to requirements. For open space “surplus to requirements” should include consideration of all the functions that open space can perform.”

“Open space and sports and recreational facilities that are of high quality, or of particular value to the local community, should be

recognised and given protection by local authorities through appropriate policies in plans.

Areas of particular quality may include:

- i small areas of open space in urban areas that provide an important local amenity and offer recreational and play opportunities,***
- ii areas of open space that provide a community resource and can be used for informal or formal events such as religious and cultural festivals, agricultural shows and travelling fairs and***
- iii areas of open space that particularly benefit wildlife.”***

“Where recreational land and facilities are of poor quality or under-used this should not be taken as necessarily indicating an absence of need in the area. Local Authorities should seek opportunities to improve the value of existing facilities.”

2.10 Use planning obligations (Section 106 Agreements)

“Planning obligations should be used where appropriate to seek increased provision of open spaces and local sports and recreational facilities.”

“Planning obligations should be used as a means to remedy local deficiencies in the quantity or quality of open space, sports and recreational provision. Local Authorities will be justified in seeking planning obligations where the quantity or quality of provision is inadequate or under threat, or where local development increases local needs. It is essential that local authorities have undertaken detailed assessments of needs and audits of existing facilities, and set appropriate local standards in order to justify planning obligations.”

2.11 The PPG 17 Companion Guide (Assessing Needs and Opportunities September 2002) suggests that local standards should also define:

- a minimum acceptable size
- a site area multiplier (not just for example the pitch area for playing football, but an allowance for the surrounds and in some cases, space for parking, pavilion etc associated with the pitch)
- capital, establishment and maintenance costs
- design guidelines.

2.11 Quantity and quality standards

"...should be determined from analysis of existing quantity provision in the light of local community views as to its adequacy and details of levels and types of use."

"Authorities should aim to bring all the open spaces or sport and recreation facilities in their area up to as consistent a standard of quality as possible and Best Value demands that they should progressively raise it."

2.12 Accessibility

"PPG 17 makes clear that new facilities should be located where they will be accessible on foot, by bicycle or by public transport. Sport England has suggested that the proportion of local residents within appropriate distances of indoor sports and leisure centres can be a useful performance indicator for Best Value purposes."

2.13 The companion guide advises all local authorities to adopt

"a logical methodology based on identifying needs, setting standards, identifying deficiencies and developing a strategy and related policies."

To carry out a local needs assessment that is compliant with PPG 17 we are urged to follow 5 steps as part of our Parks and Green Spaces Strategy preparation.

STEP 1

***Review existing strategies, policies and provision standards
Consult local communities and prepare a "vision"
Study the age and social structure of the local population
Seek the assistance of national agencies (For example CAGE,
Sport England, English Nature)***

STEP 2

Carry out an audit of local provision

STEP 3

***Determine quantity, quality, accessibility and minimum acceptable size standards
Develop design standards and costs***

STEP 4

***Identify deficiencies in accessibility
Identify deficiencies in quality***

Identify surpluses and deficiencies in quantity

STEP 5

Identify and evaluate strategic options

Prepare draft policy and consult stakeholders

- 2.14** Newcastle has already commenced its local needs assessment, has reviewed current policy and set a green spaces vision. On assessing whether national standards are appropriate, the guide suggests consulting sample areas with different levels of provision. We have done this on a city-wide scale by asking the community to respond to the draft strategy. Further targeted research has been carried out with people in particular locations. (See Chapter 5 and Annexe D)
- 2.15** 14 sample areas are described in Chapter 4 and Annexe C and cross-referenced with responses from people who live in or near those areas. Like the good practice example of Basingstoke and Deane, we have asked people what their preferred walking distances are for different types of green space. We have also asked what sort of level of provision they expect to see, in terms of features and facilities. The results are outlined in Chapter 5 and detailed in Annexe D.
- 2.16** Newcastle is completing an audit (Step 2) covering the quantity of green space, the quality and the benefit (value or service) provided. We are examining all sites over 0.1 hectare owned by the City Council. Private facilities over 0.4 hectare are identified, but have not been audited. Playing pitch, specialist sports facilities and children's playgrounds are not included as they are, or will be, the subject of separate studies. Our audit results are detailed in a separate background paper. (***Green spaces...quality***)
- 2.17** Step 3 is the core subject of this background paper in setting provision standards. Steps 4 and 5 will be addressed through Newcastle City Council's Local Development Framework (LDF) and Regeneration Plans. Quantitative and accessibility deficiencies will be addressed when the opportunity arises through the planning and regeneration process. Deficiencies in quality are to be addressed through the Green Space Strategy's organisation and investment actions and the proposed design code. The LDF and intended accompanying Supplementary Planning Documents will contain clear policies for protecting valued green spaces and for improving them to meet local needs and aspirations.
- 2.18** The task set by the government is to look carefully at our own individual situation, listen to our community and define what we need.

3 National and Local Standards

3.1 Introduction

This chapter identifies the strengths and weaknesses of Newcastle's current standards and compares them with what others are using or recommending. The standards examined are firstly quantity, secondly accessibility: including catchment areas or distance to green space and thirdly quality.

3.2 Quantity: how much open space?

There are current national recommendations for standards but the most recent guidance (see 2.7 above) is that green space provision should be determined locally according to local circumstances and needs, not taking the easy option of accepting a blanket national standard. The current national standards (National Playing Fields Association) and those adopted by a range of local authorities are summarised in Annexe A. Annexe B outlines a set of national standards currently in development by English Nature.

3.3 Newcastle's current quantity standards

Newcastle's standards are defined in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) adopted in 1998 and in our supplementary planning guidance. They follow National Playing Field Association provision standards very closely.

Neighbourhood and city centre parks: minimum size 6 hectares

Local open space: 1.2 hectare per 1000 population

Space for outdoor sport: 1.1 hectare per 1000 population

Allotments: an allotment plot for approximately 5% of the adult population (aged 30-75 yrs)

Children's play: 15 square metres per dwelling with 2 or more bedrooms. (5 square metres of this are to be for "formal" or equipped play)

Minimum formal play area size for younger children: 100 square metres

Minimum formal play area size for older children: 500 square metres

Note: The requirements for children's play relate only to residential areas and are taken from the Development Control Policy Statement No 18.

Note: A hectare is a metric area 100 x 100 metres or 10,000 square metres. (3.142 acres) One way to visualise a hectare is to picture two full size football pitches which measure 100 x 60 metres each. The two pitches would be a little larger than a hectare.

- 3.3** Whilst Newcastle has gone some way to defining needs for different types of open space, some of the definitions are ambiguous. There is a minimum size but no standard related to population for neighbourhood parks. Allotment size is not stated. There is no standard for space of less formal, countryside character. Our standards need to be more comprehensive and more robust.
- 3.4** The other authorities researched have similar standards but they are not identical indicating that the different authorities are already trying to look at local requirements. However like Newcastle most still rely heavily on the National Playing Fields Association standards. Hierarchies of provision are popular and probably ensure a better range of provision
- 3.5** **Location: how far away ?** Many authorities set distance standards in terms of linear distance and/or walking times. Usually these are from home to the various categories of open space.
- 3.6** **Newcastle's current distance standards**
These existing standards are contained in Newcastle's Unitary Development Plan 1998.

Neighbourhood or city centre public park minimum size 6 hectares, to be within 0.5 kilometre of *most* households
***Ideally* no dwelling should be further than 1.5 kilometres from football or cricket pitches**
***Most* households to be within 0.5 kilometre of tennis and bowls facilities and other specialist recreational facilities**

- 3.7** The standards are advisory in tone rather than strictly prescriptive. There are no distance standards for equipped play or local green spaces close to the home where children can play. There are no distance standards for allotments, nature areas, woodland or cycling and walking routes.
- 3.8** The research into other authorities indicates that those with better hierarchies of open space provision have also set clearer distance standards and frequently three or more distance standards. The other noticeable point is the difference in the terminology and definitions of the types of open space in the hierarchy. Neighbourhoods it seems, are very hard to define. (See definitions in Annexe A)
- 3.9** **Quality: what sort of design and management standards?**
Some authorities refer to quality issues, usually opting for a fairly broad and non-specific statement that public open spaces should be of high quality design and well cared for. Some go further and refer to particular design issues and management standards.
- 3.10** Good design and quality standards are hard to find. In practice they are more often described in detail in site specific development briefs,

design codes like that prepared for Newcastle Great Park and in Supplementary Planning Guidance. Newcastle currently has advice on design quality within Supplementary Planning Guidance for landscaping schemes and for children's play areas. Most local authority development plans have no quality standards or at best have broad, aspirational statements. Newcastle's Unitary Development Plan has the following.

Policy OS1 aims to achieve best possible standards including quality of open space, and to improve open space through master plans and development briefs. No standards are stated.

Policy OS1.2 describes neighbourhood and city centre parks as "substantial public spaces providing for a range of active and passive pursuits for people of all ages and abilities."

Development Control Policy Statement 18 on children's play in residential development provides indicative design guidance but without specific standards and criteria.

- 3.11** Most authorities use a hierarchy of different levels of provision of recreational facilities and define the size and nature of the open spaces. This is because different types of space serve different Most adopt a three tier approach. Where a hierarchy is developed this usually brings distance and catchment standards as well.
- 3.12** The Tyne and Wear authorities have a working group of open space policy officers and they have developed a local hierarchy of provision based on their shared good practice. (See table overleaf) This seems to offer a good model for us to adopt and will align us with our sister authorities including South Tyneside, who are already nationally recognised as demonstrating good practice. There is difficulty in that the terms regional, district, neighbourhood and local mean different things to different people and not just planning professionals. A "plain English" easy-to-understand description is needed.

The Tyne and Wear Open Space Hierarchy (*The sizes are indicative)

Type of open space	Description	Accessibility	Examples	Notes:
Regional	A site of regional significance in that it attracts people beyond Local Authority boundaries and offers distinctive qualities in terms of landscape and / or recreational opportunity	Due to the large catchment area of the site, car parking may be required. Facilities should also be available for cyclists and the site should also be accessible on foot or via public transport	Tyne Riverside Country Park High Gosforth Park Falcons Rugby Ground Kingston Park Town Moor The coast Newcastle Quayside & Hadrian's Way Jesmond Dene	Regional parks or facilities are often local tourist attractions
District	A site of strategic significance within the Local Authority district	Facilities should be available for cyclists and the site should also be accessible on foot or via public transport	Westgate College Lightfoot Centre Benwell Nature Park Leazes Park West Road Cemetery Exhibition Park	In our consultation we have used the term "city" to indicate that such a facility would serve and attract people from all over Newcastle

Neighbourhood	A site, usually greater than 2 hectares* in size, that serves the local community in providing an area for passive and or active recreational pursuits and offers visual relief in a built up area	Facilities should be available for cyclists and the site should also be accessible on foot or via public transport	Heaton & Armstrong Parks Gosforth Central Park Gala Field, Newbiggin Hall Walker Park Scotswood Sports Centre Blakelaw Recreation Ground Dukes Moor	In our consultation we used the term "Local" to indicate that the facility would attract and serve people from a particular part of the city
Local	A site, usually less than 2 hectares* in size, that principally offers visual relief in a built up area but may also offer some recreational opportunity	Principal mode of access will be on foot	North Benwell Park Pinewood Avenue, Walker South Gosforth Green Ayton Park, Byker Chelmsford Grove Playground Dinnington Village Green Lincoln Green, Brunton Park Allotments	We used "doorstep" to indicate that this sort of green space was within very easy walking of the home, school or workplace, sometimes within view

- 3.13** Newcastle's regeneration planners have adopted a six level hierarchy as follows for examining facilities and provision.

<p>Region (Northumberland and Durham) Sub-region (Former Tyne and Wear authorities) City (Newcastle upon Tyne) District (West End, Northern Villages, City Centre) Neighbourhood (Named localities – Gosforth, Westerhope, North Benwell etc) Doorstep (Named streets or building groups, Universities, Chinatown)</p>

The difference between *local* and *neighbourhood* is particularly difficult as these terms often mean the same thing.

3.14 Conclusions

Newcastle should aim to have robust quality, quantity and accessibility standards as recommended by PPG17, developed through consultation with local people to identify their needs and preferences. Our limited existing hierarchy of space provision across the range of green spaces should be expanded. We should do this in line with the Tyne and Wear model but replace the *local* category with *doorstep*. If we do this, our standards will be clearer to everyone and will be based on a careful needs assessment and audit. With less ambiguity, our policies and standards should be fairer and easier to apply and enforce, for the benefit of our community.

4 Density and housing type

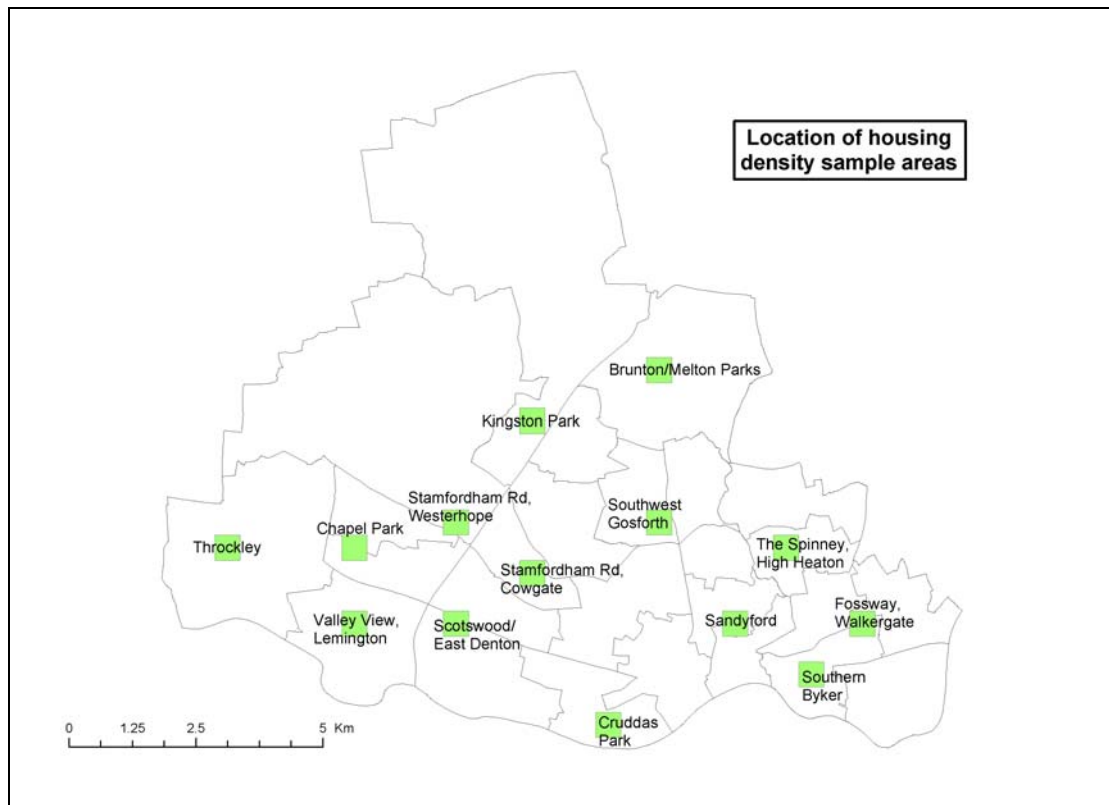
- 4.1** Newcastle has a range of house types and according to the 2001 census, 111,200 households with a further 6,200 vacant. Between 1991 and 2001 there has been a modest increase (3%) in home ownership. The current proportion of households privately rented is much the same as it was in 1991. There has been a significant decline in the number of households rented from the local authority from 38,600 -over 34%, in 1991 down to 31,100 -just under 28%, in 2001.

House type	%
Detached or semi-detached houses	42
Terraced	27
Purpose built flats	24
Houses converted into flats, or flats in commercial property	6
Tenure	%
Private rental	11
Local authority rental	28
Private ownership	53

- 4.2** Much of our housing will be similar to types and patterns of built development in other UK cities particularly in the north of England, but some are specific to our region and our city, particularly the “Tyneside Flats”.
- 4.3** Newcastle is a relatively compact city. Compared to nearby Gateshead and Sunderland there is only a small area of countryside located north and west of the built up area. Newcastle’s largest green space is the Town Moor occupying a very central location within a strongly cohesive built up setting. Newcastle's outlying villages are small in size and number, grouped to the west and north. Throckley in the far west of Newcastle is the largest and most urban village.
- 4.4** Present day Newcastle developed from the original Mediaeval core within the city walls, expanding eastward and westward along the riverside with increasing industrial activity. The presence of the Town Moor acted as a barrier to northward expansion until the late 19th century when homes for better-off Newcastle residents were built in suburbs like Gosforth, Jesmond and Fenham. At the same time Newcastle acquired its Victorian and Edwardian parks. In the 20th century there was massive expansion of Newcastle, as with most other large cities, and many small mining or agricultural settlements were engulfed within the built up area. Between the wars new neighbourhoods were created at Walker and Heaton to the east and Fenham, Scotswood, Cowgate and Blakelaw to the west . These were mainly council houses. From the 1950s growth was mainly north and west of Newcastle at North Gosforth, Kenton, Fawdon, Kingston Park,

Newbiggin Hall, Westerhope, West Denton, Chapel Park and Throckley; some private and some council. The residential estates of the 20th century often have generous green space, provided as gardens or as a green setting for houses, maisonettes and flats.

- 4.5** Some parts of Newcastle have now become deeply unpopular and 3,526 homes have been demolished since 1996. Most though not all are council houses and most are from the inter-war building boom. The west end has seen the highest number of demolitions not just of inter-war houses but also older terraces and even modern housing association homes built within the last 10 years. Demolition has been the last resort where people no longer want to live in a particular area, not as a result of house type, density or condition. New house building (3,192 in the same period) has been largely private development, some on brownfield land but plenty on land that has little or no previous development such as former convents, offices and other institutions with large grounds and agricultural land. New housing in Newcastle is predominantly 2 storey family housing except in Gosforth and the Quayside where medium rise, higher density flats and apartments have become the developer's preferred option, resulting in much higher densities.
- 4.6** Detailed statistics on Newcastle's densities are not available.
- 4.7** Some analysis has been carried out to inform this background paper and present a view of the range of house types and densities that are found locally. This work is indicative and illustrative in nature because of time and resource constraints, but the studies described in Annexe C provide some interesting insights.
- 4.8** As a pilot exercise a study has been carried out to look in some detail at a series of 14 Ordnance Survey 1:1250 sheets across Newcastle to compare and contrast the various different and locally typical house types and densities to be found here. The study looks at examples of our highest and lowest density layouts, public and private, and a range of different ages of property. It should be noted that the samples do not include an example of the most recent higher density housing that is currently being built along the NewcastleGateshead waterfront. This particular area is changing very rapidly and as yet the development pattern is not typical of the City as a whole. This could change as Newcastle develops its regeneration plans. National policy guidance (Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 on housing) requires urban development to achieve residential net densities of 30 homes per hectare or more.
- 4.9** Details of the analysis done and plans of the sample areas are within Annexe C and are summarised below. See also the background paper ***Green spaces...quality*** which gives details of current provision and quality at ward level.



1 Southern Byker

Low rise council housing with gardens and a distinctive mosaic of public space close to all the houses. Limited vehicle access. Average net density 41 homes per hectare.

2 South west Gosforth

Victorian and later suburb immediately north of the Town Moor (Dukes Moor). Low rise private housing, many homes with large gardens and some of the highest property values in Newcastle. Average net density 16 homes per hectare.

3 Brunton Park and Melton Park

Post war low rise suburban private housing with generous gardens. Average net density 19 homes per hectare.

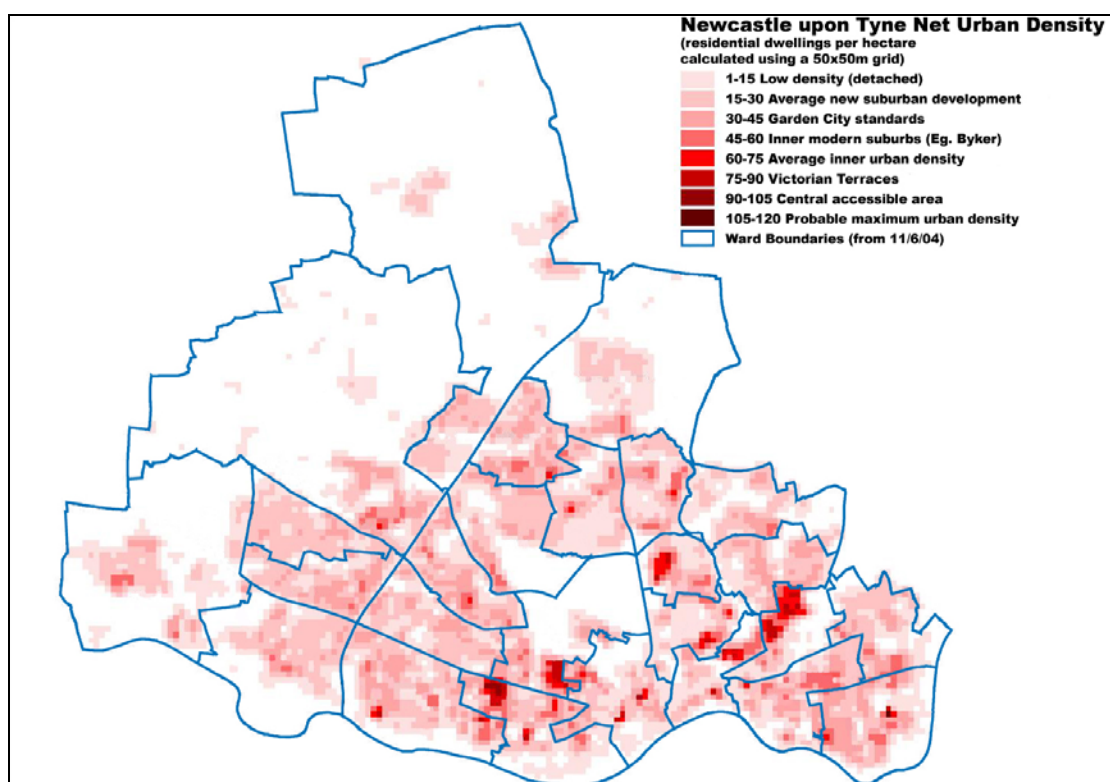
4 Sandyford

Low rise terraced houses many of which are “Tyneside flats” without gardens. Many properties privately rented. Average net density 52 homes per hectare.

- 5 Fossway, Walkergate**
Low rise interwar, semi- detached and terraced council housing, most with gardens. One block of 14 flats, Redwing Court. Average net density is 29 homes per hectare.
- 6 Stamfordham Road, Cowgate**
Low rise council houses with gardens, average net density is 41 homes per hectare.
- 7 Kingston Park**
Low rise edge-of-city estate of private houses with gardens built some 30 years ago, at the same time as Byker, around courts and in cul de sacs with garaging and parking dominant. Average net density is 24 homes per hectare.
- 8 Stamfordham Road, Westerhope/Newbiggin Hall Estate**
Post war, edge-of-city, low rise mixed tenure housing with gardens, average net density is 32 homes per hectare.
- 9 Scotswood/East Denton**
This area is interwar, low rise and mixed tenure with front and rear gardens, mostly semi-detached and average net density is 27 homes per hectare.
- 11 Chapel Park**
This is an edge-of-city private post war estate of moderate sized low rise family housing with front and back gardens. Average net density is 26 homes per hectare.
- 11 Valley View, Lemington**
This area is inter and post war, low rise and predominantly modest sized council homes in terraces with some semi-detached. Average net density is 31 homes per hectare.
- 12 Throckley**
This is an urbanised village with an unusual diversity of house types and ages, most with variable sized gardens, compared to other sample areas. Tenure is mixed and average net density is low at 25 homes per hectare.
- 13 High Heaton**
This area is an interwar council development mainly two storey family homes with modest gardens plus a single sixties tower block of flats at The Spinney. Average density for the area is 30 homes per hectare with a high of 103 for the tower block.
- 14 Cruddas Park**
This sample contains Newcastle's highest density houses in the seven, high rise, sixties Cruddas Park flats, now mainly occupied as student housing. Average net density is 10 homes per hectare.

4.10 Findings on densities

This sample study suggests that the highest densities in Newcastle are to be found where there are tower blocks of flats like Cruddas Park with 107 and the Spinney with 103 per hectare net density, even allowing for the green space setting of these blocks of flats. In the sample areas the highest net densities for low rise housing are to be found in places with 19th century terraces and "Tyneside flats" such as Doncaster Road, Sandyford with 94 homes per hectare, Julian Avenue, Walkergate with 68 and Woodburn Street, Lemington with 53. A digital map (see overleaf) produced for the whole city based on GIS information indicates the location of highest density residential areas with very clear concentrations in Sandyford, Heaton, Jesmond, Elswick and Arthur's Hill: all are inner urban areas with older terraced houses.



Lowest densities in Newcastle are to be found in the outer and often more affluent suburbs of Westerhope, Benton Park, North Gosforth, Woolsington and Kingston Park. In the sample areas the lowest average net densities were found in south west Gosforth (16) with lowest densities of six homes per hectare at Moor Crescent, Westfield Drive and Graham Park Road where properties have extensive gardens. Brunton/Melton Park showed an average net density of 19 with a lowest of 10 homes per hectare at Princes Road/Queensway, Brunton Park.

4.11 Findings on garden size

Many homes in Newcastle are flats or apartments with no garden, though usually these have landscaped grounds, particularly on council estates. Where homes have a garden, the average size over the

sample areas was 170 square metres. The largest garden in the samples was at Throckley: Prospect House with 1,800 square metres, much larger than the 1,486 square metres at Gosforth or 1,072 at Newlands Avenue, Melton Park. The smallest gardens were in the terraced "Tyneside flats" where a very small front plot a metre or so deep plus a back yard of 30 square metres may be shared between two households. Sandyford had the smallest garden of 6 square metres, front only, in a modern terraced house.

- 4.12** How should we use this information about our local housing types to assess green space need? There is no doubt that residents in different areas have different needs and this is often related to whether or not they have a garden. Not everyone wants or needs a garden: they can be hard work to maintain. For families the presence of a garden will at least provide a reasonably secure place for very young children to play and for others, a garden can provide a green space experience on the doorstep. In our research exercise in spring 2004, we tested whether having a garden affected perceptions of green space needs. Researchers found very little difference between those who had a garden and those who had not in terms of desired travelling times to play areas, sports pitches, parks and nature areas. It was a surprise to find that of those without a garden, 23% said 30 minutes was an acceptable travelling time to reach playing fields and generally people with no garden seemed prepared to spend longer travelling. Asked to comment however one interviewee says *"houses with no gardens need space nearby"*.
- 4.13** We can use density figures to predict the demand or need for types of green space to some extent and this must be balanced against whether or not households have access to a reasonable sized garden. Birmingham suggests a minimum of 70 square metres for a family garden with a minimum length of 10.5 metres. Newcastle's Supplementary Planning Guidance (Residential Design Guide - incorporating spacing standards) suggests the same minimum garden length mainly because it reflects the current minimum distance (21 metres) for privacy between houses. With the boom in garden centres and the popularity of television garden programmes there is probably an increasing awareness and value placed on gardens. It seems reasonable to suggest that a garden should allow enough space for a paved patio large enough for a table and chairs (4 x4 metres) a small grass area and flower beds, (5x5 metres) space for a small shed or compost heap (2x2 metres) and a path for access and hanging out washing (6 square metres). These rough spatial allowances add up to 51 square metres as an absolute minimum. Where there is a family and home owners may want to grow vegetables or have a bigger grass or paved area for children's activities then Birmingham's suggested minimum size seems more appropriate. Garden size is an issue that Newcastle's planning and urban design policies must address as part of the Local Development Framework process.

- 4.14** In a Tyneside flat or an apartment, there is little or no opportunity for youngsters to play in a garden and they will need safe accessible green space where they can play outdoors within very close proximity. There is less pressing need for small "doorstep" spaces close to the home where people have generous gardens.
- 4.15** Green space needs cannot all be met through an urban garden however generous. Even in the bigger gardens it is doubtful whether they could accommodate an informal game of football or feeding the ducks and certainly not a cycle ride or a half-hour run. Green spaces fulfill a social function for all ages. Density is certainly a factor and so is the presence or absence of a reasonable sized garden, but the overriding objective is to meet the needs of the whole community with a good range of green space experiences that are safe, attractive and accessible.

5 Newcastle's population

- 5.1** Latest figures from the Office of National Statistics are based on the 2001 Census and indicate that Newcastle's population in 2001 was 256,500. It is very clear that Newcastle is losing population at a rate on average of 1500 people per year. The most serious falls in population are in the areas currently being targeted for regeneration in the east and west ends of Newcastle. Since the 1981 census there has been a loss of 8% or 24,500 people. This is a long way out of line with national figures that show the UK population growing by 5% over the last 20 years. Most of this growth has been in the south, south east and south west of England with decline in the north east and north west.
- 5.2** Newcastle has slightly more women (52%) than men (48%), a difference that is heightened in the post retirement age groups when women outnumber men in the ratio 3 to 2.
- 5.3** The age structure of Newcastle's population shows Newcastle has marginally lower than average numbers of children and over 60s, but significantly more later teens and early twenties, a percentage explained by the high number of students. Proportions in the different age groups vary a lot between the different parts of the City. We have higher populations of youngsters aged 15 and under in Woolsington (22.5%), Blakelaw (22.5%), Walker (22.1%), Kenton (22%), Fawdon (21.6%) and Fenham (21.4%). In contrast Westerhope (16.9%), Jesmond (10.3%), Moorside (11.6%), West City (13.8%), Sandyford (9.8%) and Heaton (10.9%) have significantly less.

Age range	Newcastle %	National %
Under 5s	5.5	5.9
School age children	12.1	12.9
Young adults 15 to 24	16.6	12.2
Over 60s	20	21

- 5.4** Wards with the highest proportion of over 65s are Newburn (19.7%), Westerhope (20%), Denton (21.1%) and Fawdon (19.2%). There are fewer older people in Elswick (12.9%), Wingrove (11.4%), Moorside (10.4%), Jesmond (10.9%), Sandyford (12.8%) and Heaton (11.6%).
- 5.5** Jesmond, Sandyford and Heaton are wards popular with students so this may go some way to explaining the lower proportions of under 15s and over 65s.
- 5.6** Newcastle's ethnic minorities now make up 6.9% of the population but there are high populations in certain wards like Moorside (16.2%), Elswick (25.5%) and Wingrove (24.7%). Lowest proportions of ethnic minorities are in the outer west wards: Newburn (1.2%), Lemington (1.7%), Denton (1.95), Westerhope (1.5%), Woolsington (2.4%) and in the east end; Monkchester (2.4%).

5.7 Health is strongly linked with green space provision and use. There are greater numbers of people with poor health in Scotswood (14.9%), West City (15.9%), Byker (17.9%), Walker (17.7%) and Monkchester (15.6%). Better health is enjoyed in Castle (9%), Wingrove (9.6%), South Gosforth (6.5%), Jesmond (5.3%), Dene (8.4%) and Heaton (8.7%).

5.8 Conclusions

How should we use this information about our local population to assess their green space needs? There is no doubt that different age groups and social groups have different needs and this is reflected in our consultation. It is essential to know the likely patterns and distribution of family housing and school age children when planning provision of junior sports pitches and equipped playgrounds. We can use population figures to predict the demand or need for allotments, sports facilities and cemeteries. (See for example the *Draft Playing Pitch Strategy 2003*). However most green space serves the community as a whole, young and old, rich and poor, healthy and sick. What is much more important is whether people can gain access to enjoy the green space and whether it is offering a quality experience. The demographic information is not the most critical factor.

6 Assessing Newcastle's Green Space Needs

6.1 "Everyone needs green space." This seems to be the accepted wisdom and none of our consultation suggests that this is wrong. Indeed most respondents who express a view think Newcastle needs to do far more to protect its green space from loss. Only a tiny minority thought there was too much green space. Research interviews carried out in Spring 2004 suggested that the majority are satisfied with the amount of green space they have. In North Newcastle 100% said yes to the question: "**do you feel there is enough green space in your area?**" However residents in the inner west of Newcastle were less satisfied and only 58% said yes. We should therefore ask some searching questions.

6.2 Gardens?

Should the presence or absence of gardens be a factor in the provision of green space? Do people who have the benefit of gardens with their homes have the same need for green spaces as those who do not? Certainly gardens are not the same as green space and can never offer the same range of opportunities. Gardens therefore are not a substitute for green space as far as the majority of Newcastle residents are concerned. However it may be that there is not such a pressing need for the smaller "doorstep" spaces as there would be in areas of multi-storey residential apartments, flats or terraced houses where there are no gardens that small children can play in.

6.3 Garden size

UDP Policy OS1.1 requires open space in housing developments. Newcastle City Council's Residential Design Guide, incorporating Spacing Standards, is currently adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance and acknowledged in the Unitary Development Plan 1998. (Development Control Policy Statement 17) It recommends the following on "**Garden size and treatment**".

Front gardens vary widely in size, from the expansive landscaped lawn to the small paved forecourt. The minimum possible length in many cases is likely to be determined by the requirement for at least 5.5 metres driveway. Within shared surface courts the garden is likely to incorporate a typically 1.8 metre wide service strip along the highway, in place of a footpath.

Rear gardens in a minimum house-to-house spacing of 21 metres will have lengths of 10.5 metres and this should generally be the minimum length. Their width will depend on the house type. (Standards S1 & S3, further details on slopes in Standard S4)

The City Council therefore encourages the maximum amount of space both within the dwellings and in the rear garden. Where the dwellings are small, then a shallow but wide design is preferable to a narrow and deep one, in that it will give a better garden size and opportunity for reasonable future extensions.

- 6.4 The April 2004 paper “**Planning Newcastle: a chance to have your say**” raises the question of residential spacing standards and open spaces within housing under key issues A 24, PH4 Housing Quality, and OS6 Private Open Space. This is an area needing policy development in the Local Development Framework.
- 6.5 Birmingham's Urban Design Guide advises the following with the proviso that “**careful design rather than a blanket application of numerical standards can often address concerns such as privacy and amenity. The objective behind the standards is what is important rather than the standards themselves.**”

10.5 metres is suggested as a reasonable garden length
70 square metres minimum garden size for family accommodation
52 square metres for 2 bed houses
42 square metres for 1 bed houses
30 square metres per unit for flats and other developments providing communal amenity space

6.6 Countryside

If people live on the edge of the city close to open countryside do they have the same green space needs as a resident of the inner city, on the Newcastle Quayside, in Sandyford or Elswick? Countryside is green space in as far as it is green, open and mainly not built upon. However Newcastle's countryside is not open for all to access as of right, apart from places that are for the public to enjoy like Havannah Nature Reserve and Tyne Riverside Country Park. The rest of the countryside can only be enjoyed legally from highways and Public Rights of Way. In some places the landowner tolerates access, or may levy a charge on users such as golf and other sports clubs or Natural History Society membership fees for visiting the reserve at High Gosforth Park. The countryside is generally not a place for informal ball games or childrens' play or even tai chi and therefore cannot meet these needs or compensate fully for deficient green space.

- 6.7 A similar question arises over the Newcastle Town Moor. Newcastle is unusual in having such a unique and very large open space at the Town Moor, covering a total of 388 hectares (959 acres), within 5 minutes walk of the city centre, the universities, two hospitals and many schools and residential neighbourhoods. Unlike our local countryside it

is mostly open legally for public access. Yet the Town Moor is no public park even though certain parts have been made into parks and amenity green space. Indeed it is difficult to decide on an appropriate category. The Moor contains allotments, parks, amenity grass, road verge and golf courses. It is predominantly grass pasture grazed by cows but it is certainly not farmland. Like countryside, these grasslands are not suitable for ball games or play, but if you want to fly a kite or model aeroplane or go sledging there is no better place.

- 6.8** According to our current Unitary Development Plan standards, Newcastle's population of 259,000 (2001 Census) has a minimum requirement for 311 hectares of local open space and 285 hectares of space for playing sports. In theory our entire local open space provision could be comfortably fitted on the Town Moor with the sports provision met through school and club grounds. One could conclude from this simplistic assessment that Newcastle is not deficient in green space. But would this meet local needs? Not all communities gain easy access to the Town Moor. Clearly the notion is a nonsense and in any case the Town Moor Act would rule out such an idea. But the illustration serves to show that just looking at statistics and figures cannot provide all the answers.

6.9 Big parks or little spaces?

Someone who lives within a few minutes of a large park like Walker Park or Gala Field will probably have more of their recreational and green space needs met by that one large space than someone who only has small scattered areas of amenity grass near at hand.

Are your needs for a range of green spaces offset by living close to a large and multi-purpose park?

Are small incidental local spaces still important?

Is there a minimum size that a green space should be to be useful?

Long, thin or irregular spaces may add up to a reasonable area for doorstep amenity space. However they would usually be more useful as local places to sit out, meet neighbours or play if they were more regularly shaped and big enough for children to play a game of cricket football or rounders. We have looked at Melton Park sample area where the largest green space is highway verge in the central reserve of a busy main road. It is an attractive feature and must give positive messages to visitors and potential investors arriving in Newcastle, but again no place for ball games or childrens' play. Small spaces are more expensive to maintain than large ones and in terms of value for money we should ask whether it is right for public money to be spent on small spaces that few people derive benefit from? Many authorities set standards for minimum sizes of local spaces and minimum dimensions and this is something that we can address as part of a quality standard for doorstep green spaces.

- 6.10** Our audit covers sites with a minimum size of 0.1 hectare. This is a modest space of 1000 square metres, big enough for two tennis courts. For comparison the green space and war memorial at Old Eldon Square in the centre of Newcastle is about 3000 square metres or 0.3 of a hectare in size. We acknowledge that there are many green spaces smaller than 1000 square metres but we have taken the view that smaller spaces just cannot accommodate the facilities that people expect and have suggested to us in the consultation. Verges, corner sites and similar small spaces may be green and attractive, enhancing local amenity and valued as such. Most are too small to use and enjoy for recreation or play, though if there is nowhere else they may still be used.
- 6.11 Housing density?**
Should higher density housing estates have more green space? Density alone is not necessarily a guide to green space needs as the sample areas have demonstrated. The highest density homes in the City are the tower blocks of flats and these are well provided with green space at ground level. Sometimes this green space can be cheerless and forbidding: it is not garden or park. The highest density low rise housing areas are almost half the density of the towers but are combined with a noticeable lack of garden space and offer a very hard urban environment. These traditional terraced houses are not without charm and attractions and are still highly popular in some parts of Newcastle.
- 6.12** Ironically it is in some of Newcastle's lower density housing estates with generous amounts of amenity green space, where the environment can be rather drab and monotonous, lacking character and cohesion. The green space has swards of mown grass and often a number of trees. The grass spaces are often not quite large enough, level enough or are too close to houses to play ball games, a situation made worse by frequent "*No Ball Games*" signs. Furthermore the grass is very costly to maintain, requiring fortnightly mowing during the growing season. The cost will increase because the UK growing season is getting longer as we see the impacts of climate change. Too much green space that few can use or enjoy can be as unattractive in townscape terms, as too little and costs us dearly.
- 6.13** There are no easy answers here and the samples show all too well that it is important to get the balance right. Everyone needs green space but it should be green space that is appropriately maintained and offering the range of enjoyment, relaxation and facilities within reasonable reach of the home, suited to the local community and local circumstances. Newcastle does not have the same green space needs as Bath, Glasgow, Stevenage or Sheffield but equally people in Melton Park, Throckley, Byker, Quayside, Fenham and Jesmond do not have the same needs either. It makes little sense to have a medley of different standards for the city: this would be very complex to develop and difficult to ensure fairness in application. It also makes no sense to

abandon standards altogether. This study suggests that our approach should acknowledge that there are different needs in our city and that there should be a minimum level of provision that we should try and achieve as well as a more generous optimum level that we should aspire to in the less advantaged areas.

6.14 Consultation

As part of the green space strategy preparation, consultation has been carried out to try and find out what people think about the facilities available on green spaces and the distances they have to travel. This information will help to assess local needs and develop new standards. We made efforts to publicise the draft strategy as widely as possible and encouraged people to tell us what they thought of it. Our respondents are those who chose to respond. They are not necessarily a statistically rigorous cross section of the Newcastle community. The consultation exercises are summarised below with a focus on any comments or suggestions about standards of provision.

6.15 Draft Strategy Feedback Sheets.

We received 36 tear-off feedback sheets from the back of printed versions of the strategy plus 5 internet responses: 41 feedback responses in all. Over 1,200 copies were sent out, mainly to those who requested a copy. There were 4 questions that were particularly relevant to this paper.

Question 3 “Green Spaces should be more accessible”

No-one disagreed with this. All responses were either agree (50%) or strongly agree (50%)

Question 6 “Green spaces have good protection from development”

Responses were more mixed but the majority (46%) were in agreement. A significant number neither agreed or disagreed (12%). 20% disagreed and 10% strongly disagreed. 12% said they did not know. This reflects many comments received in other consultation that green spaces are not sufficiently protected. People who felt green spaces had inadequate protection, had post codes in the vicinity of Gosforth (NE3), Jesmond (NE2), Blakelaw and Cowgate (NE5), Heaton (NE6), the West End (NE4) and the City Centre (NE1).

Question 7 Suggested standards for amounts of green space.

No-one felt the amounts were too much. The majority thought they were about right (80%). A small number said the quantities suggested were too little (12%) or that they did not know (7%). Those who felt the standards were too low were from the vicinity of Jesmond (NE2) and the West End (NE4).

Question 8 Suggested standards for walking distances Again the majority thought these were about right (78%, but 15% thought they were too far and 7% said they did not know. No-one felt they were too

near. Those who felt the suggested distances were too far came from the vicinity of Heaton (NE6), the West End (NE4), Gosforth (NE3) and Jesmond (NE2).

A number of people sent in letters or e-mails and some gave their views on the suggested standards. In broad terms this was supportive although one contributor questioned the need and basis and felt that there was too much emphasis being placed on this approach. Another expressed concerns about creating lots of smaller spaces that are more costly to maintain. Some respondents queried whether standards would be realistic or deliverable. There is a strong view from most of our consultation that we need to look after what we already have. The individual comments on the standards are noted in full: see Annexe D for details.

6.16 Picture questionnaire

We used a simple picture sheet at a number of events to find out peoples' preferred distances to travel on foot or by bike, car or bus to different types of green space. This participative approach seemed to work well provided a facilitator was on hand to explain.

Based on 95 responses to date some clear majority preferences are emerging.

54% are prepared to walk 5 to 14 minutes to reach a children's equipped play area.

67% are prepared to walk 5 to 19 minutes to reach a playing field.

38% are prepared to walk 30 minutes or more to reach a nature area.

44% are prepared to walk 10 to 19 minutes to a park.

The distance of 400 metres seems to be widely accepted as an average 5-minute walk, without crossing main roads. However we are conscious that many members of the community are not "average" and anyone with young children, disabled, less than perfect health or in the younger or older age groups would have difficulty covering this distance in 5 minutes, which equates to 4 miles per hour. If the walk involves steep steps or slopes then the walk will be still harder. We therefore feel that a walk of **300 metres in 5 minutes** is a more acceptable average locally.

This research suggests that for local green spaces with play and playing fields a walk of 300 to 600 metres from home should be our aspiration. For parks this could be a walk of 600 metres to a kilometre and for natural areas up to 1.5 kilometres. This initial conclusion was tested in the second **Citylife** questionnaire covered in paragraph 6.15 below.

It is interesting that many respondents see the more natural areas as a destination they are prepared to travel further to reach and do not expect them to be on the doorstep. This is repeated in the travel distances and times using cars and in a very few cases the bus or cycle.

A possible downside is that because of the way the questionnaire was used respondents are not necessarily a cross section of Newcastle residents, but a sample of interested parties who were attending special interest events. Even allowing for this the responses are a useful indicator and it is likely that this is the first time people have been asked their views on this. The Council's various park user surveys almost always include a question about how far people have travelled and by what means, but do not query preferences.

6.17 Interviews about journeying to green spaces (Feb-March 2004)

Further research has been carried out with 200 interviews at the following locations in areas where we have had a low response to green space strategy consultations. We wanted to boost the weak sample and hear from people in some of the less accessible and more deprived parts of Newcastle.

Inner West Newcastle	Adelaide Terrace Shopping Precinct Cruddas Park Shopping Centre	60 interviews
Outer West Newcastle	Newbiggin Hall Shopping Centre Newburn Station Road shops	60 interviews
Outer East Newcastle	Shields Road shops	50 interviews
North Newcastle	Brunswick Post Office	30 interviews

The research confirms many of the findings of the previous studies. Residents of North Newcastle were less prepared to travel than people living elsewhere and all in this area had gardens. We found those without gardens were generally prepared to travel longer than those who have a garden. Residents in Outer East Newcastle are prepared to travel for the longest time, males marginally further than females.

In this research, the average acceptable journey time for play area or playing fields was 17 minutes which translates into a walking distance of about a kilometre.

For nature areas the average time was 32 minutes or about 2 kilometres walk.

For a park the average time was 22 minutes or about a mile or 1.5 kilometres walk.

The researcher writing up the report has translated the travelling times into distances using a vehicle rather than walking. This is interesting in itself and could indicate a worrying trend that people increasingly perceive it is necessary to travel further to green spaces of decent quality and that this entails vehicle use. Many of us make the same decision about our choice of supermarket, so why not do likewise for play areas, sport or parks. This assumption might well account for peoples' willingness to travel further afield to enjoy wildlife. We know from the earlier picture questionnaire that when asked for walking times as well as cycling or vehicle travelling times, the acceptable times people gave were very similar. They were just as willing to walk for say 15 minutes to a park as to drive for 15 minutes. However the car would allow a visit to a park much further afield.

6.18 Citylife questionnaire November 2002

Citylife is Council's monthly magazine and is issued to all households in Newcastle, to all staff and all council venues such as the libraries, leisure centres, and local offices. **Citylife** is also available online. The green space strategy questionnaire included a prize draw to encourage people to respond. The questionnaire asked which green spaces people used and how often, about good and bad points and an open question:

"Is there anything else you would like to tell us about green space in Newcastle?"

There were 289 completed questionnaires and the responses were analysed in a separate background paper. (See Annexes D and E)

A number of people took the opportunity to tell us what they thought about the adequacy of provision. No-one said there was too much but 12 people said there was enough green space. When postcodes were analysed there was no clear pattern of distribution that would allow us to identify particular areas of Newcastle where provision is felt to be adequate. The responses were equally spread across Gosforth (NE3), Jesmond (NE2), Westerhope (NE15) and Heaton (NE6).

Three times as many people (33) said more green space was needed. Here there was more of a distributional pattern with most from Heaton (NE6), Gosforth (NE3), Cowgate (NE5), Fenham and the West End (NE4) and Westerhope (NE15).

A website questionnaire at the same time had mainly staff responses that mirrored the **Citylife** returns. Two people, one in Gosforth and another from West Denton said there was sufficient green space: ten times as many (21) said there was too little and eight of these also referred to too much open space being built on. The Gosforth area

(NE3) again featured strongly together with NE2, and NE6 with a number resident outside the city.

Some authorities have asked people directly whether they think there is enough green space, sometimes asking about the sufficiency of the different types. Our most recent research in spring 2004 suggested that the majority are satisfied with the amount of green space they have. In North Newcastle 100% of interviewees said yes to the question: “**do you feel there is enough green space in your area?**” For residents interviewed in the Outer West and Outer East there was a strong yes from 74% and 73% respectively. However residents in the inner west of Newcastle were less satisfied and only 58% said yes. It is a common theme in our consultation responses and from earlier exercises, particularly the focus groups in 2000 (see Annexe E) that when asked about this, people are not sure and may just comment that you can never have too much green space. We feel that by allowing people to tell us their concerns without a direct question is possibly a more reliable way of estimating views on quantity.

6.19 Citylife Questionnaire October 2003

This questionnaire was again available in all households in the city, to all staff, online and in all council venues with a prize draw to encourage people to complete and return the questionnaire by 31 October 2003. 219 questionnaires were returned. A full analysis has been done on peoples’ expectations of green spaces, see Annexes D and E. Opinions and preferences on distances and levels of provision are summarised below. An important point is that this questionnaire had only 2 respondents under 16 suggesting that **Citylife** is perhaps not the best way to reach youngsters, even with the incentive of a prize draw.

Walking times

On average people were prepared to walk 11 to 14 minutes to a playground, local park or allotment garden which compares well with the results of the picture questionnaire above and suggests that a slightly longer distance may be acceptable. (This time would give a walking distance of about 800 metres)

For major city parks and nature areas a longer walk was considered acceptable: 20 to 25 minutes, giving a walking distance of about 1.5 kilometres, or a mile.

Facilities

On the facilities desired there was a very clear wish to see the “top seven” litter bins, seats, trees, paths, lighting, mown grass, flowers and bulbs” provided on neighbourhood or doorstep green spaces and local parks. In major city parks toilets should be added to this basic list as well.

Consistent with all our public consultation, people expressed their continuing **strong concerns** about litter, dog fouling, drinkers and drug users, personal safety and other anti-social behaviour so it is

most essential that these problems are addressed in Newcastle's quality standards for green space.

- 6.20** A workshop was held with the Parks and Green Spaces Consultative Forum. Members of this forum are volunteers who have agreed to represent the views of a particular stakeholder interest, group or organization, not their own personal opinions. Part of the session looked at their preferences for levels of facilities and distances. As with the **Citylife** questionnaire we asked about "doorstep" or green spaces closest to the home, the "local park" and the "city park".

The top seven were very similar to the **Citylife** respondents.

For "doorstep" spaces the forum members voted for seats, flowers and bulbs, grass, litter bins, trees, and paths but unlike **Citylife** respondents they had community activities in joint second with flowers and bulbs. For **Citylife** readers lighting was on their list instead.

For the local park, forum members voted for seats and litter bins, play equipment for different ages, facilities for teenagers, toilets, trees and tennis courts. Nature area and ornamental shrubs were in joint seventh place. **Citylife** readers put more priority on grass, flowers and bulbs, paths and lighting.

For the "city" park, forum members voted for litter bins, seats, toilets, trees, play equipment for different ages, events and activities, and a café, bar or restaurant. **Citylife** readers again gave more priority to flowers and bulbs, paths and lighting.

Forum members contributed individually to the picture questionnaire results summarised above.

- 6.21** Consultation sessions on the green space strategy actions have been held with key staff groups within Newcastle City Council. Draft actions 7.2.4 (distance) and 7.2.7 (quantity and quality) were included. No officers have suggested that these actions are inappropriate and the concept of having revised standards has generally been welcomed.
- 6.22** A meeting was arranged to debate the proposed new standards involving planning policy staff. The meeting concluded that the standards were probably about right with a view that they should be a little less prescriptive and be clear that they were to **guide** new development rather than suggest a commitment by the Council to meet the new standards everywhere in Newcastle. Leisure Services' concerns about encouraging a proliferation of smaller, expensive-to-maintain spaces, particularly children's play areas in residential estates were explored. There was also recognition of the message from many members of the public that they do value the small spaces close to home as well as larger parks and green spaces. At the "doorstep"

level, officers felt that something more than a "one size fits all" approach was needed.

- 6.23** On the basis of the consultation to date there should be some fine tuning to the original suggested standards in the draft strategy to reflect what people have told us. However it has to be acknowledged that many people, groups and organisations who were invited to comment did not take the opportunity to do so. Even among the many people who requested a personal printed copy of the strategy, most did not return a feedback sheet or comments. If people were unhappy with what was being proposed they would surely have told us. Thus it seems reasonable to conclude, albeit cautiously, that the suggested quantity, quality and distance standards are probably ***“about right”***.
- 6.24** People have indicated a willingness to walk a little further to reach a play area, but are interpreting this as a distance to an equipped play area. Children do not need play equipment in order to use a space for play. What we have not asked about is how far people wish their children to go from home. This is almost impossible to survey because it depends on so many variables: the type of residential area, the visibility, the age and responsibility of the child etc. The standard for *“doorstep”* space within 5 minutes walk of home, school or work should therefore remain, but with added qualitative requirements.
- 6.25** Green space is not just needed near the home but near the workplace as well. However workplaces may be on industrial estates, retail or commercial zones or business parks. It is important for health and well being that there is green space within easy reach of the workforce to offer a place to have a walk, socialize or unwind. Workplaces are therefore included within the standards below.
- 6.26** As a result of the research and consultation the standards have been amended and now define desirable levels of provision, desirable distances and a number of qualitative criteria relating to desirable facilities. The standards allow us to:
- measure how well Newcastle meets the standards
 - protect green space from loss where this would mean local provision falls below the standards
 - identify under and over provision
 - use the standards in negotiations for planning permission for new development to ensure that appropriate green spaces are included where they are needed.
- 6.27** A word of caution is needed on standards because having agreed standards does not commit the Council to meeting those standards across the city. As the next sections will explain, it is possible to create new green space but it is not easy. Where there is under-provision the best that the City can guarantee is to use any available opportunities when they arise. The Council does not have the large sums of money

that would be needed to acquire development land for green space and some areas with poor provision are also in some of the most popular parts of Newcastle where land values are very high.

- 6.28** The revised standards are proposed as follows. There will be more public consultation opportunities in the course of the planning process for preparing the Local Development Framework which is expected to replace Newcastle's Unitary Development Plan by 2007. In the meantime these revised standards can be adopted and used and the Council can monitor whether or not they are effective and appropriate.

6.29 Green Space on the doorstep

Everyone in Newcastle should have access to a good quality green space providing somewhere to sit or walk, relax and experience greenery.

For public or communal spaces the minimum size should be at least 0.1 hectare (1000 square metres) with no dimension smaller than 15 metres. The space should be within 300 metres walk from the home or workplace without having to cross a classified road. (Approximately 5 minutes walk).

The space should offer trees, grass, flowers or bulbs, surfaced paths, seats, litter bins and have lighting at night.

In residential areas with family homes Newcastle's youngest children (0-5 years) should have easy, safe, access to these "doorstep" green spaces. Where there are no gardens, doorstep green spaces should be within 50 metres of home. In high density areas, over 30 homes per hectare where there is less likelihood of family homes, spaces should be within 100 metres of home. No child aged 5 or under should have to cross a road that has permitted traffic speeds over 20mph to reach this space."

- 6.29** The *Citylife* questionnaire asks for views on local and major city parks and we have found that people identify fairly easily with this distinction. Parks are different from local or doorstep green space and people expect a broader range of opportunities, facilities and opportunities. Parks also need to offer a hard-to-define quality of specialness and pleasure. "*Delight*" is how one of our forum members expresses it, a view very strongly supported by the others. The Urban Green Spaces Task Force (Working Group 4) refer to research by Sheffield University into what makes an ideal park. The key requirements were as follows.

**variety: meadows, formal areas, water
vegetation: trees, greenery and flowers
water in all its forms
sensory stimulation, scent and colour**

**opportunities for play
provision for young people
seating, shelters and toilets**

6.31 Local Green Space

The suggested local green space standard has been amended as follows.

Everyone in Newcastle should have access to good quality local green space of at least 2 hectares within 600 metres walk of the home or workplace. (Approximately 10 minutes walk without crossing a classified road.)

This open space should offer trees, grass, flowers or bulbs, surfaced paths, seats, litter bins and have some lighting at night. In residential areas this space should also provide a place for primary and junior school age children (5-12 years) to play including a reasonably sized, level, grassed area for ball sports with “buffers” at least minimum 5 metres wide separating the grassed space from roads, footpaths or buildings.

6.32 Local Park

Everyone in Newcastle should have access to a good quality local or neighbourhood park of at least 6 hectares within 1 kilometre walk of the home, school or workplace. (Approximately 15 minutes walk allowing for using safe crossings to classified roads and other hazards)

The park should offer trees, grass, flowers or bulbs, surfaced paths, seats, litter bins, toilets and some lighting at night.

In residential areas this space should also provide a place for school age children and young people (5-18 years) to play, walk, meet friends and play informal sports including equipped play areas for the different age groups to use in safety. The facilities for children and young people should ideally have supervisory arrangements during normal hours of use. There should be reasonably sized, level, grassed areas for a range of informal sports with “buffers” at least 5 metres wide separating the grassed space from roads, footpaths or buildings.”

6.33 Regional or City Parks and Green Spaces

In line with the Tyne and Wear hierarchy the following standard for a larger scale green space has been included. These spaces, together with many of the smaller ones, will allow Newcastle to meet some of the requirements being promoted by English Nature. (See Annexe B)

Everyone in Newcastle should have access to one or more major regional or “city” parks or spaces over 10 hectares in size offering a range of facilities and opportunities for the whole community and for wildlife, within 1.5 kilometres (approximately 20 minutes walk) from home, school or workplace.

6.34 Allotments

An allotments questionnaire was designed to be used with a newsletter to all allotment holders. Unfortunately this consultation exercise has not yet been completed. A trial for the questionnaire was carried out at the Allotment Show 2003 but only 14 responses were returned by volunteers. This sample is not really sufficient to have any status other than to act as a useful indicator. (See Annexe D.) Respondents felt that between 5 and 20 minutes was reasonable for walking to an allotment garden with the majority (50%) favouring 10 minutes. Many travel for a similar time by car. The allotments standard is therefore proposed to remain unchanged. Further survey work will be needed as part of the Allotments Strategy preparation to test local demand for allotments and community gardens.

Allotments should be available within 1 kilometre of home.

- 6.35** The standards for access to play space for the different age groups have been challenged by some staff respondents. The public response has not suggested changes. Newcastle Council is intending to prepare a strategy for equipped play and these standards will be explored further as part of this exercise.

6.36 Woodland and Nature Areas

The suggested standards for woodland and nature areas have attracted minimal comment and are suggested to remain unchanged. The proposed standard acknowledges English Nature’s regional targets to try and achieve 2 hectares of accessible natural green space within 500 metres of every home and one hectare of Local Nature Reserve per 1000 population by 2010 but adjusts these aspirations in line with the comments from the public. Woodlands and nature areas are already to be found within many parks and amenity spaces.

Everyone in Newcastle should have access to woodland or a local nature area of at least 2 hectares within 2 kilometres of home.

6.37 Green Corridors

A large number of people welcome the concept of linked open space and individually a lot of respondents express a wish for better off-road cycling routes, as in the examples below.

“I heartily approve of the “Green Space Strategy” in particular the creation of new “Green Routes.”

“We are really fortunate to have the variety and expanse of green areas all around the City. More linking of these with safe cycle/walking routes would be great.”

“There are cycle/pedestrian marked dual use paths. The pedestrians walk all over both tracks – please more publicity for rights of cyclists. So few places. For safe cycling – we are criticised for riding occasionally on quiet footpaths, it would be nice to be able to cycle on our marked official cycle tracks”

In the key officer consultations the action point (7.2.3) for a linked open spaces plan received strong support. No-one has suggested any changes to this suggested standard and it is to remain unchanged.

Everyone in Newcastle should be able to have access to an off road walking and cycling route within 1 kilometre of home, shops or work that allows access to the wider linked green spaces network of Newcastle.

- 6.38** The term **“good quality”** is used in the standards above and is defined as follows, based on the strategy team’s quality audit work. (See separate background paper for details)

**Newcastle’s policy will be to achieve a standard of at least 50% on all its green spaces using the quality audit.
For all parks and larger green spaces (0.4 hectare and over) the Council will strive to achieve Civic Trust “Green Flag” award standard or equivalent, with a score of at least 70% using the quality audit. This target for improvement will be phased.
Green spaces already achieving a quality score of 70% or more will be maintained at that level with targets for modest improvements written into management plans.**

These quality standards are proposed for adoption as Council Policy and incorporation into the Local Development Framework and relevant Supplementary Planning Documents and planning briefs.

6.39 Conclusions

Green Space Strategy consultations have shown the following.

There is support for having standards.

More people think there is not enough green space than think there is enough.

Most people who have expressed a view support the proposed standards for quantity of green space.

Most people who express a view support the proposed standards for distances to green space.

Clear preferences for the facilities at different green spaces have been stated and form the basis of our proposed quality standards.

Most people using the feedback sheet think green spaces have good protection, but there are a significant number who express a view that protection from building is inadequate.

Most people want their green spaces to be better cared for, safer and have more effective deterrents to anti-social behaviour.

6.40 Green space recommendations, standards and policies need to be integrated into a corporate framework and formally adopted as City Council policy. Within the Council this currently takes the form of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and Supplementary Planning Guidance. The UDP is to be replaced with the Local Development Framework (LDF) which will have a similar function. The Green Space Strategy will act as a bridge between the UDP and the new LDF, raising issues to be included and reinforced. To fulfil this function the completed strategy will be presented for adoption as Council Policy by Newcastle City Council's Cabinet.

6.41 “**Supplementary Planning Guidance**” is adopted by the City Council to help planning officers make decisions relating to planning applications. This will help us protect valuable green spaces from development. The revised standards are suggested for adoption. In effect this will mean that following approval by Cabinet, the Green Space Strategy will be reported to Development Control Committee proposing adoption as Supplementary Planning Guidance. This will be an interim measure. Once the Planning and Compensation Act becomes law later this year (2004) steps will be taken to adopt the strategy as a “**Supplementary Planning Document**” including undertaking any additional consultation required and completion of a satisfactory “**Sustainability Appraisal**.”

7 Is Newcastle short of green space?

- 7.1 The Unitary Development Plan for Newcastle adopted in 1998 contains many policies to defend green space in the section entitled “Open Space and Recreation”. These are Council policies and apply to all open spaces. Policies cover the following.

Policy OS1 Achieving best possible standards, preventing loss, maintaining and improving, promoting countryside recreation and provision for all.

Policy OS1.1 Developers to provide open space.

Policy OS1.2 Provision standards and a requirement to take these into account when assessing development proposals.

Policy OS1.3 Developer requirements to provide open space.

Policy OS1.4 Protection of open space from loss.

Policy OS1.5 List of circumstances when development may be allowed.

Policy OS1.6 List of open spaces over 0.4 hectares, for purposes of the above policies.

Policies OS2 and OS2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 Recreational route network.

Policy OS3 Riverside and water based recreation.

Development Control Policy Statements Nos 17, 18 and 19 on spacing standards, children’s play and landscaping.

- 7.2 Our consultations show that many people did not know about the protective policies in the UDP and we need to make sure they are explained during the preparation of the Local Development Framework. The following recommendations will help.

Organise a series of workshop style training events to help with proper application and enforcement.

Create an area-based, integrated approach.

Adopt revised provision and quality standards.

Incorporate policy requiring would-be developers to carry out a needs assessment in accordance with PPG 17, before development of green space is contemplated.

Policy requirement for the local planning authority and regeneration partners to use audit results and follow PPG17 guidance to test whether Council land can be released for building.

Incorporate policy requirement to take account of all the benefits of green spaces before considering development. (E.g. nature conservation, history, landscape, special facilities etc).

- 7.3 A key issues report “**Planning Newcastle: a chance to have your say**” was published in April 2004. This outlines important questions on open space, sport and recreation. The Green Spaces Strategy and this background paper will provide essential information for the future Local Development Framework.

- 7.4 The Unitary Development Plan says
“Newcastle is a densely developed city and is under-provided with open space particularly in the inner areas.”

In response, the plan intended to:

“seek to raise standards of open space provision particularly in the inner areas. Every effort will be made to improve existing open space and create new open space through the development process.”

The UDP identified the following areas as being deficient in parks of 6 hectares minimum size.

Fenham
West Denton
Kingston Park
Blakelaw
Newbiggin Hall
Chapel Park
Scotswood

- 7.5 There have been changes since the plan was written. Demolition for example, has created some large areas of open grassed space in certain parts of the city including Scotswood. These are temporary spaces in the main, awaiting redevelopment. Building has started on former agricultural land at Newcastle Great Park where there will eventually be some 120 hectares of new green space for the public to use and enjoy on the northern fringe of the city. This will certainly benefit some Kingston and Brunton Park residents. Newbiggin Hall has gained a new park at Gala Field. However for the majority of the areas listed as deficient, not much has altered to date.
- 7.6 A planning policy exercise in 2002 looked at compliance with the UDP open space standards based on population figures for Newcastle’s electoral wards. The findings are shown in the table below but should be treated cautiously. The assessment only covered open spaces over 0.4 hectares in size and disregarded smaller ones. The assessment did not take account of green space available to residents in a ward but actually located in an adjoining ward. The exercise illustrates the difficulties of using quantitative standards (site size and population). Future exercises will look in more detail at the geographical communities as defined in the Newcastle Neighbourhood Information Service and will also use the amended Ward boundaries from June 2004 .

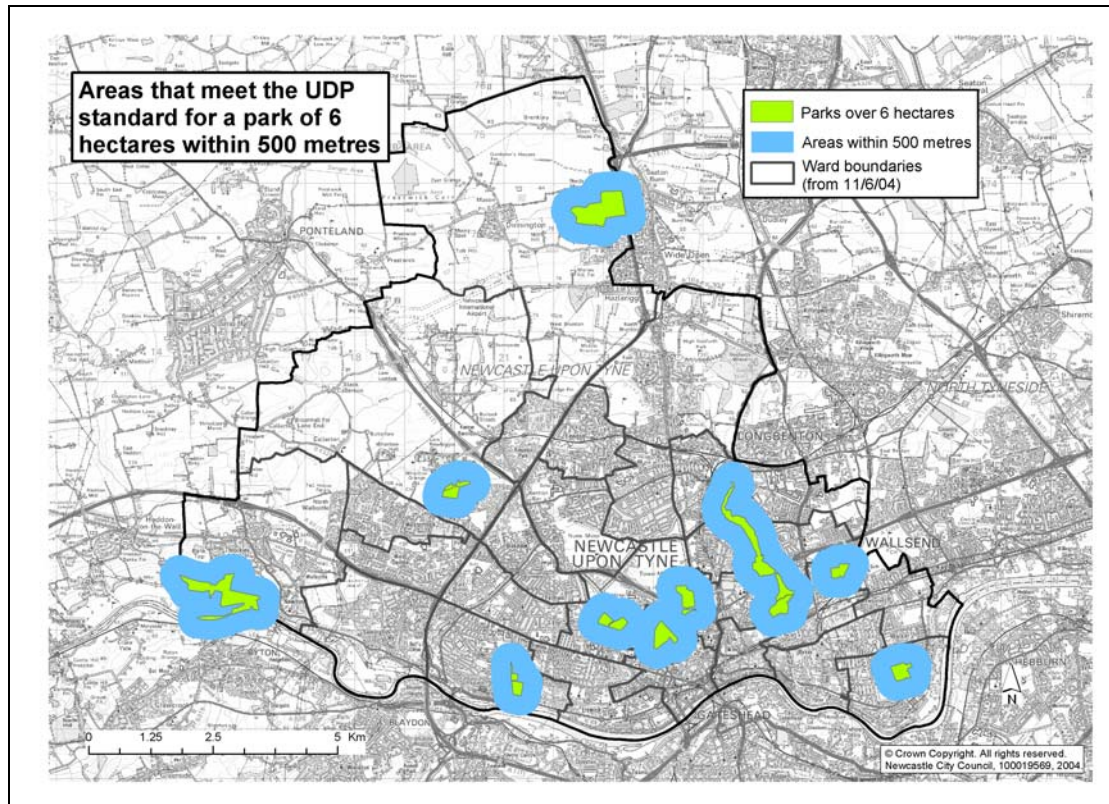
7.7 Table showing compliance with UDP open space standards based on ward boundaries prior to June 2004 and population levels from 1991 census

Area	Ward	Local space	Outdoor sport
Outer East	Byker	yes	no
	Monkchester	no	no
	Walker	yes	no
	Walkergate	yes	no
Inner East	Dene	yes	no
	Heaton	no	no
	Jesmond	no	no
	Sandyford	no	no
Gosforth and North Newcastle	Castle	yes	no
	Grange	no	no
	South Gosforth	no	no
North central	Blakelaw	yes	no
	Fawdon	no	no
	Kenton	yes	no
South Central	Fenham	yes	no
	Moorside	no	no
	Wingrove	no	no
Riverside West	Benwell	yes	no
	Elswick	no	no
	Scotswood	yes	no
	West City	yes	no
Outer West	Lemington	yes	no
	Newburn	yes	no
	Westerhope	yes	no
	Woolsington	yes	no

- 7.8** The UDP contains the current standards for Newcastle until formally superseded by new standards being developed through this Green Spaces Strategy and its proposed sister documents the Playing Pitch, Allotments and Play Strategies. The UDP has a distance standard for neighbourhood or city centre parks – substantial public spaces providing for a range of active and passive pursuits for people of all ages and abilities. Most households should be within a half kilometre (500 metres) of a public park of 6 hectares minimum. Using this standard, current areas of under provision have been identified. Using a Geographical Information System (GIS) distances were plotted around parks. The distance is measured as 375 metres *as the crow flies* because we have found that when trial areas were measured accurately for walking distances along paths and streets this corresponded fairly closely with an actual walk of 500 metres or half a kilometre. An adjustment has also been made to allow for barriers like main line railways, trunk roads, rivers etc where there are restricted crossing points. There will be a margin of error but this is relatively small.
- 7.9** If the examination only looks at green spaces classed as parks and gardens, relatively few of these are over 6 hectares in size: Big Waters, Jesmond Dene, Armstrong, Heaton, Exhibition, Leazes, Hodgkin, Nuns Moor, and Walker Parks, Gala Field, Iris Brickfield, and Tyne Riverside. Over half the built up area of Newcastle including most of the north west of the city is too far away from a public park of this size. If the exercise includes large amenity green spaces like Denton Dene the picture is better. The conclusion from this analysis is that much of Newcastle does not meet the UDP standard.

Ward (Boundary as from June 2004)	Locations that are too far away
Benwell and Scotswood	Eastern area Western area and West Road
Blakelaw	Whole ward
Byker	All of Byker Ward
Castle	Dinnington, most of Brunswick Village, Hazlerigg. Kingston Park
Dene	Whole of central and eastern area of ward
Denton	Whole ward
East Gosforth	Western and northern area
Elswick	Whole ward
Fawdon	Whole ward
Fenham	Whole ward
Kenton	Whole ward

Ward (Boundary as from June 2004)	Locations that are too far away
Lemington	Whole ward
Newburn	Throckley Central and north area ward
North Jesmond	Western area of ward
North Heaton	Central and north of ward
Parklands	Whole ward Northern half of South Gosforth Ward
Sandyford	Central and western area including riverside
South Heaton	Whole of southern and central area of ward
South Jesmond	Central area of ward
Walker	Area west of and including St Anthony's Road Riverside area
Walkergate	Whole ward apart from Benfield Road area and small area at Middle Street/Welbeck Road.
West City	South of ward and riverside
Westerhope	Whole ward
West Gosforth	Whole ward
Wingrove	South of ward along West Road Western fringe
Woolsington	Woolsington and Callerton villages and other outlying settlements North west Newbiggin Hall



7.10 Deficiency identified using the new proposed standards.

The new green space standards have been developed based on consultation results to date and should give us a better way of judging whether localities are short of green space.

7.11 Green spaces on the doorstep

The new standard requires small spaces within 300 metres or five minutes walk. This distance is recommended to be closer where there are no gardens, or in high density residential areas. Plan 1 at the end of this chapter shows which parts of Newcastle meet the standard for green space on the doorstep. The table below lists areas that do not have green space within 300 metres walk.

Ward (Boundary as amended June 2004)	Locations that are too far away
Benwell and Scotswood	Area north of Whickham View and along West Road
Blakelaw	Small area at Bavington Drive/Netherby Drive Small area adjacent to Ravenside Road
Byker	Small eastern area at Finsbury/Roman Avenues.
Castle	South eastern Hazlerigg West end Brunswick Village Area in Dinnington: Shaftoe Way.

Ward (Boundary as amended June 2004)	Locations that are too far away
Dene	Large central area of ward
Denton	Very small pocket at Hillhead Road/Chapel House Drive.
East Gosforth	Small area at Christon Road/Hollywood Avenue Small area at The Grove/Stoneyhurst Road
Elswick	South of General Hospital/Graingerville
Fawdon	Small area adjacent to Edgefield Ave/Kenton Road/ Jubilee Road.
Fenham	Central part along West Road and north including Benwell Hill/St Cuthbert's Road
Kenton	Small area at Kenton Avenue
Lemington	None
Newburn	Small area at north west Throckley
North Jesmond	Large area to centre and west
North Heaton	Centre and north east of the ward
Parklands	North Brunton Southern Brunton Park/Greystoke Park Great North Road/Broadway area
Sandyford	Very small pockets at riverside, manors and Mowbray Street.
South Heaton	Central area and industrial area at Shields Road/Fossway.
South Jesmond	Large central and north part of ward
Walker	Area between Monkchester/St Anthony's Roads.
Walkergate	Alderwood Crescent Western fringe, Sutton and Coutts Roads Small area adjacent to Welbeck Road, Blackwell Ave/Eastbourne Ave.
West City	City centre area including Central Station, much of Graingertown and Market street
Westerhope	Small area adjacent to Wheatfield Road.
West Gosforth	Central area including Kenton Avenue, Elmfield Road and Salters Road.
Wingrove	Area near Newcastle General Hospital.
Woolsington	South east Woolsington and Callerton Station Small area at Langleeford Road

7.12 All amenity green spaces, natural or semi-natural spaces, parks and gardens can provide doorstep green space if they are within 300 metres of the home or workplace. There are some private spaces that meet this need in certain areas though these will not be taken into account in this study unless the City Council is responsible for maintenance, as with some church grounds.

- 7.13** Local green space is suggested at least 2 hectares in size within a slightly longer 600 metres or about ten minutes walk. The table below describes the deficient areas and these are illustrated on Plan 2 at the end of this chapter.

Ward (Boundary as amended June 2004)	Locations that are too far away
Benwell and Scotswood	Area between West Road and Whickham View
Blakelaw	Central area of ward
Byker	Large area of ward to north east
Castle	Dinnington and Brunswick villages Small parts of Kingston Park
Dene	Large central part of the ward
Denton	Central area: lower Hillhead Road
East Gosforth	North and central area of ward
Elswick	Large area south of West Road, including North Benwell terraces and Graingerville.
Fawdon	Eastern area of ward
Fenham	Large central and eastern part of the ward
Kenton	Montague Estate
Lemington	Central area at upper Union Hall Road Road Central Westerhope
Newburn	Western Throckley
North Jesmond	North and central area
North Heaton	Large northern and central part of Ward.
Parklands	Large southern residential area on both sides of Great North Road.
Sandyford	Western part of ward and riverside
South Heaton	Large south and central part of Ward.
South Jesmond	Central area
Walker	North western area around St Anthony's Road
Walkergate	Walkerville north of Metro Pocket to south west.
West City	Sorthern part of ward, City centre/Graingertown
Westerhope	Central area of Chapel Park Eastern area adjacent to Wheatfield Road, Woburn Way
West Gosforth	Large central and northern part of ward
Wingrove	Area along West Road
Woolsington	Woolsington, Callerton, and outlying settlements North west Newbiggin Hall Small area at Kenton Bank Foot

- 7.14** A local or neighbourhood park is suggested at least 6 hectares in size within a kilometre or about 15 minutes walk. This standard is similar to the UDP standard described at paragraph 7.2, but our consultation has suggested that people are prepared to walk further than half a kilometre to this type of park. The size is arbitrary. Smaller parks cannot easily offer the quality of openness, a sense of escape and contrast to the built up urban scene. Gosforth Central Park for example, at 3.27 hectares is very pleasant but very urban in character and buildings can be seen all around the perimeter. The deficient areas are described in the table and shown on Plan 3 at the end of this chapter.

Ward (Boundary as from June 2004)	Locations that are too far away
Benwell and Scotswood	Eastern area Western area and West Road
Blakelaw	Whole ward
Byker	Whole Ward
Castle	Dinnington, Brunswick Village, Hazlerigg. Kingston Park
Dene	Whole of central and eastern area of ward
Denton	Whole ward
East Gosforth	Western and northern area
Elswick	Whole ward
Fawdon	Whole ward
Fenham	Whole ward
Kenton	Whole ward
Lemington	Whole ward
Newburn	Throckley Central and north area ward
North Jesmond	Central and western area of ward
North Heaton	Central and north of ward
Parklands	Whole ward Northern half of South Gosforth Ward
Sandyford	Central and western area including riverside
South Heaton	Central and south of the ward
South Jesmond	Central area of ward
Walker	Riverside and north west parts of the ward
Walkergate	All of the ward
West City	South of ward and riverside
Westerhope	Whole ward
West Gosforth	Whole ward
Wingrove	South of ward along West Road and Western fringe
Woolsington	Woolsington and Callerton villages and other outlying settlements North west and eastern Newbiggin Hall

- 7.15** It is very noticeable that much of the north west of Newcastle is more than a kilometre from a 6 hectare park as well as the central section of the riverside and much of the east and west ends. These areas are not without green space, just that the green space they have is not classed as park.
- 7.16** The analysis suggests a very strong case for investment to upgrade some amenity spaces in the deficient areas to provide new parks. This approach has worked well for example at Gala Field in Newbiggin Hall and could be achieved at Denton Dene, if funding became available.
- 7.17** There are some parks, for example North Kenton, that is just short of the required size at 5.1 hectares. A small extra area together with qualitative improvements could bring North Kenton up to the standard. Demolition of unpopular Council owned apartment blocks in the area could achieve the spatial increase and open space linkage very soon.
- 7.18** Our standards for the largest “city” scale park of 10 hectares or more is for these to be within 1.5 kilometres. Again the size is somewhat arbitrary but the aim of the standard is to try and offer Newcastle residents a top level park of sufficient scale to accommodate major events, a boating lake, a good range of sports and other facilities.

Ward (Boundary as from June 2004)	Locations that are too far away
Benwell and Scotswood	Eastern area Western area and West Road
Blakelaw	Whole ward
Byker	All of Byker Ward
Castle	Dinnington, most of Brunswick Village, Hazlerigg. Kingston Park
Dene	Whole of central and eastern area of ward
Denton	Whole ward
East Gosforth	Western and northern area
Elswick	Whole ward
Fawdon	Whole ward
Fenham	Whole ward
Kenton	Whole ward
Lemington	Whole ward
Newburn	Throckley Central and north area ward
North Jesmond	Western area of ward
North Heaton	Central and north of ward
Parklands	Whole ward Northern half of South Gosforth Ward
Sandyford	Central and western area including riverside
South Heaton	Whole of southern and central area of ward
South Jesmond	Central area of ward

Ward (Boundary as from June 2004)	Locations that are too far away
Walker	Area west of and including St Anthony's Road Riverside area
Walkergate	Whole ward apart from Benfield Road area and small area at Middle Street/Welbeck Road
West City	South of ward and riverside
Westerhope	Whole ward
West Gosforth	Whole ward
Wingrove	South of ward along West Road Western fringe
Woolsington	Woolsington, Callerton and other settlements North west corner of Newbiggin Hall

- 7.19** The strategy suggests allotments are available within a kilometre walk.
The table below lists deficient areas as shown on Plan 6.

Ward (Boundary as from June 2004)	Locations that are too far away
Benwell and Scotswood	Riverside fringe
Blakelaw	Western half of ward
Byker	Small area north east of Byker Estate
Castle	Kingston Park
Dene	North eastern part of ward
Denton	Eastern edge of ward
East Gosforth	Western and northern area
Elswick	South western riverside
Fawdon	North and western parts of ward
Fenham	Western fringe
Kenton	West and central
Lemington	Whole ward
Newburn	North west Throckley
North Jesmond	None
North Heaton	None
Parklands	Northern part of ward
Sandyford	South western corner/riverside
South Heaton	Small area at southern end of Chillingham Road
South Jesmond	South eastern part of ward.
Walker	Riverside area
Walkergate	None
West City	City centre area and riverside
Westerhope	Western part of ward
West Gosforth	Small central area
Wingrove	Very small pocket just west of the hospital.
Woolsington	Woolsington village and outlying settlements North west tip of Newbiggin Hall

- 7.20** Woodland or nature areas of at least 2 hectares are suggested within 2 kilometres walk. This analysis has looked at the larger spaces in the “natural and semi natural “ category, but also includes some of the parks where these have woodlands or relatively wild and natural areas like Jesmond Dene Hodgkin and Leazes Parks or have extensive wildlife habitats as at Tyne Riverside and Big Waters. The results of the analysis show that Newcastle residents are quite well served by woodlands and nature areas, based on the distance standards our consultation has indicated as reasonable. The deficient areas are noted below and shown on Plan 5.

Ward (Boundary as from June 2004)	Locations that are too far away
Castle	Kingston Park
Dene	Little Benton
South Heaton	Small area at eastern edge of ward
Westerhope	Northern edge along Stamfordham Road
Woolsington	Newbiggin Hall Estate

- 7.21** The city's network of off road cycling and walking routes should be within 1 kilometre of home, school or work. Again based on this distance standard, most of the city is reasonably well served. However it should be noted that the routes shown on Plan 7 do include some quiet roads so this is not a picture of “off road” provision. The Linked Open Spaces Plan proposed in the Green Space Strategy will be addressing non-vehicular routes in more detail, in partnership with the cycling and walking aspects of the Local Transport Plan for Newcastle.

Ward (Boundary as from June 2004)	Locations that are too far away
Byker	Area south of Fossway and east of Union Road/Bothal Street
Elswick	Arthur's Hill area and Newcastle General Hospital
Fawdon	Small area in vicinity of Newlyn Road
South Heaton	Central area of ward
Walker	North west corner adjacent to Welbeck Road
West City	Small western area south of Elswick Road

- 7.22** These deficiency analyses show there is no room for complacency with a number of areas needing green space nearer to home or work and a particular shortage of the larger parks. There are some serious deficiencies across the range of green space types and worryingly some areas appear on the deficiency lists again and again. Arthur's Hill, Elswick, Byker, the Quayside and Jesmond, show multiple

deficiencies and are all higher density residential areas often without gardens, where need is arguably greatest.

- 7.23** As a footnote to this analysis, it should be noted many ward names and boundaries are being changed from June 2004. The new ward boundaries have been used on the plans, but revised Area Committee boundaries are not available at the time of writing.
- 7.24** On the basis of this assessment of deficiency Newcastle's needs have been collated and shown on Plan 8. The geographical locations where the various different types of green space are lacking have been plotted and the following needs are identified. Chapter 9 discusses ways that Newcastle City Council could try and address these needs and recommended options are listed in Chapter 10.

Green spaces on the doorstep:

New spaces at least 0.1 hectare in size needed at:

Hazlerigg	
North Gosforth (2)	West Gosforth (2)
Fawdon	Stamfordham Road, Westerhope
Jesmond (3)	Southwood Gardens/Kenton Lane
Northern Scotswood	Fenham (2)
Arthurs Hill (2)	Grainger Park/Bentinck Road
Elswick	City Centre
Benton	High Heaton (2)
Heaton (4)	Walker (3)
Walkergate/Fossway	Walkerville

Local green space

New informal spaces at least 2 hectares in size needed at:

Dinnington	Brunswick Village
Whitebridge Park	Grange Estate
Fawdon	West Gosforth
Benton	Jesmond (2)
Westerhope/Chapel Park	Woolsington
West Denton	Northern Lemington
Northern Scotswood	Fenham (2)
Grainger Park	City centre
Cochrane Park	Walkerville
Walkergate/Fossway	Byker/Welbeck Road

Local park

New local park at least 6 hectares in size needed at:

Benton	North Gosforth
Chapel Park	Walbottle
Throckley	

Large park

New park at least 10 hectares in size needed at:

Denton Dene (2)	Gala Field, Newbiggin Hall
West Denton	Lemington
North Kenton	Kingston Park
West Gosforth	Waverdale, Walkergate
Harbottle Park, Byker	Hodgkin Park, Benwell
Elswick Park	

Allotments

New allotments at least 1.2 hectares in size needed at:

Brunton Park	Kingston Park (2)
Fawdon	Kenton (2)
West Gosforth (2)	Blakelaw
Fenham	Chapel Park
West Throckley	West Denton
South Benwell	Elswick Riverside
Eastern Byker (2)	Walker Riverside

Woodland and Nature Areas

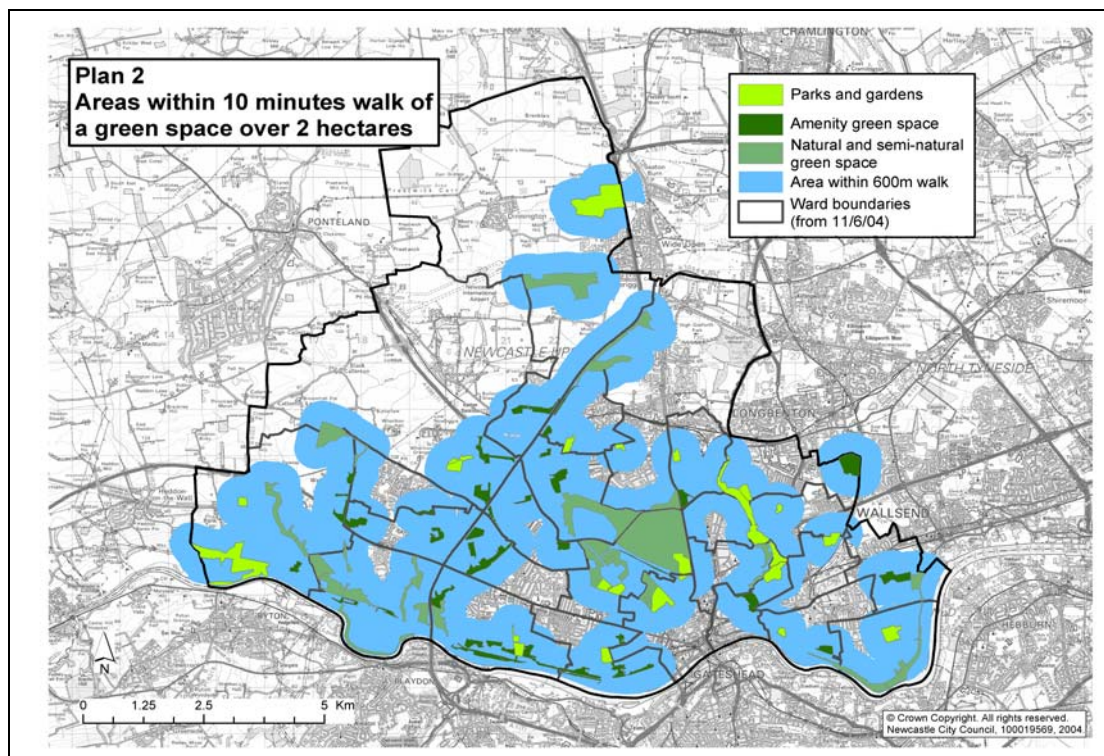
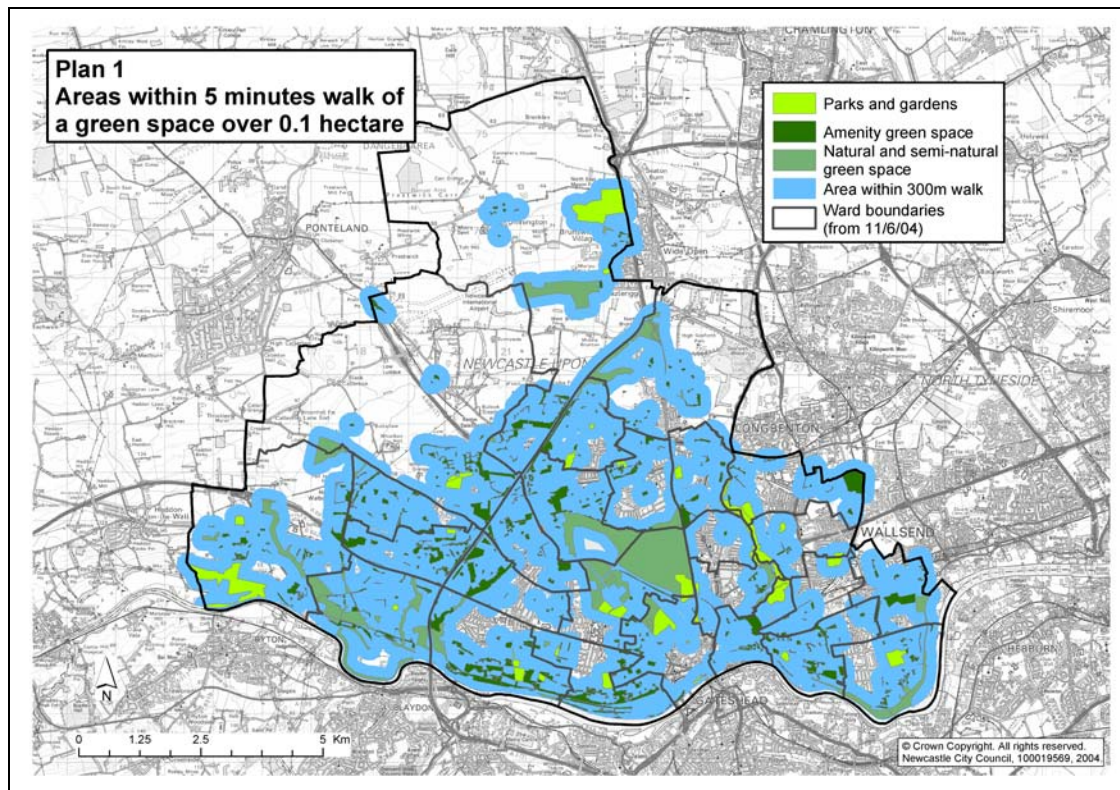
New woodlands or nature sites at least 2 hectares in size needed at:

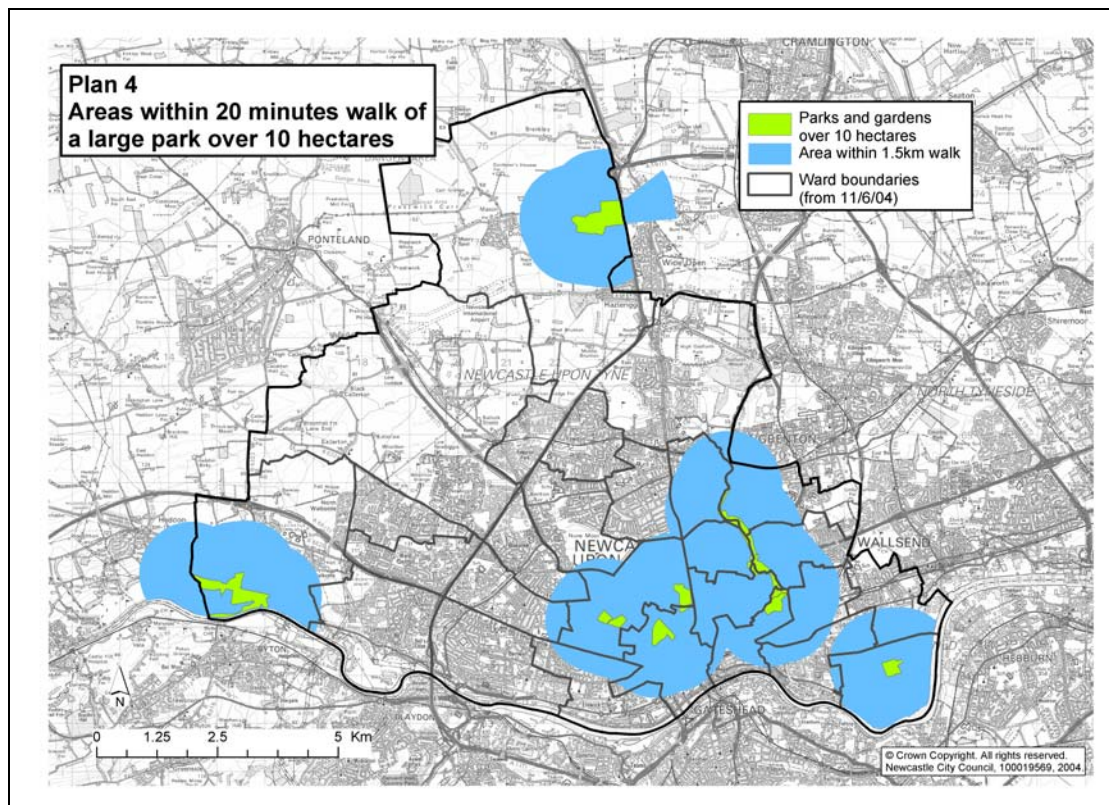
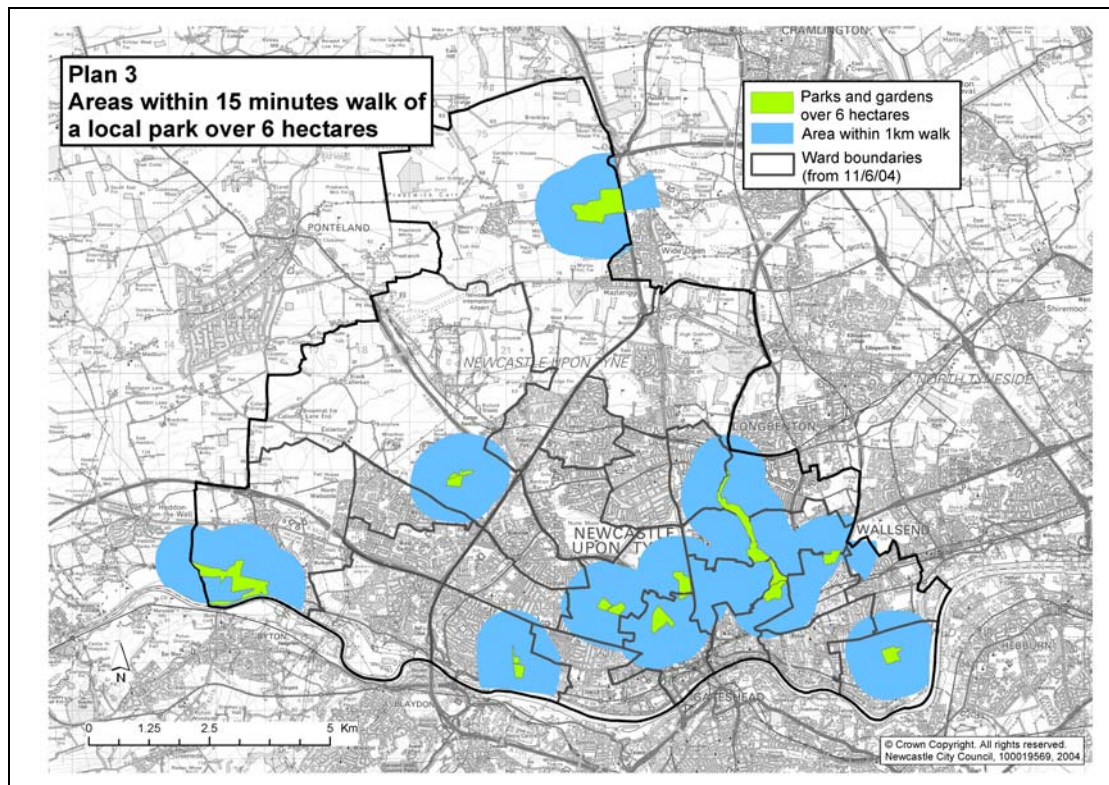
Kingston Park/North Brunton
Newbiggin Dene

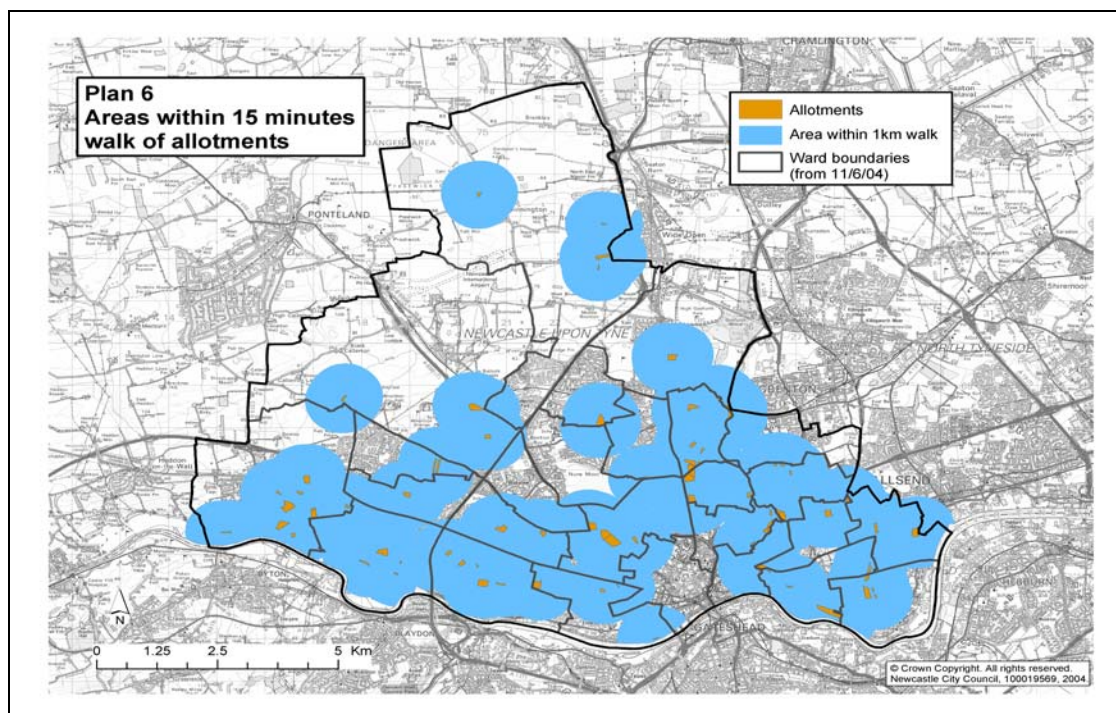
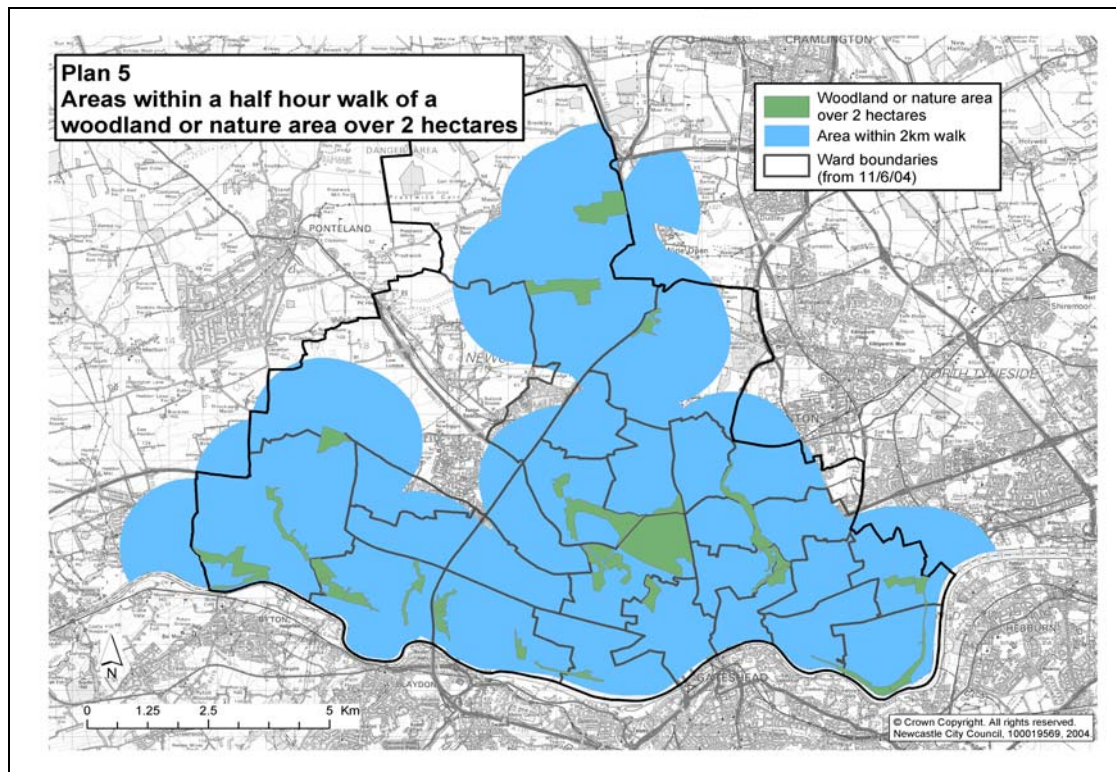
Green routes

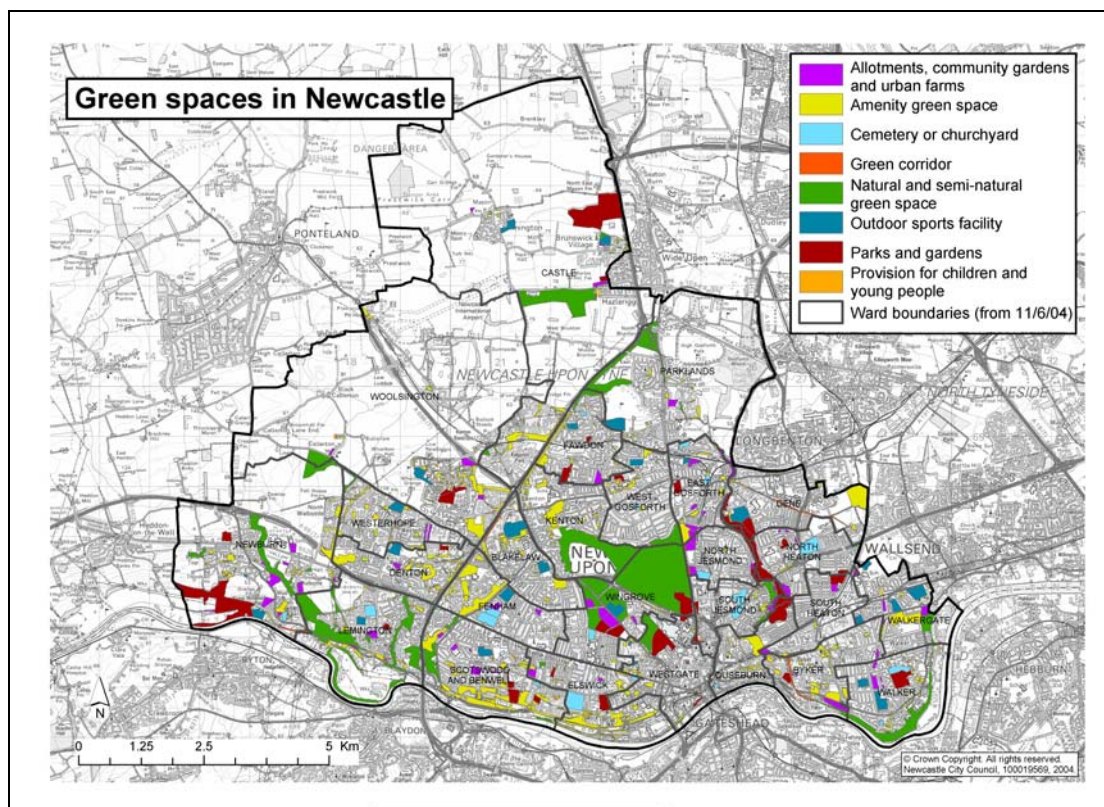
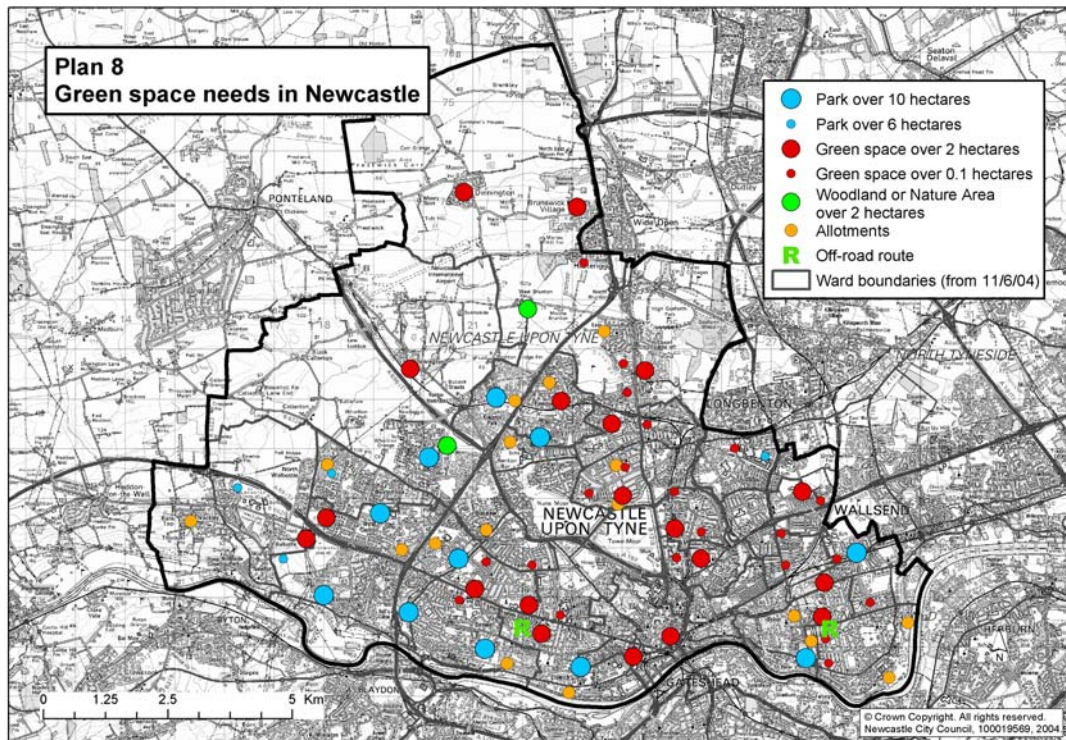
New green routes needed at:

Walker/Walkergate	Elswick Road area
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8 Identifying “surplus” green space

- 8.1** Identifying green space that might be “surplus” to requirement is no simple matter. Current Unitary Development Plan policy (OS1.4) spells out the nature of development that will be regarded as harmful to public open space and therefore not allowed. The following paragraphs (4.73 to 4.75) deal with the way Newcastle gauges open space needs and importance and the particular policy requirements for Education land. It is the responsibility of the organisation seeking to dispose of the land to carry out stringent tests to demonstrate that open space is surplus to requirements.
- 8.2** There are different types of green space and we have used the government’s recommended typology to classify our green spaces. (See background papers: “**Green spaces...benefits**” and “**Green spaces...quality**” for details) We have also acknowledged that size matters as well. A small park cannot usually offer the same range and quality of experiences as a larger park.
- 8.3** Before a green space can be said to be surplus it is necessary to follow a step by step assessment. Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 (PPG17) endorses a sequential approach to be taken when green spaces are being considered for development.

First - check whether there is enough of the particular type of green space in the locality. Beware of assuming that if a space is in poor condition it is not needed. A quality audit has been carried out for Newcastle’s green spaces and a significant number are not in good condition. (See “**Green spaces...quality**”.) What this tells us is that they need improvement and better management, not that they are surplus to requirements.

Second - look at what the space actually provides for the local and wider community. The implications of losing or significantly altering the green space have to be examined including identifying the particular features and opportunities that would be lost. If there are significant or valuable benefits, could they be substituted or compensated for elsewhere or in another way? A benefits audit has been undertaken for Newcastle’s green spaces and is described in more detail in the background paper “Green spaces...benefits”. A space that provides a large number of benefits to a large number of people should probably be protected from development. If the benefits are highly significant and cannot be replaced or substituted, for example a stretch of land containing rare species or valuable archaeological remains, then the space clearly cannot be released for development.

Third - check whether the locality is short of any other type of green space.

Fourth - ascertain whether the space could be altered to provide a different type of green space to remedy a local deficiency. In the case of privately owned space are resources available to acquire some or all of the land for green space use?

Fifth - find out whether the local community agrees that the land is surplus to their needs.

- 8.4** The PPG 17 approach to dealing with applications to build on green space now needs to be enshrined as policy within the Local Development Framework. In some respects the approach is not so dissimilar to Newcastle's existing UDP policies OS 1.2 and 1.4 except that the needs assessment is now uppermost and explicit.
- 8.5** As shown in Chapter 7 above, the general picture for Newcastle is that parts of the City do not meet the current or new provision standards. There is certainly no surplus of park provision and few areas of over-supply in other categories. Places where green space provision is more generous tend to be the inter and post war council housing estates, though the spaces are often small or located as amenity space or verge alongside roads. The other areas with increasing amounts of green and open spaces are those parts of the city where demolition has taken place, mainly within unpopular housing estates in the east and west riverside wards: Walker, Byker, Scotswood, Benwell, and Elswick. There has also been a lesser amount of clearance in Lemington, Newbiggin Hall, Kenton, Fawdon and Blakelaw. In theory much of this land is green space only in name and appearance since seeding is the usual temporary treatment to prevent the sites from becoming eyesores. Many of these cleared sites are actually land awaiting redevelopment.

9 Addressing deficiency

- 9.1** This section looks at ways to remedy deficiencies, based on the assumption that in most instances, land values in Newcastle will rule out acquisition for the purposes of developing new green space. The only land that has been acquired for the city for green space purposes in the last 30 years has been derelict land where the council has received grant aid both to acquire the land and to carry out reclamation. An exception was the purchase in 1997 of agricultural land at Prestwick Carr to allow the land to be managed for nature conservation, an initiative supported by the Lottery Fund.
- 9.2** From time to time privately owned green spaces are the subject of planning applications for development. If this happens in an area that is clearly shown to be deficient in green space, it is unrealistic to expect that the Council will be able to find the resources to acquire the land for public green space use. A better option will usually be to use the deficiency evidence to develop a case for some publicly accessible green space to form part of the development scheme. If the development is for new homes, workplaces or a school then the new users of the development will have a need for green space within easy reach. Their needs can be estimated and specified. If provision of a quantity of green space proves not appropriate then it may be reasonable to ask the developer to make a contribution toward improving the quality or quantity of existing local provision.
- 9.3 Planning conditions and obligations**
The mechanisms for securing these improvements will be planning conditions either with or without an agreement under Section 106 of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. The latter arrangement allows a developer to agree to the provision of facilities that may or may not be on the development site, but are linked in some way to the development. At the time of writing, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is carrying out more research into the effectiveness of Section 106 Agreements as these are thought to be slow and unwieldy. They are actively considering whether a “tariff” system would be beneficial. The idea would be that the local authority would develop a local list of what is needed linked to the different scales and types of development. For example Doncaster Council operate a tariff on the provision of new play equipment. They ask for one item of play equipment to be provided or funded by a developer for every 100 children. This can be applied to a development of family sized homes to estimate the likely numbers of children to be catered for.
- 9.4** The “*Planning Newcastle*” key issues report looks at developer contributions and planning obligations in paragraphs G20 –G22 and raises questions about their effectiveness in key issue OS4.

- 9.5 The S106 agreement may provide facilities or features elsewhere to offset loss through the development or they may be essential for the future users of the development for example schools, highways, and other infrastructure. Government Circular 1/97 states that the facilities provided must be:

“directly related to the development proposal, the need for them arises from its implementation and they are related in scale and kind.”

“Planning obligations should be used as a means to remedy local deficiencies in the quantity or quality of open space, sports and recreational provision. Local authorities will be justified in seeking planning obligations where the quantity or quality of provision is inadequate or under threat, or where new development increases local needs. It is essential that local authorities have undertaken detailed assessments of needs and audits of existing facilities and set appropriate local standards in order to justify planning obligations. “

- 9.6 For open spaces and sports the Circular allows a developer to agree to make a contribution to revenue costs and to provide “commuted sums” for maintenance for a fixed period of years. Where a development is not large enough in its own right to require a new park or green space, there can be a requirement for the developer to provide a contribution toward improving local facilities to meet an increased need and usage as a result of the development. The government is reviewing its guidance about S106 Agreements because they are seen to be rather slow and unwieldy. Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 revised in 2002 has this to say in paragraph 33, on the use of S106 Agreements for open spaces.
- 9.7 When thinking about using planning powers to remedy deficiency, the Local Planning Authority needs to be open and transparent in its negotiations. It must be fully clear to a prospective developer what is likely to be required and why and each developer must be treated fairly. Clear policies are needed to explain the council’s position and how its decisions will be made. Up-to date, clear and detailed information about surplus and deficiency in the city also needs to be available to inform the process. In effect this means having available a data base on the quantity, type, quality, benefits and accessibility of local green spaces plus information explaining where there is under or over provision as outlined in this paper.
- 9.8 For the moment our analysis has been principally at city-wide level but examined at Area and Ward levels to suit committee reporting arrangements. Information on surplus and deficiency would be useful to support ward plans. The work has been made more difficult because of ward boundary changes in effect from June 2004 and consequent changes to the Area committee boundaries. All plans and information

in this paper have been amended to show the new 2004 Ward boundaries but any references to “Areas” will be those Area Committees in existence prior to June 2004.

9.9 Creating new green space

There are ways to obtain new green space. Some recent successful examples are described below to show that it is possible to secure new green space for the community if opportunities are taken and exploited with creativity and vision.

- 9.10** New local or doorstep spaces are most often created within new development or redevelopment. The existence of provision standards is essential in negotiating new spaces with prospective developers. When the Local Planning Authority grants consent for development, planning conditions can be attached to secure the provision and landscaping of new green spaces, play areas and other features that are an integral part particularly of new residential development. The following green spaces and landscaping have been provided this way.

**St Nicholas’ Hospital: Princes Meadow and Baronswood.
Middlewood Park, Fenham
Broadway West
Newcastle Great Park – Melbury and Elmfield Park**

New doorstep spaces are also being included at redevelopment schemes where there was no publicly accessible green space before.

**Former Proctor and Gamble offices at Hedley House, Gosforth
Brunton Green in Newcastle’s Great Park** (A new local green space has been created to benefit both new residents and existing residents at Greenfield Road, Brunton Park, in an area deficient in doorstep green space.)

- 9.11** Local green spaces are sometimes offered for public use by owners.

Green space at Jesmond Parish Church providing the only amenity space in central Jesmond

All Saints Church at West Avenue Gosforth allows public access to its grounds.

Northumberland Wildlife Trust created a new nature park for all to enjoy at Garden House, their St Nicholas’ Hospital headquarters

Former St Nicholas Hospital cricket pitch is also now available for public use

Informal access tolerated in parts of **High Gosforth Park**

Grove Park on the former Proctor and Gamble offices site, Gosforth will allow public access to a private green space

- 9.12** New parks and larger spaces can also be created, usually through change and redevelopment, but with the added need for investment in infrastructure and facilities.

9.13 Demolition and regeneration

Demolition is opening up large tracts of land at Scotswood, Walker Riverside and some other parts of Newcastle. When these areas are redeveloped, some of the cleared space can be retained to provide desirable levels of new green space in the categories needed. This does not only mean doorstep and local spaces but also allows the creation of new parks, nature areas and a whole network of linking spaces and green corridors. Existing parks and spaces can be accommodated within the new framework or altered or amended to serve their community better. Demolition and clearance in an area undergoing wholesale regeneration offers a chance to rethink how the green space performs in the locality. Indicative green space frameworks were designed for the East and West End Regeneration Plans produced in July 2001 to inform the regeneration process and similar ideas have been tabled for other areas to guide development and promote linkage. The City already has a number of parks that have been created where buildings have been demolished.

Benwell Nature Park

North Benwell Park

Ayton Park, Byker

9.14 Planning Obligations (Section 106 Agreements – see paragraphs 9.3 – 9.6 above)

Section 106 agreements have provided for extensive new green spaces including cycling and walking routes, play and other facilities at the following development schemes.

Little Benton

Newcastle Great Park

North of Newcastle at Woolsington and Dinnington: new woodland, wetland and recreational access negotiated as restoration after opencast coal mining

St Nicholas' Hospital, Gosforth

- 9.15** Where investment is available, one option for creating a park is to upgrade existing open space or to amalgamate one or more existing spaces to create a larger entity. Successful bids for funding are needed, strongly supported by a strategic approach which is one of the driving purposes behind this strategy.
This approach has been successful at:

Gala Field, Newbiggin Hall Estate

Iris Brickfield, Heaton

- 9.16** Creating a city-wide or regional park is more challenging though not impossible.

The Tyne Riverside Country Park at Newburn resulted from reclamation of colliery and railway land some 25 years ago. It is now one of Newcastle's most popular and highest quality parks and it is of regional and national significance because of the river, the watersports there and Hadrians Way National Trail.

Denton Dene, currently a large area of amenity green space, sports and natural /semi-natural space could become a major park to match the quality and attractions of Jesmond Dene

Major parkland is planned at Newcastle Great Park that will serve Newcastle as a whole, not just those who live in the new houses and work in the new Business Park.

- 9.17 Creating allotments:** New allotments will generally only be created where there is demand. In the last few years new allotments or community gardens have been created from neglected large gardens at the rear of housing blocks, subject to residents' wishes.

Allotments will need to be planned at Newcastle Great Park to satisfy demand from the new residents.

Three Mile Allotments is an extremely successful site in North Gosforth, on land provided to compensate loss as a result of the construction of Kingston Park.

North Benwell Terraces. Where houses have been cleared to create new green spaces, residents asked for one of the sites to be designed to provide a future Community Garden at Ladykirk Road.

- 9.18 Creating woodland and nature areas:** New green space areas for wildlife have been created recently at the following.

St Nicholas Park, Northumberland Wildlife Trust HQ

Havannah Local Nature Reserve - colliery reclamation

School Wildlife Gardens -Eco Schools Scheme

Kenton Dene - Community Tree Planting

New native woodland plantations at Newcastle Great Park

Open cast coal restoration at Woolsington, Throckley, and Dinnington

Big Waters, Percy Pit, and Tyne Riverside, Newburn were all former colliery sites, achieved through reclamation

Benwell Nature Park created on former housing site

Walker Riverside, Waverdale created by reclamation of derelict land

Brenkley and land adjoining Safeway, Cowgate created through landfill

9.19 **Creating a linked open space network and cycling/walking routes**

Like many other places, Newcastle has achieved new linking routes for non-vehicular use by reclaiming derelict railway lines.

Hadrian's Way National Trail along the Tyne from Newburn to Wallsend

Northward links to Byker, Blucher Village and North Walbottle

Coxlodge Wagonway linking Gosforth to Little Benton and Rising Sun Country Park in Wallsend

Blucher Wagonway linking Lemington with North Walbottle

9.20 Development can provide good opportunities for providing linking paths, but having a strategic commitment to the route beforehand is very helpful. On occasions a good opportunity for an important link has been missed. This is a principal reason that a Linked Open Spaces Plan is recommended in the Strategy. By preparing and consulting on a plan that defines the component spaces and linkages between them, we will be able to give formal protection and planning status in the same way as recreational routes are protected in the Unitary Development Plan.

9.21 There are good practice examples where linking routes have been included in recent development projects, some through delivery of the UDP recreational routes system and others as a result of good design and forethought.

Princess Mary's Hospital residential conversion included a very attractive short path through trees linking Burdon Terrace to the Town Moor/Great North Road.

There are pedestrian routes through **St Nicholas' Hospital** between Jubilee Road, Salter's Road and Kenton Road

Newcastle Great Park will provide an extensive network of off-road routes.

Routes were included at the former **Redewood School** (Redewood and Stapleford Closes)

The **Haydon Grange** development at Little Benton provided a network of linking paths and bridleways.

10 Recommendations for the Green Spaces Strategy

10.1 This concluding section lists the various recommendations that have been made and suggests these for inclusion in the “**Green spaces...your spaces**” **Action Plan**. Many will also need to be followed up in the Local Development Framework. Some of the recommended work is already in progress or has been identified in the “**Planning Newcastle**” key issues paper during the strategy preparation period 2002-2004.

10.2 Complete a PPG 17 compliant needs assessment for Newcastle.
The following are still needed.

Complete audits of the quantity, quality and benefits provided by the smallest green spaces below 1000 square metres (0.1 hectare), amalgamating linked areas of verge and other spaces to be mapped as larger networks wherever possible.

Extend audits to cover all other council owned green spaces: civic spaces, school grounds and sports areas, and all private and semi-private open spaces where the public have legitimate access.

Further studies of the age and social structure of the local population, based on *Neighbourhoods* (as defined in the Newcastle Neighbourhood Information System) and on the revised electoral wards, subject to boundary and name changes from June 2004. Much of the green space information and analysis will need to be revised to reflect the new configuration.

More detailed demographic analysis and estimates. These will be essential in regeneration areas to assess green space needs for the expected future population structure.

Carry out more house-type and density studies as part of the Local Development Framework process, particularly for new housing styles that are emerging in regeneration areas.

10.3 Set local standards for green space quantity, quality, accessibility and minimum acceptable size and adopt as current council policy, superseding the standards in the 1998 Unitary Development Plan.

Report the finished Green Spaces Strategy to Cabinet for formal endorsement as Council Policy.

Report the finished Green Spaces Strategy to Development Control Committee for immediate adoption as *Supplementary Planning Guidance* as an interim measure.

Once the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act becomes operational later in 2004, take steps to adopt the Green Spaces Strategy as a *Supplementary Planning Document*. This may entail additional consultation and completion of a satisfactory Sustainability Appraisal, depending on what the government guidance requires as part of this new process.

More consultations on distances and quantity of allotments will be done by the allotments officer as part of the more detailed Allotments Strategy. Adopt the standards and provisions as above. Complete the Newcastle Playing Pitch Strategy and adopt the standards and provision recommendations as above. Prepare a strategy for equipped play provision including standards for new development. Adopt as above. Continue to monitor the effectiveness of the new provision standards for green spaces. Consider a tiered set of green space standards with a city-wide minimum and a series of optimum levels designed specifically to suit new types of higher density housing and residential or business areas without garden space. Adopt a hierarchy of local space based on the Tyne and Wear model, adopting the term "*doorstep*" in place of "*local*". "*Local*" and "*neighbourhood*" should be used synonymously because it is so hard to differentiate between them. Consult "less able people" and under 16s on preferred walking distances to green spaces.

10.4 Identify deficiency and develop strategic priorities to address inequality in green space provision

Develop design standards and costs.
 Monitor deficiencies in accessibility and quantity of green space.
 Identify and monitor deficiencies in quality.
 Identify and monitor green space surplus within Newcastle.
 Define priority areas through public consultation.
 Address deficiencies in priority areas when the opportunity arises, through the planning, regeneration and development process.
 Develop policies for existing green space to make sure it is fit for purpose and meets local needs and aspirations.
 Upgrade all city and local parks to meet Civic Trust *Green Flag* quality standard.
 Address garden size in planning and urban design policy guidance.
 Identify and evaluate strategic options.
 Prepare draft policy and consult stakeholders.
 Upgrade and/or amalgamate certain amenity green spaces to provide local and citywide parks to address deficiency. Consider changing the quality and facilities of existing green spaces to address deficiency, provided that features of acknowledged historic, landscape or biodiversity value are not compromised or destroyed. Plan 8 indicates the likely priority areas for correcting green space deficiency. The following are considered to be achievable, subject to successful funding bids and Council commitment over the coming years.

New doorstep and local green spaces

West End (Scotswood, Benwell and Elswick, through regeneration)

East End (Walker, Byker, through regeneration)

Newcastle Great Park (through new development)

Various locations (through the development or redevelopment process: E.g. former Heaton Manor Upper School site)

New local parks:

Chapel Park (through amalgamation and upgrading of existing spaces and consider incorporation of surplus education land)

Throckley (through demolition, amalgamation and upgrading of existing smaller spaces)

New large parks:

Newcastle Great Park (development and S106 agreement)

North Kenton (through demolition, enlargement and investment)

Kingston Park (upgrade existing amenity space)

Walkergate (upgrade Waverdale)

Byker (through regeneration: demolition, enlargement, amalgamation and investment in Harbottle and Ayton Parks)

Hodgkin Park (through regeneration: amalgamation of existing spaces and investment)

Denton Dene (through regeneration: upgrading from amenity space and investment)

Lemington (Upgrade and invest in part of Percy Pit)

Newbiggin Hall (enlarge Gala Field and continue investment)

West Denton (upgrade and amalgamate existing sports and amenity space)

New woodland and nature areas (as part of larger park development)

Newcastle Great Park

Denton Dene

Gala Field/Newbiggin Dene

Hodgkin Park

New Allotments

East End (through regeneration)

West End (through regeneration)

Newcastle Great Park (development/S106)

New linked green routes

East End (through regeneration)

West End (through regeneration)

Newcastle Great Park (development/S106)

Ouseburn Corridor (Planning for Urban River Environments or "PURE" project)

10.5 Strengthen policies for protecting valued green spaces using planning policy documents.

Strengthen policies for circumstances when green space can be released for building, including sequential test, application of audit results and PPG 17 compliance.

Add a policy to protect highway verges and corner/incidental spaces of demonstrable amenity value under 0.1 hectare - mini-amenity green spaces.

10.6 Put in place other policy initiatives

Linked Open Space Strategy to be prepared including better provision of off-road cycling facilities and actions to improve wildlife habitats. (Need to check overlap with work on Local Transportation Plan and Biodiversity Action Plan).

Playing Pitch Strategy

Allotments Strategy

Play Strategy

ANNEXE A

National and Local Standards

This annexe looks at what other UK agencies and councils are recommending or using as their standards, firstly those for quantity, secondly accessibility and thirdly quality.

1 How much open space ?

National Playing Fields Association (NPFA)

The NPFA are an influential and long established registered UK charity working for play, sport and recreation .They have long promoted the aim of "*six acres per thousand*" people for open space provision. In 2001 they published a review paper "***The Six Acre Standard***". This paper recommends the following.

Minimum outdoor playing space 2.4 hectares (6 acres) per 1000.

Of this, 1.6 hectares for outdoor sport: (1.2 hectares for pitch sports)

0.8 hectare for children's play

Local area for play (LAP) for ages 6 and under, 100 square metres activity zone with "demonstrative features" and a 5 metres buffer zone.

Local equipped area for play (LEAP) for children aged 4 to 8, 400 square metres activity zone, minimum 5 items of equipment and 20 metres buffer zone.

Neighbourhood equipped area for play (NEAP) for over 8s, 1000 square metres activity zone, minimum 8 items of equipment and 30 metres buffer zone.

The National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners

This organisation has a standard of 20 allotment plots per 1000 households. Existing plot sizes can be very variable. An allotment plot is defined as "10 rods" or 250m². (0.025 hectare or about half the size of a tennis court) Thus 20 plots would need a site of half a hectare.

Core Cities Standards

Newcastle upon Tyne

Newcastle's standards are defined in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) adopted in 1998 and in our supplementary planning guidance. They follow NPFA standards very closely.

Neighbourhood and City Centre parks minimum size 6 hectares

Local Open Space 1.2 hectares per 1000

Space for outdoor sport 1.1 hectares per 1000

Allotments and stables: an allotment plot for approximately 5% of the adult population (aged 30-75 yrs)

Children's play 15 square metres per dwelling with 2 or more bedrooms

Minimum formal (equipped) play area size for younger children 100 square metres

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

Minimum formal (equipped) play area size for older children 500 square metres

Whilst Newcastle has gone some way to defining needs for different types of open space, some of the definitions are ambiguous. There is a minimum size but no standard related to population for neighbourhood parks and no definition of neighbourhood. Allotment size is not stated. There is no standard for spaces of less formal, countryside character. Our quantity standards need to be more comprehensive and more robust.

Bristol Local Plan revision consultation, February 2003

No set quantity standards of provision but strong emphasis on protection, creating new high quality spaces and landscapes and improving access. Particular attention to be paid to the amenity, nature conservation interests and the value to the community of open space, whether defined in the Local Plan or not.

Sheffield UDP 1998 (currently under review)

Recreational open space is based on or above NPFA standards for formal and informal recreation space excluding allotments.

Liverpool UDP November 2002

Again a strong emphasis on protection and where necessary replacement. Reliance on NPFA standards for playing pitches. Liverpool is keen to enhance its open space in terms of quality, management, new recreational provision and new parks in areas of defined need.

Birmingham UDP 1993 (currently under review)

Standards very similar to NPFA.

Beacon and other" best practice" Councils

Brent Deposit UDP 2001

This authority adopts a hierarchical approach based on a minimum facility size and distance standards, not a standard size per 1000 population, plus a strong emphasis on protection. Brent also urges "*Dual Use*" of school grounds and believes there is potential at many school sites. Whilst the school remains the main user, Brent's open space deficiency is in part to be addressed this way.

Doncaster Audit

Doncaster's green spaces strategy is cited as a best practice example by the Urban Green Spaces Task Force and their target is to achieve standards of quality and provision that equal or exceed national standards. Where there is no national standard they have set their own. Their consultation showed NPFA standards to be appropriate for their circumstances and they have a target to meet NPFA standards or local standards in ***all wards*** within 10 years. They identified some local needs not covered by the NPFA for example space for riding bicycles. They also establish a detailed hierarchy of provision with distance and minimum facility sizes. Doncaster very clearly has more specific and detailed standards than *any* of the other cities researched and whilst they do rely on NPFA standards this is based on their own consultation into local needs.

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

Glasgow (City plan, February 2002)

No overall standards for City wide open space but refers to Glasgow Council's recreational Green Space standards similar to NPFA and strong emphasis on protection.

Local Standards

Gateshead (Unitary Development Plan 1998)

Gateshead's policies rely heavily on existing national standards, NPFA and others, but recognise the need for more work on local need and provision. Gateshead also opts for a hierarchy of provision.

North Tyneside (Unitary Development Plan 2002)

New housing to include recreational provision to NPFA standards and appropriate to the future residents. Protection for four categories of open spaces based on Sport England national policy. Protection also for recreational corridors.

South Tyneside (Unitary Development Plan 1999)

Like Doncaster, South Tyneside's standards were cited as a best practice example in the reports from the Urban Green Spaces Taskforce in 2001-2 and in the PPG17 Companion Guide. The borough has adopted an open space standard *above* the NPFA national standard and have a policy restricting new development if this would mean a reduction of standards below their locally agreed minimum, in any of the borough's wards. South Tyneside also has a policy to develop linked open space and a hierarchy of provision standards.

Sunderland (Unitary Development Plan 1998)

The City sets out the target to achieve 1 hectare per 1000 people over the plan period. Standards are stated by use or sports category with a well developed hierarchy of spaces and minimum sizes

Blyth Valley (District Local Plan 1999)

The plan aims to meet NPFA standards. For new development Blyth are seeking from developers a level of contribution for playing pitches equivalent to the cost of laying out one hectare per 250 dwellings, for developments of 10 dwellings or more.

Middlesbrough (Local Plan 1999)

The plan defines 8 categories of open space, based on use/function and a hierarchy. 4 new areas of "primary open space " are identified. Play provision is based on NPFA standards but the plan acknowledges more work needed on sports provision. There is also a standard for Local Nature Space minimum 0.5 hectare within 1 kilometre of every home and 10-15 minutes walk from every school.

Castle Morpeth (District Local Plan 2003)

Minimum standard for outdoor playing space well above the NPFA.

Conclusions on quantities:

Generally all the authorities researched have different standards but there is a strong majority opting like Newcastle to adopt the NPFA standards or similar. In broad terms Sheffield, Doncaster, South Tyneside and Castle Morpeth aim above NPFA standards whilst Newcastle, Glasgow and Gateshead are slightly below. Liverpool, Birmingham,

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

Sunderland, North Tyneside, Blyth and Middlesbrough are closest to NPFA.
Hierarchies of provision are popular and probably ensure a better range of provision.
Brent is relying on this rather than standards per 1000.

2 Location: How far away ?

The recently published research paper "***The Use of Public Parks in England***" 2003 had the following national findings on distances and travelling to parks.

"over two thirds of adults (68%) said that the park they most often visited was the one closest to where they lived. This was particularly so for women (72%) adults from social groups D&E (73%) and adults from ethnic minority groups (82%)"

"43% of adults who said they had used a park in the last 12 months had taken children to a play area. Accompanying a child to a play area was the second most common activity undertaken in parks by adults behind going for a walk (75%)."

"Adults who took children to play areas used their nearest park (72%) and were most likely to walk (61%)."

"Walking was the most common method adults used to get to the park they visited most often. (56%) followed by car/van ((35%). Public transport was used by only 4% of adults."

"The majority of journeys originated within five miles of the park (82%) with most of these being within one mile (56%)."

"Over half of adults (68%) had a journey time of 10 minutes or less."

"60% of adults who walked covered less than half a mile"

"Country parks and formal gardens tended to attract visitors from further afield with over 1 in 4 adults traveling at least 10 miles."

Many authorities set distance standards in terms of linear distance and walking times from the various categories of open space.

National Playing Fields Association (NPFA)

Local Area for play (LAP) within 1 minute walking time of home

Local equipped area for play (LEAP) within 5 minutes walking time of home

Neighbourhood equipped area for play (NEAP) within 15 minutes walking time of home

Core Cities standards

Newcastle

Neighbourhood or city centre park minimum size 6 hectare to be within 0.5 kilometre of most households

No dwelling to be further than 1.5 kilometre from football or cricket pitches

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

Most households to be within 0.5 kilometre of tennis and bowls facilities and other specialist recreational facilities

Bristol has a commitment to improve distribution, variety, quality and accessibility.

Birmingham requires dwellings to be within 400m safe walking distance of a play area.

Beacon and other" best practice" Councils

Brent has the following distance standards for its hierarchy

<i>Type of open space</i>	<i>Approximate size</i>	<i>Distance from home</i>
Metropolitan park	60 hectares	3.2km
District park	20 hectares	1.2km
Local park	2 hectares	0.4km
Amenity space	under 2 hectares	less than 0.4km

Doncaster Audit

Well developed range of distance standards including open space hierarchy and green corridors to link all sites.

Glasgow No distance standards

Local Standards

Gateshead has distance standards developed in detail for play and parks though play distances don't apply in very isolated locations

North Tyneside No local distance standards though follow advice of NPFA.

South Tyneside Clear distance standards by hierarchy

Sunderland Clear distance standards by hierarchy, similar to South Tyneside.

Blyth Valley has a children's playing space distance standard.

Middlesbrough Clear distance standards similar to South Tyneside and including local nature space.

Castle Morpeth No distance standards

Conclusions on distances and accessibility:

What this survey tells us is that the authorities with better developed hierarchies of open space provision have also set clearer standards. Brent, Newcastle, Gateshead, Doncaster, South Tyneside, Sunderland and Middlesbrough all have three or more

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Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

distance standards. With less than three distance standards are Birmingham and Blyth whilst Glasgow, North Tyneside and Bristol have none stated in the documents seen.

The other noticeable point is the difference in the terminology and definitions of the types of open space in the hierarchy. Neighbourhoods it seems, are very hard to define. An e-mailed inquiry to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister about the current definition of "neighbourhood" is unanswered. Dictionaries are not much help either.

Neighbourhood - vicinity, area, district, region, locality, zone, quarter

The Shorter English Dictionary: "the quality, condition or fact of being neighbours or lying near to something, nearness, the vicinity or nearness of something. A community ; a certain number of people who live close together, the people living near to a certain place, a district frequently considered in reference to the character or circumstances of its inhabitants."

Local - restricted, limited, confined, narrow, restricted, home, native, resident.

The Shorter English Dictionary: "Belonging to, existing in or peculiar to a particular place or places, belonging to a town or other limited region as distinct from the country as a whole.

3 Quality: What sort of design and management standards ?

Some authorities refer to quality issues, usually a fairly broad and non-specific statement that public open space should be well cared for. Some go further and refer to particular design issues and management standards.

National Playing Fields Association (NPFA)

Design principles stated for LAPs, LEAPs and NEAPs. Minimum activity zones, buffers and number of items of equipment.

Core Cities standards

None available

Beacon and other "best practice" Councils

Doncaster

Supplementary Planning Guidance on adoption and maintenance of Public Open Space (2000) has set a higher level of developer contribution to the management of new or existing open space by adopting a **15 year** maintenance period as the basis for their commuted sums.

Policy RL4 (e) refers to elements to be included in the design of new open space: landscaping, amenity areas, nature conservation areas and play space.

Identifies 16 parks as borderline and 9 as requiring improvement.

All sites to meet a minimum standard within 10 years, set by the audit baseline and parks improvement plans.

Review to be carried out of grounds maintenance priorities and management.

Woodland Strategy to be prepared including management approach

New SPG to be prepared for green space in Doncaster

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Play minimum standard of 1 item of play equipment per 100 children in all wards

Adopt all road verges as green corridors

Programme to increase biodiversity value of all sites

Glasgow Detailed design must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the City Council that it provides for appropriate habitat creation and/or landscape improvement and/or the improved management of the retained or newly created Green Space.

Local Standards

Gateshead

Supplementary Planning Guidance for children's play

Restrict sale of open space to be incorporated in private gardens

Policy C42 covers siting design and management standards: avoidance of excessive noise, nuisance, disturbance and traffic, avoiding steps and steep slopes where possible and no detriment to local visual or residential amenity, townscape or landscape.

Play areas to have "buffer" zones for safety and traffic calming on minor roads.

Policy C44 defines design standards

Toddler play areas to be visible from adjacent dwellings

Play for ages 7-11 should be designed not to attract teenagers

Areas for ages 12-18 to be designed to discourage illicit and undesirable activities.

It is also worth noting that Gateshead has included policies governing the design of open spaces

North Tyneside

Recreation and OS resources to be properly managed

Green recreational corridors to be created and protected from development.

South Tyneside

District parks to be large scale natural areas or formalised landscaped parks with specialised recreational facilities

Neighbourhood parks to have a landscaped setting and general recreational facilities

Local parks open spaces to have recreational facilities.

Pocket parks to have high amenity value

Linked open space system to be developed.

No children's play equipment on unsuitable surfaces

Playgrounds to be fewer and larger

Play area guidelines to be prepared

Middlesbrough

Improve quality of open space for public recreation and enjoyment

Green space defined as all vegetated open space areas public and private, within built up area and adjoining it, that has amenity, informal leisure, wildlife or agricultural value.

Green wedges and green link network protected and design required to enhance them

Primary and secondary open space defined. (secondary = grounds, cemeteries, miscellaneous amenity space, wildlife areas.)

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Pocket parks to have play for young children, space for low key games. (LAP)

Local park to have kickabout, playground, sitting areas trees and shrubs.(LEAP & NEAP)

Area park to have varied play for all ages, extensive landscaping, woodland, horticultural features, sitting and walking areas, tennis, bowls, putting, and multi purpose sports.

Castle Morpeth

Children's play facilities should be located to allow supervision by adults in the surrounding area and landscaped to provide a good and safe environment for play.

They should be sited to avoid nuisance to residents in neighbouring properties and where access and traffic do not cause a danger to children.

Conclusions on quality:

Quality standards are much harder to find. In practice they are more often described in a lot more detail in site specific development briefs and in Supplementary Planning Guidance. Most development plans have none or at best have broad aspirational statements like Newcastle, Glasgow and South Tyneside. Those authorities in this survey with more detailed quality standards seem to be Gateshead, Doncaster and Middlesbrough.

General Conclusions:

Planning standards for open spaces are extremely variable but there are clear areas of consensus, particularly reliance on the NPFA standards. It should be noted that all the documents assessed were written before the report of the Urban Green Spaces Task Force and revised PPG 17. The latter advises strongly against reliance on NPFA national standards.

Most authorities use a hierarchical approach to provision of recreational facilities and the size and nature of the open space that contains these. Most adopt a three tier approach. Where a hierarchy is developed this usually brings distance/catchment standards as well.

ANNEXE B

English Nature's Proposals for Accessible Natural Green Space

English Nature (EN) is the national government agency for conserving wildlife and for the national Biodiversity Action Plan for England and Wales. They are keen to promote improvements in wildlife habitat and to engage with the community. EN have for some time been carrying out research into open space needs for people and wildlife. They have suggested a standard of 1 hectare per 1000 in urban areas for Local Nature Reserves. (*Research Paper: Box and Harrison 1993*)

EN have also prepared draft guidance and a toolkit for local authorities to use if they wish to develop "**Accessible Natural Green Space Standards (ANGST)**". The draft is not yet complete and has therefore not been published. However the standards have been publicised in a leaflet "**A Space for Nature**". English Nature's suggested standards for accessible natural green spaces are as follows.

no person should live more than 300 metres from their nearest area of natural green space of at least 2 hectares in size

hectares of Local Nature Reserve per 1,000 population

one accessible 20 hectares site within 2 kilometres of home

one accessible 100 hectares site within 5 kilometres

one accessible 500 hectares site within 10 kilometres

Local Biodiversity Standards

Through the North East Biodiversity Forum, English Nature and partners have developed a local indicator for the number of accessible natural green spaces. Their current targets are as follows.

Target 19: By 2010 ensure that all urban dwellers have an area of accessible natural greenspace of at least 2hectares within 0.5 kilometres of their home

Target 20: Designate in each local authority area, one hectare of Local Nature Reserve (LNR) per 1000 population by 2010.

They suggest examples of green spaces would include country parks, formal parks, Local Nature Reserves and wildlife corridors such as linear walkways and canals. On distance or accessibility, EN recommends that the maximum distance from home to a "natural green space" should be 300 metres. "**Natural green space**" is defined as:

"land, water and geological features which have been naturally colonized by plants and animals and which are accessible on foot to large numbers of residents."

EN have no design or quality standards at present.

ANNEXE C

Newcastle Sample Areas Study Density, Housing type and Green Space Provision.

As a pilot exercise a study has been carried out to look in some detail at a series of 14 Ordnance Survey 1:1250 sheets across Newcastle to compare and contrast the various different and generally typical house types and densities to be found here. What this study does do is to look at sample residential areas throughout the city, including examples of our highest and lowest density layouts, public and private, and a range of different ages of property. It should be noted that the samples do not include an example of the most recent higher density housing that is currently being built along the NewcastleGateshead waterfront. This particular area is changing very rapidly and as yet the development pattern is not typical of the city as a whole. This could easily change as Newcastle develops its regeneration plans and may well follow options for much higher density apartment blocks similar to the Quayside.

Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 (Housing) offers a definition of "net site density " for the purpose of assessing whether proposed new housing developments meet the minimum density requirements of 30 houses per hectare. Gross density would be measured over the total urban area.

Net density excludes the following.

- major distributor roads
- primary schools
- open spaces serving a wider area

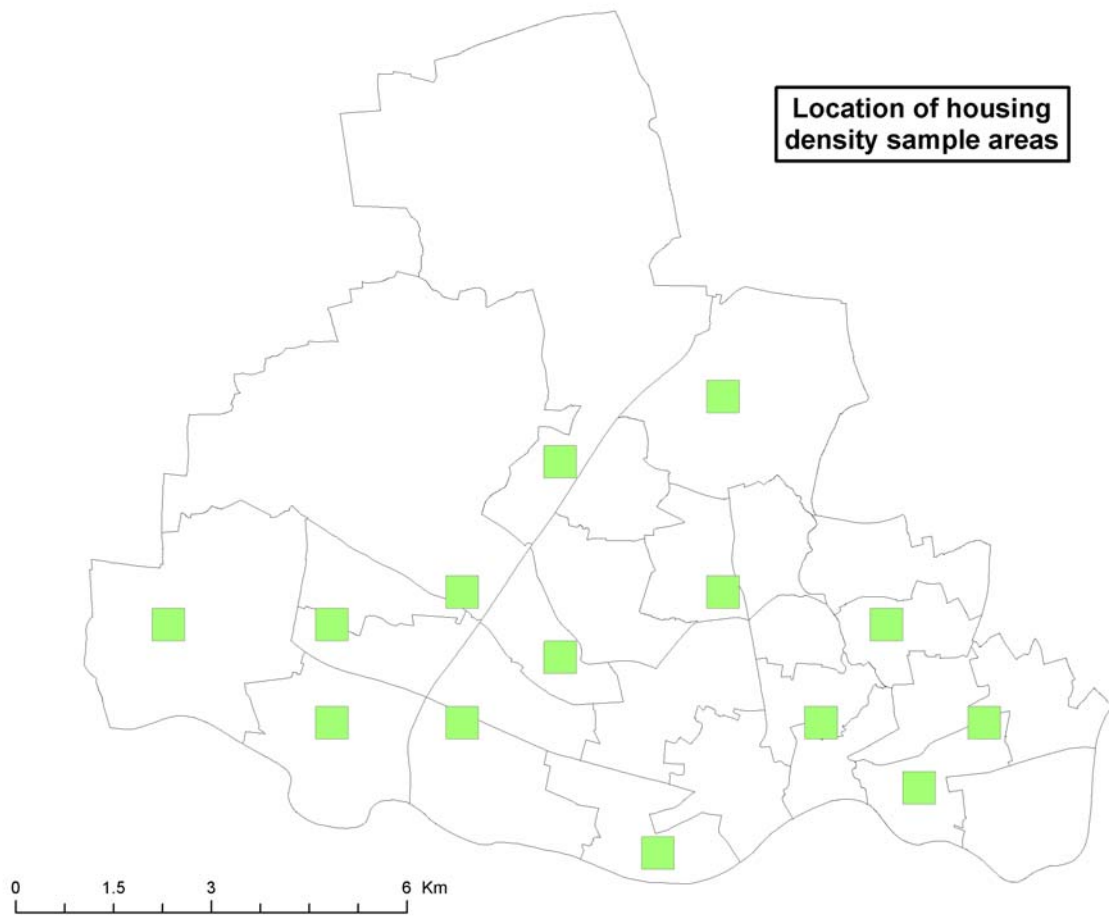
The following are directly related to housing and would be included within net density.

- access roads within the site
- private garden space
- car parking areas
- incidental open space and landscaping
- children's play areas

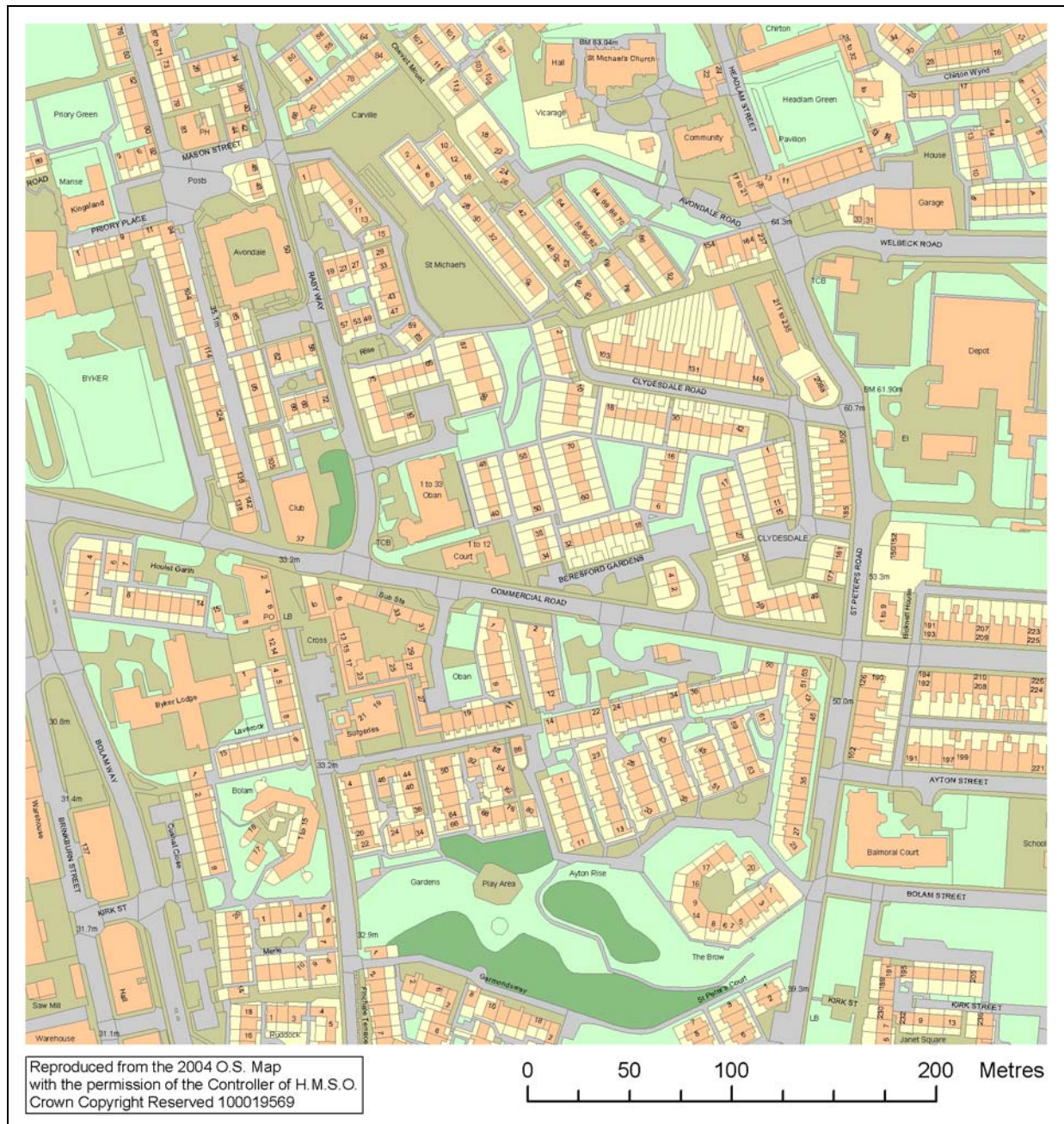
In the density measurements in the sample areas this advice is followed. The method was to count the number of houses in each hectare grid square, including each apartment and flat, based on the house numbers given on the ordnance map. For care homes and similar where homes are not numbered these were not included. Any grid square with a particularly small and untypical proportion of housing, for example six terraced houses and then a large industrial land use or cemetery, was excluded. The average for the sample was calculated on the grid squares that met the requirements above.

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning



1 Southern Byker (NZ2764SW) (Byker Ward)



This area is predominantly council housing, two storey and is mainly the famous 1970s redevelopment designed by architect Ralph Erskine. Byker is nearly 30 years old and suffering from deterioration of the external fabric and unpopularity with tenants.

Viewed on an aerial photo the area appears very green, almost all houses have gardens front and rear but the gardens are very small, average 42 square metres, barely large enough space to hang out the family washing.

There is an intricate mosaic of public space close to all the houses which is still for the most part generously planted with trees and shrubs. This estate layout depends on intensive management but has not always received it. Some areas are overgrown and sometimes intimidating. Vehicle access in Byker was limited from the start to create

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

safe and attractive spaces for people. Nowadays, cars are squeezed into any nook and corner as car ownership increases.

Byker is a high density development with an average density of 41 homes per hectare. Highest density on the sheet is 67 per hectare in the area around Beresford Gardens which includes the flats at McGowan and Oban Courts. (This sample area does not include the higher density Byker Wall.) There is a local "Pocket Park" at Ayton Park about 1.3 hectares in size.

Byker residents living within or close to this area have made the following comments about local green space.

" I don't want them to disappear under bricks and concrete. Keep them green".

There are *"far too many trees and bushes, blocking out light"* and *"youngsters use bushes as dens"*.

Complaints of litter and dogs but enjoy *"nice areas to play, walk, cycle etc"*.

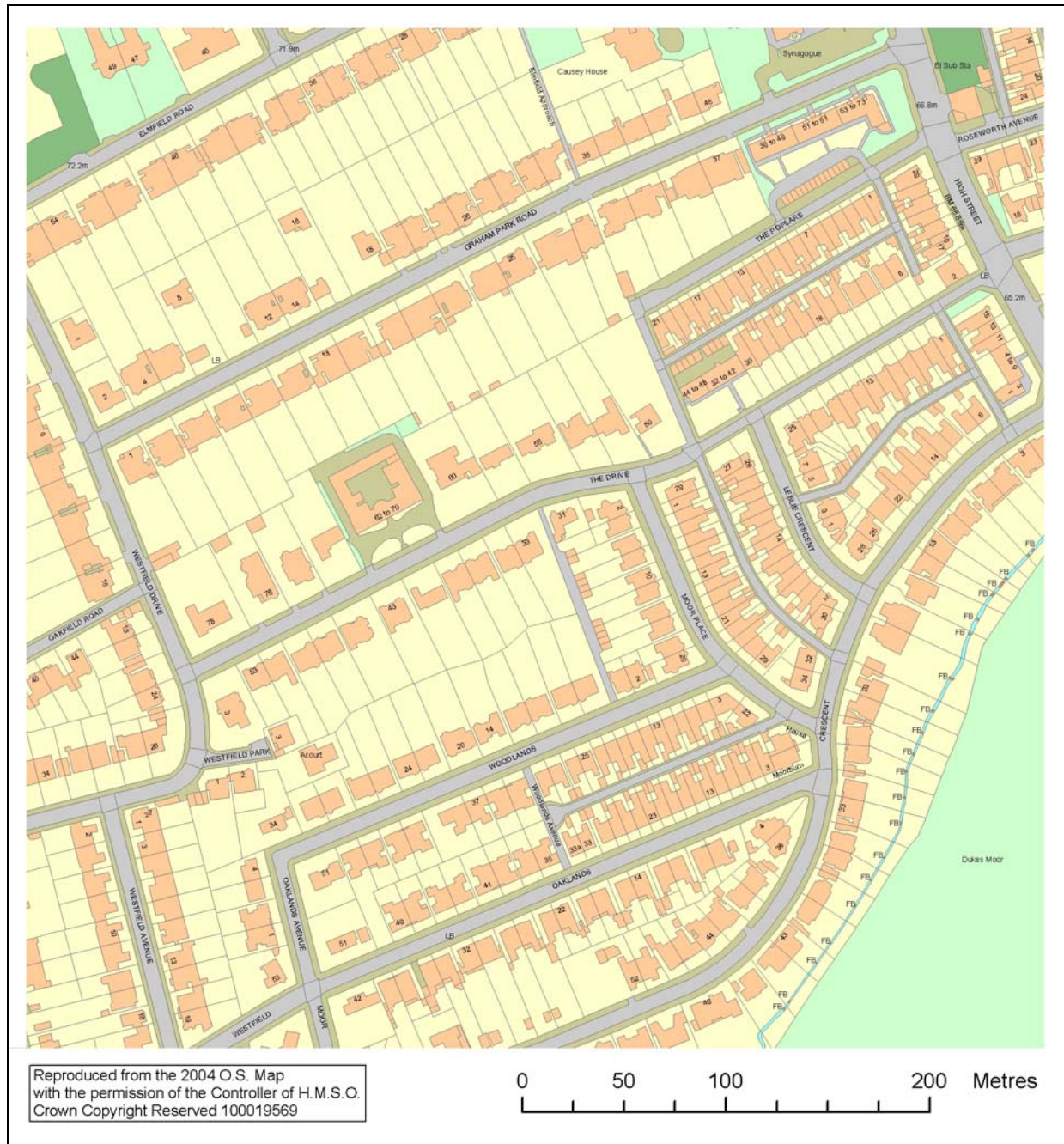
"There is not enough" green space. *"Also they are "becoming very noisy and open to vandals."*

Teenage drinking and perverts are mentioned as of particular concern

Dangers to children from used needles, dope smokers and need for better play provision for disabled.

A pensioner gives safety concerns as the main reason for not using many spaces and complains of vandalism and a wish for more organised activities such as Tai-Chi, walks, tea rooms and shelters."

2 South west Gosforth (NZ2467SW) (West Gosforth Ward)



This area is immediately north of the Town Moor (Dukes Moor) and west of Gosforth High Street and is almost exclusively 2 storey private housing, with some of the highest property values in the city. There are two distinct house types: late C19 traditional terraced villas with small front gardens and rear yards and mid C20 detached or semi detached homes with often very large gardens to front and back.

There is little public open space in this sample and the main recreational green space is the Dukes Moor which is well used and much valued locally, used very much like a “village green”. Average density is 16 homes per hectare, up to a maximum of 37 per hectare in the vicinity of Leslie Crescent/Moor Place where all the homes are terraced

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

properties. Average garden size is 426 square metres, in the range from 1486 down to the smallest at 22 plus 30 square metres of back yard.

Many South Gosforth residents gave comments on local green spaces.

"I love the Moor – just having an open space energises the mind" but complains of dog fouling and asks or more to be done to preserve green space from building. Newcastle's green spaces are "unimaginative, boring flower displays" and "probably the worst city for parks that I have lived in. There is little botanical to be found and compare with Saltwell Park."

"Provide bike racks to avoid using cars", "bus stops nearby", "stop people parking in parks eg Exhibition Park we want it safe for kids and bikes."

"I would like the Town Moor to have more trees on the walkways to act as a windbreak and make it more attractive."

"Want children to play without fear of dog mess and broken glass" "Smooth paths for children to roller-skate." "tennis courts to be smooth without sharp stones. Bins emptied especially in summer. Local parks are well looked after" but adds that local spaces are "becoming fewer due to housing developments."

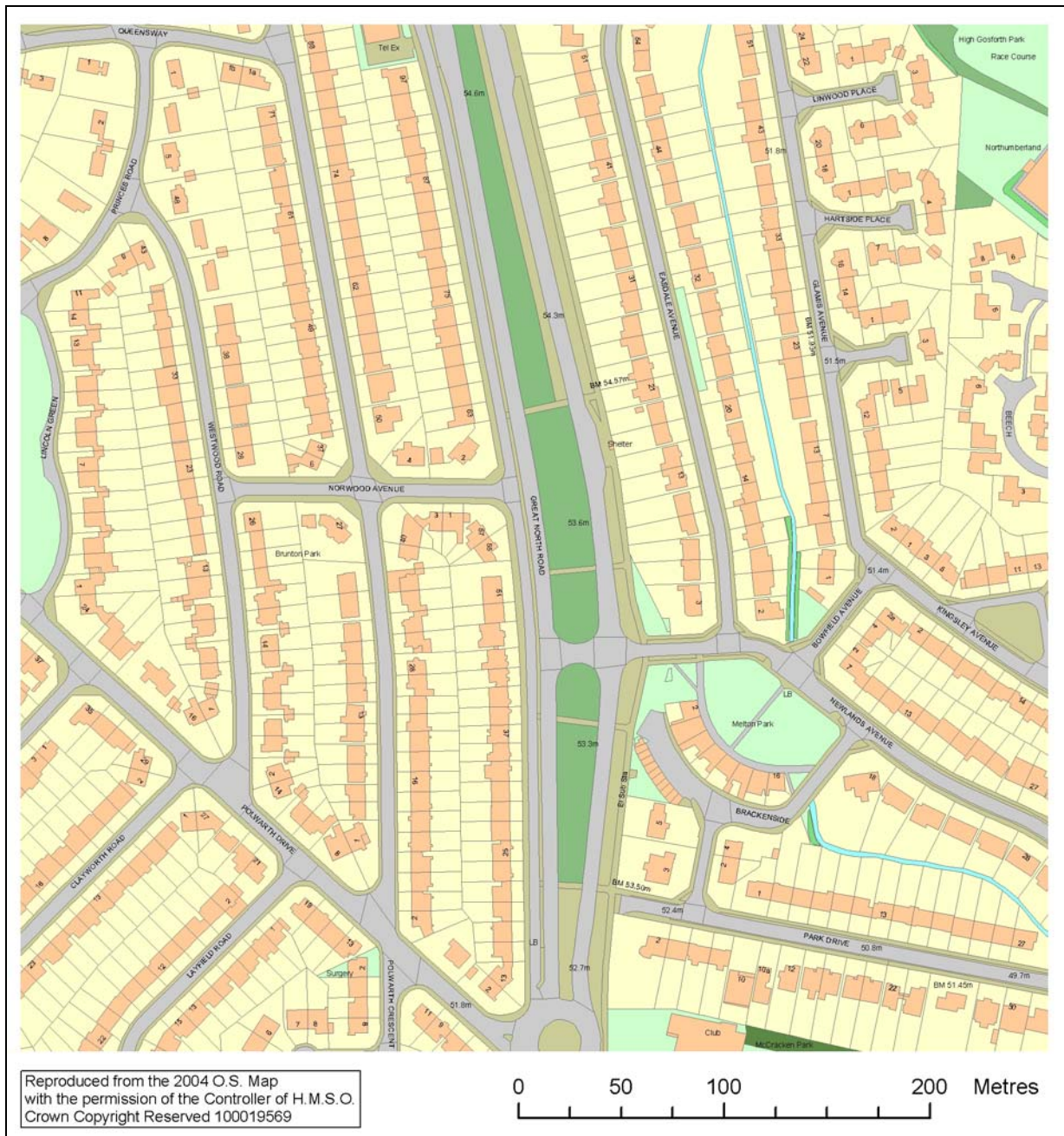
"Not enough trees in streets in Gosforth", and complains that "Newcastle city centre spaces are clean and litter free. It is not possible to say that for Gosforth streets, green spaces and parks."

"Area to kick a ball around" is needed and to be "kept clear of dog mess".

"Grass has had too much football played on it", would like a skatepark and has concerns about "drunks and druggies".

Complaints about "cycles on pedestrian path" and "gathering spot for teenagers."

3 Brunton/Melton Parks (NZ2470SW) (Parklands Ward)



This sample area straddles the Great North Road between Brunton Park and Melton park, both post war suburban private housing developments of two storey terraces and semi-detached homes, with generous gardens front and back. Average density is 19 homes per hectare with a maximum of 29 for Layfield and Clayworth Roads. Average garden area is 326 square metres ranging from 1072 down to 126.

The area has little public green space other than a small area at the former Melton Park shops and Lincoln Green, Brunton Park. The largest green space on the OS sheet (0.7 hectare) is in the central reserve of the dual carriageway.

Residents' comments from within and around the sample area include the following.

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Something that would slow down cars. More design for children – no place where we can play.

Green spaces are “very poorly maintained” ... “grass cuttings should be removed.”

“Brunton Park play area is unusable after any rain due to lack of any field drainage.”

A respondent who uses facilities near work rather than at home says “too much space is being lost to developers who should be forced to develop brown field sites instead of Green Belt.”

Good point is that “there are so many” green spaces but regrets the “litter, litter and more litter” and suggests “perhaps more fun areas for the young people.”

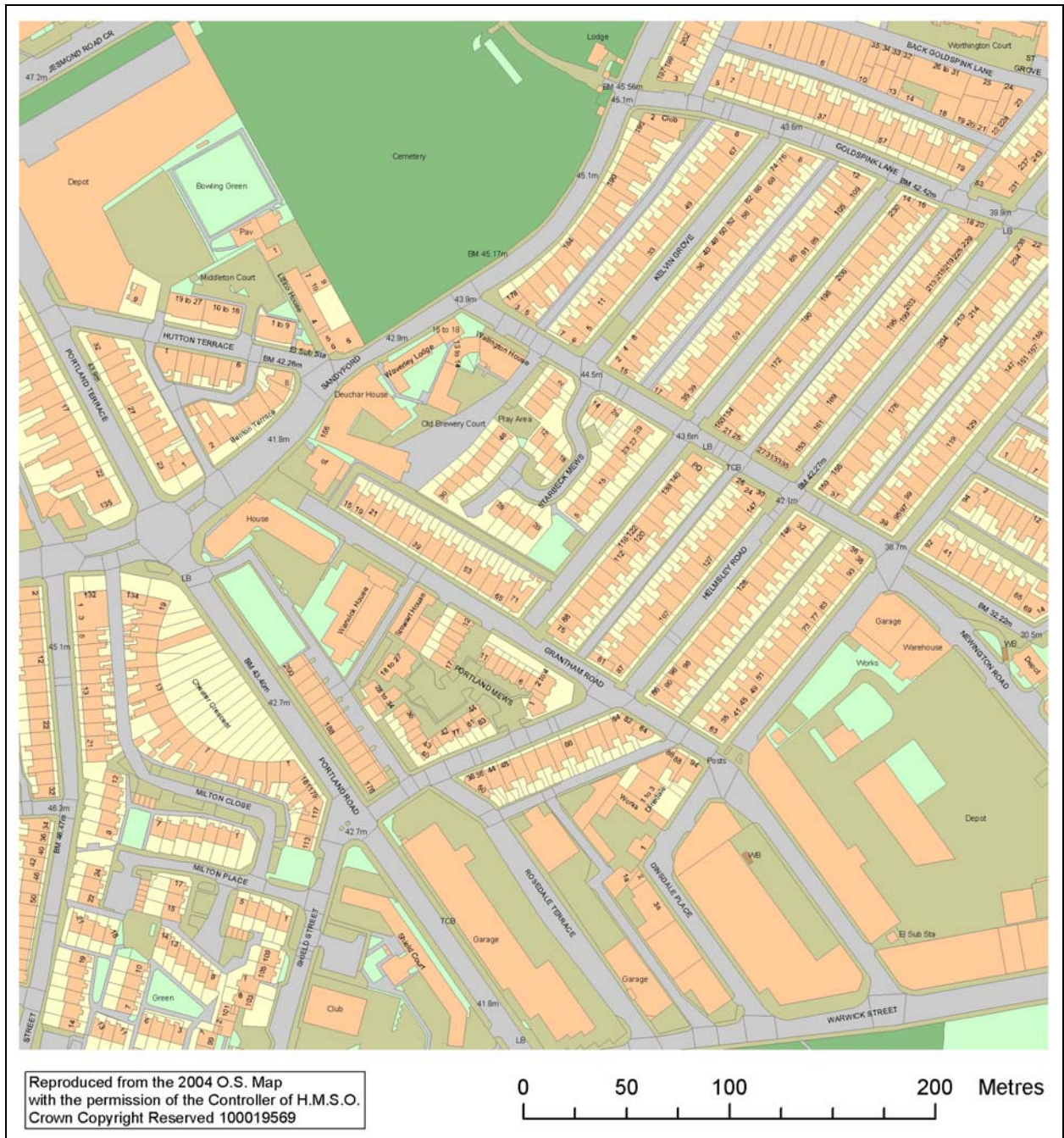
“Generally kept in excellent condition” but complains of “callous and irresponsible dog owners ie dog fouling” suggesting more action to penalise offenders.

“We are fortunate to have open spaces for example the Town Moor and similar locations” but also complains of dog fouling.

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

4 Sandyford (NZ2565SE) (Straddles Sandyford and South Jesmond Wards)



This OS sheet covers the area south of the Newcastle General Cemetery (Jesmond “Old” Cemetery) and Sandyford Road and east of Chester Street. Most of the houses are densely packed late 19th century terraced houses many of which are “Tyneside flats”. (An upstairs and ground floor flat having the appearance of a single house but having two front doors and sharing the rear yard.) Many of these properties are privately rented and the area is popular with students. There are also some modern terraced council houses at Shieldfield. Most properties are two storey.

Average net density is 52 up to a maximum of 94 at Doncaster Road which is a very high score for Newcastle as a whole, considering this is an area with no high rise flats. Proper gardens are a rarity in Sandyford. The terraces have front plots of about 2

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

metres depth between the front door and the footway and paved yards at the rear. Average garden size is 15 square metres with a rear yard of 30 square metres but often this external space will be shared between two households. Largest garden area is 255 square metres and the smallest is a 6 square metre front plot.

Of the green space in this sample, there is the cemetery (locked at night) and the recreational space at City Stadium, Warwick Street. As a residential environment the area does have significant green space within relatively easy reach including Jesmond Dene/Vale for those who can manage steep hills offering some compensation for the lack of private gardens.

Local residents' comments are as follows.

"Plenty of trees and green grassy spaces" but says "lack of flowers and flower beds in the park. Sandyford Park needs a park for the elderly. The cemeteries should be a place for wildlife and a place of beauty and should be in order."

"I like flower displays, too many weeds in some cemeteries and parks. Get rid of Japanese Knotweed. Please promote wildlife conservation in all green space/residential areas of Newcastle –More bird and bat boxes and ways to encourage insects and butterflies. "

"We have good parks and Jesmond Dene, flower beds nicely kept" but "not well supervised, paths not kept in good condition, not safe. We could do with old fashioned type park keepers. Many people do not feel safe walking alone in any parks. Wardens needed to supervise and just be there."

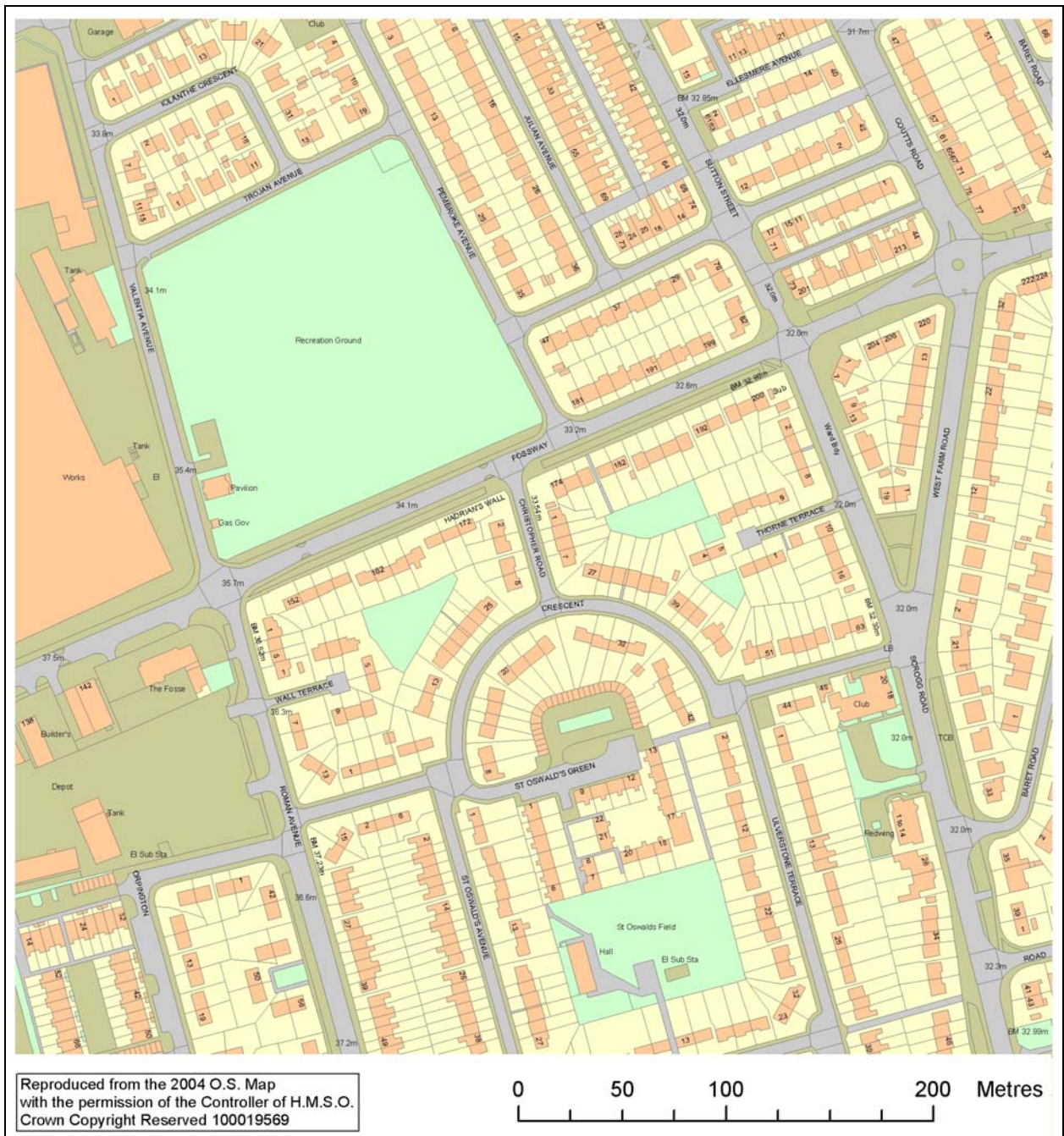
"Where I go there are some seats to sit and enjoy it" but "they need to be more clean."

Likes "the cut from my house to Warwick Street and the walk from my house through the parks Heaton and Armstrong to the waterfall in Jesmond Dene past Pets Corner".

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

5 Fossway, Walkergate (NZ2865SW) (Straddles Byker and South Heaton Wards)



This is an area of 2-storey, interwar, semi-detached and terraced council housing, most with gardens. There is also one block of 14 flats, Redwing Court and a small number of Tyneside flats at Julian Avenue. Average net density is 29 homes per hectare up to a maximum of 68 for the Tyneside flats. Gardens front and rear are the norm, averaging typically 154 square metres, largest garden area in this locality is 321 square metres and the smallest are the Tyneside flats with 15 in front and a 15 square metre shared yard at the back.

At first glance the area seems well endowed with green space for sports and amenity as well as local parks and allotments within reach and reasonably generous gardens.

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

Facilities for children are poor with a long walk to the nearest equipped playground at Miller's Dene. The nearest park over 6 hectares is at Iris Brickfield which is over a kilometre to the north and involves a long walk up Benfield Road to cross the main line railway. Walker Park is nearer, about a kilometre to the south. Nearest countryside style spaces are at Waverdale or Walker Riverside.

There were no comments from within this sample area and its immediate surrounds. Residents' comments from elsewhere in Walker were as follows.

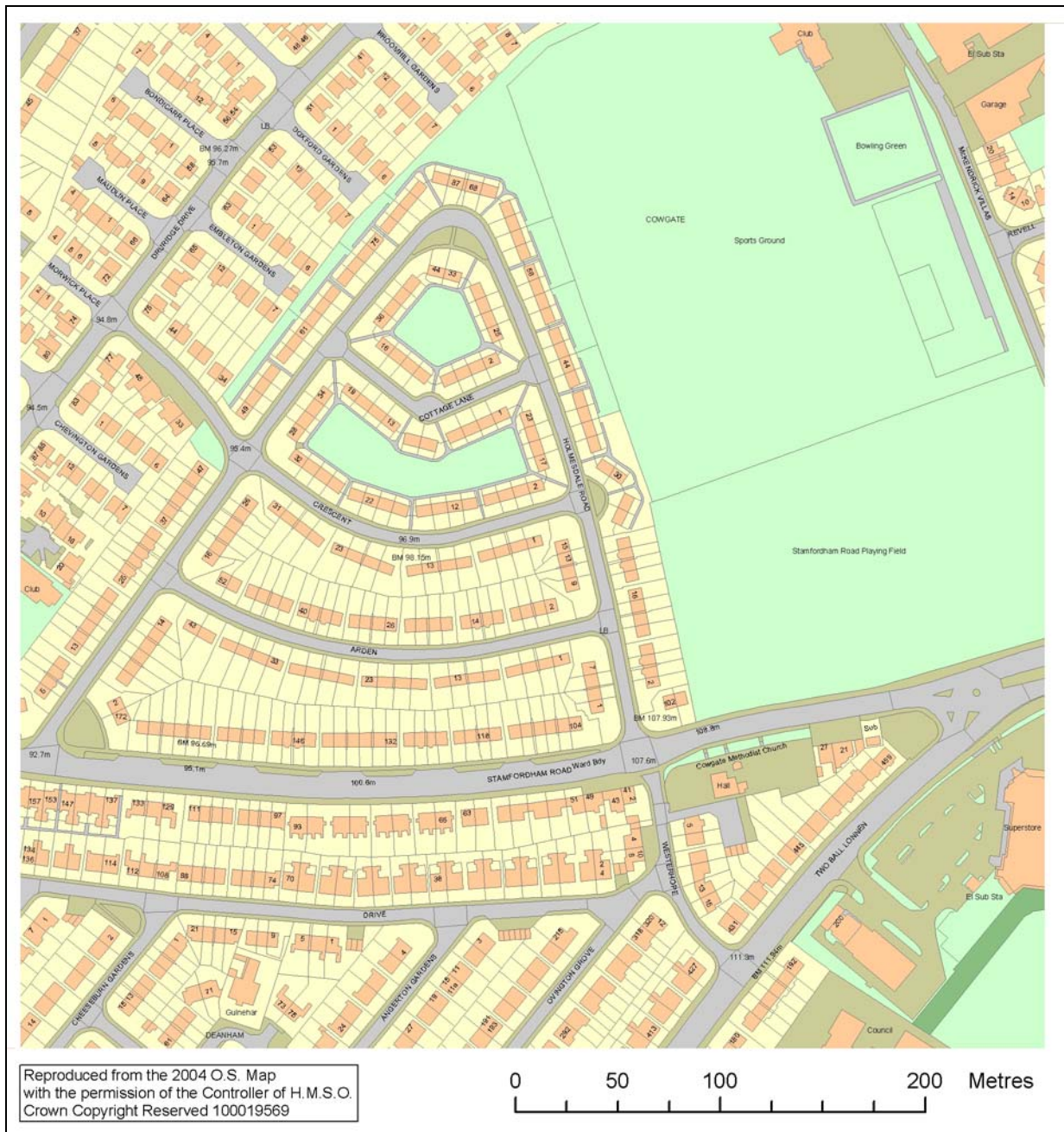
"Well maintained" but "sometimes too complicated, just simple green grass areas wanted."

"Get out into fresh air and get exercise. Dog fouling, shortage of toilets" are of concern. "

"Fresh air plus the chance to glimpse the wildlife that's good. Cycle tracks full of broken glass, blind bends on tracks where gangs gather out of sight" CCTV asked for.

Newcastle's green spaces are "improved greatly, the effort is there for everyone to see but there should be more of it, make more use of old strips of land i.e. wildlife corridors, more use of intrusive thorny plants and hedges: birds in vandals out."

6 Stamfordham Road, Cowgate (NZ 2166SE) (Blakelaw Ward)



This is a similar area to the Fossway sample area with predominantly council owned low rise houses with front and back gardens, average density 41 homes per hectare up to a maximum of 60, south of Stamfordham Road where there are semi-detached houses with an upper and lower flat. Average garden size is 136 square metres with 300 for the largest and 84 the smallest. Green space provision seems good with generous sports provision at the Cowgate and Stamfordham Road Playing Field. Getting to parks and equipped play areas involves crossing major roads, and the nearest park of 6 hectares or over is at Nuns Moor well over a kilometre to the south. The Town Moor is the nearest countryside space.

Green spaces...your spaces

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Residents say:

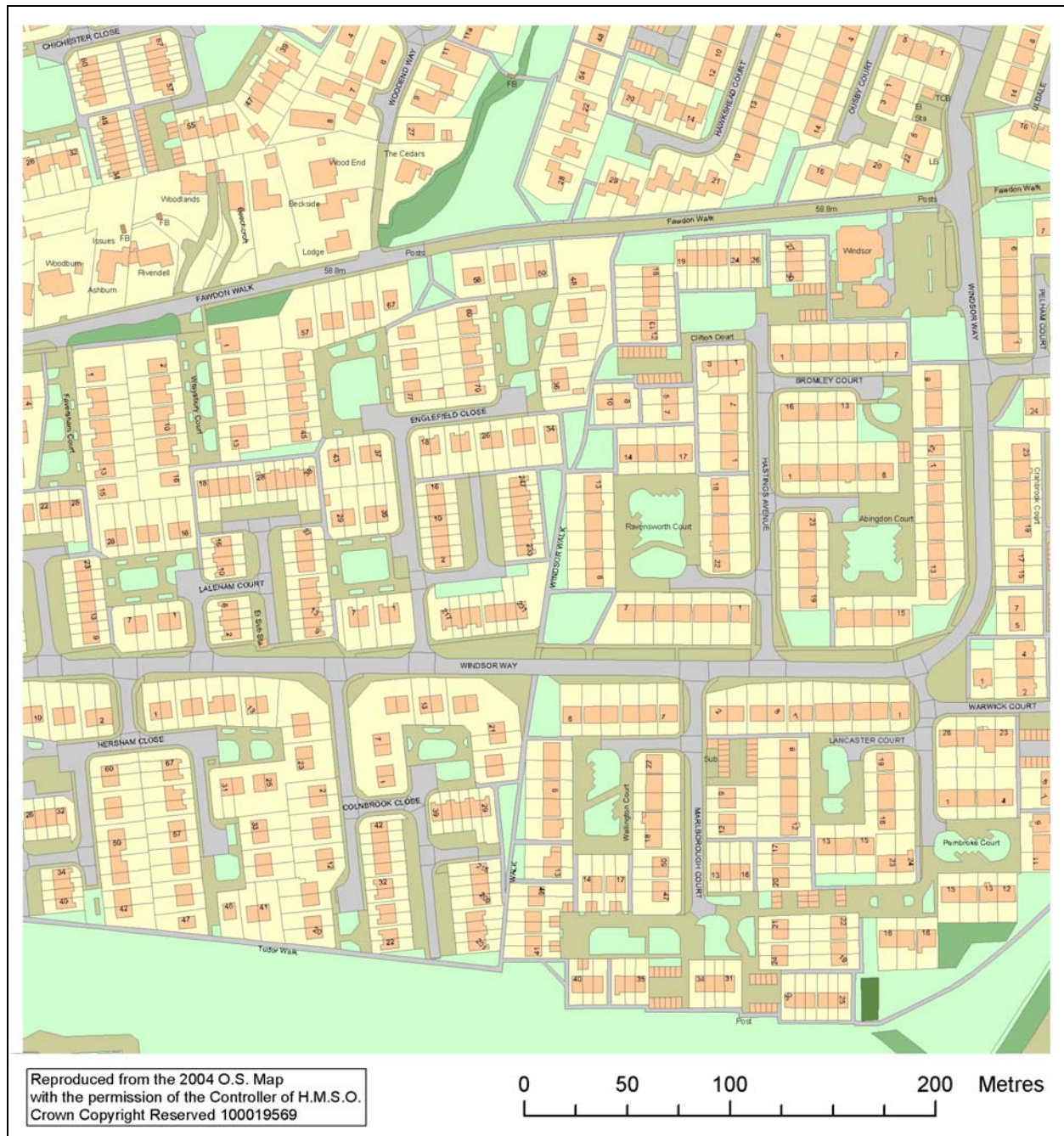
"Not cleared of rubbish enough".

"You can play games with your children" but dislikes "motorcycles, and dogs muck" and adds "there are not enough areas for wildlife."

"Unsafe to go on to moors alone. Kids on motorised bikes spoil surfaces. When mowed, the cuttings are left on surrounding paths. Well-used shortcuts eg through at junction of Two Ball Lonnen and Stamfordham Road need solid surfaces."

"Print a map of areas in use in your next issue" (of Citylife) and has worries about development "accessibility (Town Moor) size – unique, don't build on it. Not enough litter bins or seating."

7 Kingston Park (NZ 2169SE) (Castle Ward)



This is an edge-of-city estate of private 2 storey houses built some 30 years ago, at the same time as Byker was redeveloped. The homes are arranged in short terraces or semi-detached around courts and in cul de sacs with garaging and parking playing a dominant role unlike Byker.

Average density is low: 24 homes per hectare up to a maximum of 36 at Laleham Court, an enclave of very small "starter" homes. Every house has a garden, usually a private enclosed rear garden and an open plan frontage shared with the neighbours. Average garden size (front and rear) is 162 square metres, largest 776 square metres at a detached house on Fawdon Lane down to the smallest 30 square metres rear garden only at Windsor Walk.

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

The character of the green space here is very different from the council estates. There is a lot of it but most is in the form of shared vehicle access courts where cars are parked and manoeuvred. However because these are not formal roads they also offer places for local youngsters to play. The area also has a pleasant linear green route north-south along Windsor Way and a large grassy area to the south at Tudor Walk offering sports pitches and amenity grass. For a park over 6 hectares in size the nearest is Gala Field at Newbiggin Hall, well beyond reach across the A1. Countryside is close at hand half a kilometre north at the Great Park

Many residents in this area have offered comments.

"The Town Moor is brilliant, most cities would kill for that" but there is "disregard for Green Belt" Not enough seats for the elderly." "Talking to other people, Kingston Park needs a Park – with seats and plants to look at, somewhere central." "Lack of cycle routes connecting green spaces – there are bits but they don't often link up." "Easily accessible for those that do not have transport", dislikes "dog poo, litter" and "concerned about developments in Green Belt areas."

"It gives you a feel of space, freshness, countryside, health, very good to have. I don't think there are any bad points about green areas. "There is a daily problem of food litter from the retail outlets." "More park equipment, football posts etc. Play equipment needs updating. "

"We need more supervised places where older people can sit without any fear." "Dog fouling and non removal of grass cuttings".

"Generally speaking they are clean safe places to visit. There are never enough picnic tables."

"Good for children to play and explore, healthy and free for parents." "Parks should be closed off by railings at night as in London Boroughs to stop vandalism, broken glass etc. Kingston Park estate has plenty of green areas but lacks floral arrangements around roundabouts and retail area ."

"Public transport to get to certain green areas."and would like more community things, especially for older people.

"Better transport including Metro for more tourist type park areas" and suggests better maintenance at "Tudor Grange – we have an open green area that is unkempt"

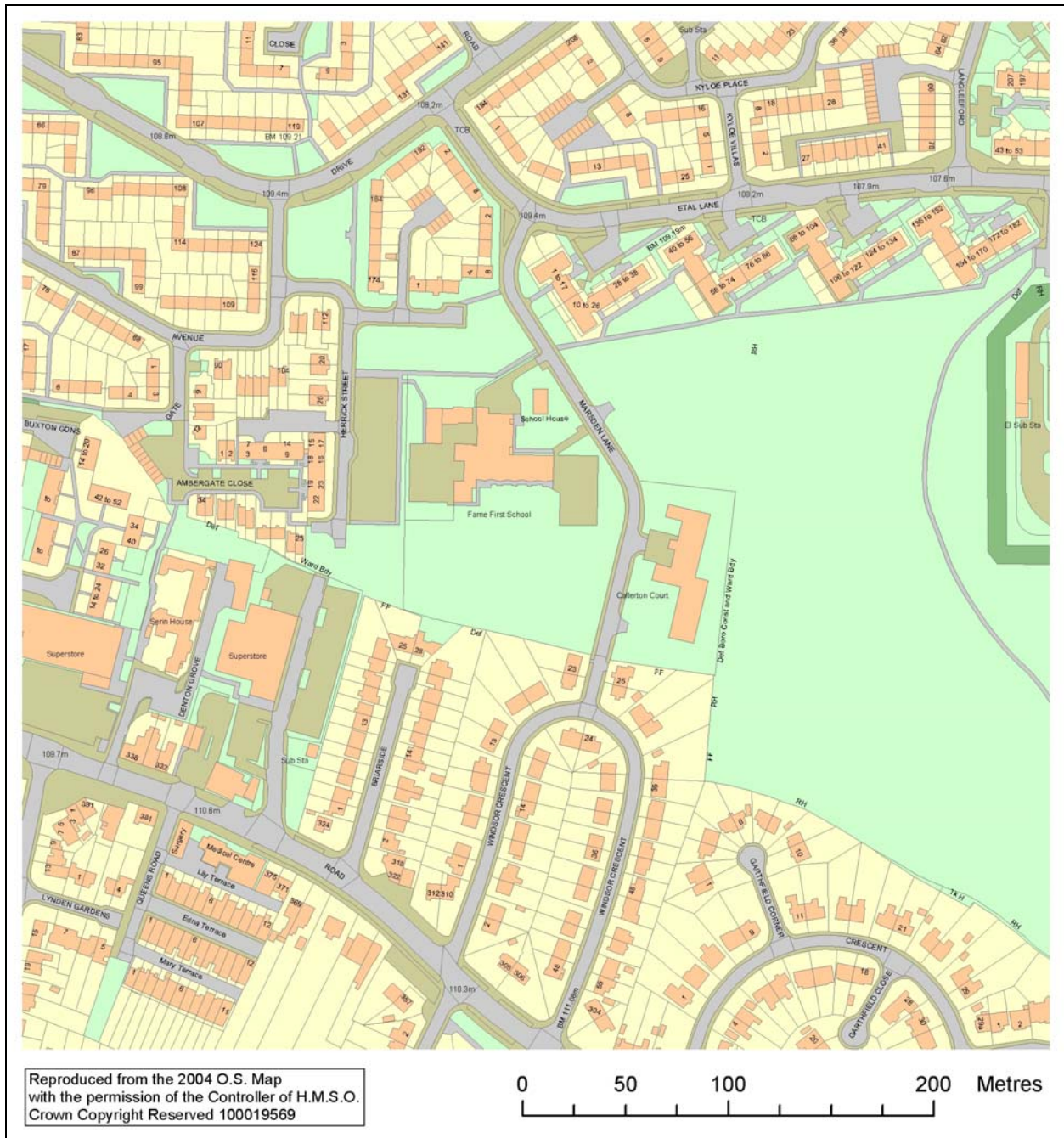
"The stream at bottom of Woodend Way is dirty, rubbish tip, overgrown and the bridge over it is collapsing. Would like a fenced in area for dog walkers to allow exercise of dogs in safety."

"Nothing for teenagers to do, no-where for them to go." "Better play facilities, tennis, basketball, BMX, skatepark."

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

8 Stamfordham Road, Westerhope/Newbiggin Hall Estate. (NZ 2067SW) (Westerhope and Woolsington Wards)



This is mostly post war, low rise and mixed tenure housing, mainly council owned in the north at Newbiggin Hall, average 32 homes per hectare. Highest density (41) occurs at the small enclave of older terraced former miners' houses: Lily, Edna and Mary Terraces and at the Etal Lane maisonettes.

Most homes have front and rear gardens average 112 square metres, largest 462 and smallest being 15 – a rear yard at Edna Terrace. At Newbiggin Hall the front gardens are simply unenclosed mown grass.

Along the roads there are frequent irregular shaped areas of grassed amenity space but too close to the roads to offer much recreational opportunity. The area has an edge-of-

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

town location and easy access to countryside. Gala Field is the nearest park and equipped play facility within easy reach and there is generous open grass at Etal Lane.

Local residents said the following though we had no responses from people within the sample area.

"Nice to look at. Gives a sense of freedom. Can be used as a rubbish dump sometimes."

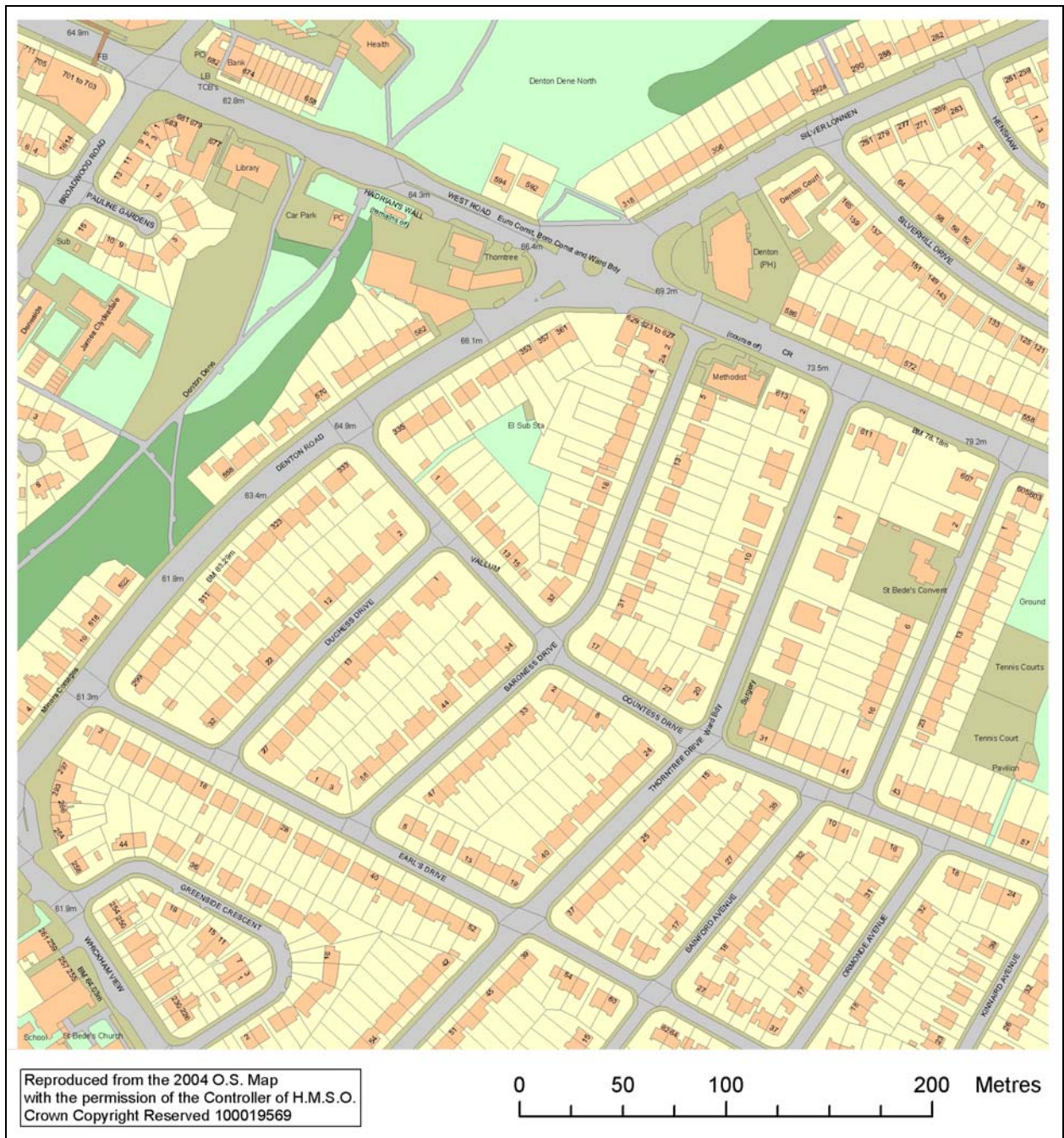
"Fresh air. Lack of maintenance. When the grass is cut no attempt to tidy up leaving a dangerous mess. Why is the Council grassing over flower beds especially on housing estates."

"Town Moor good"

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

9 Scotswood/East Denton (NZ 2065SW) (Benwell and Scotswood Ward)



This area is interwar, low rise and mixed tenure. The homes are often quite substantial with front and rear gardens, mostly semi-detached and average density 27 per hectare rising to a maximum of 44 at Silverhill Drive where there are flats.

Typical garden size is 243 square metres, largest 605 at a villa style property on West road and smallest 60 at Baroness Drive.

There is plentiful green space and a playground at Denton Dene but involves crossing the busy A 69/A696 Denton Road/Silver Lonnen. The sports facilities at Benwell Hill Cricket ground are private but Scotswood Sports Centre, Westgate College and

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

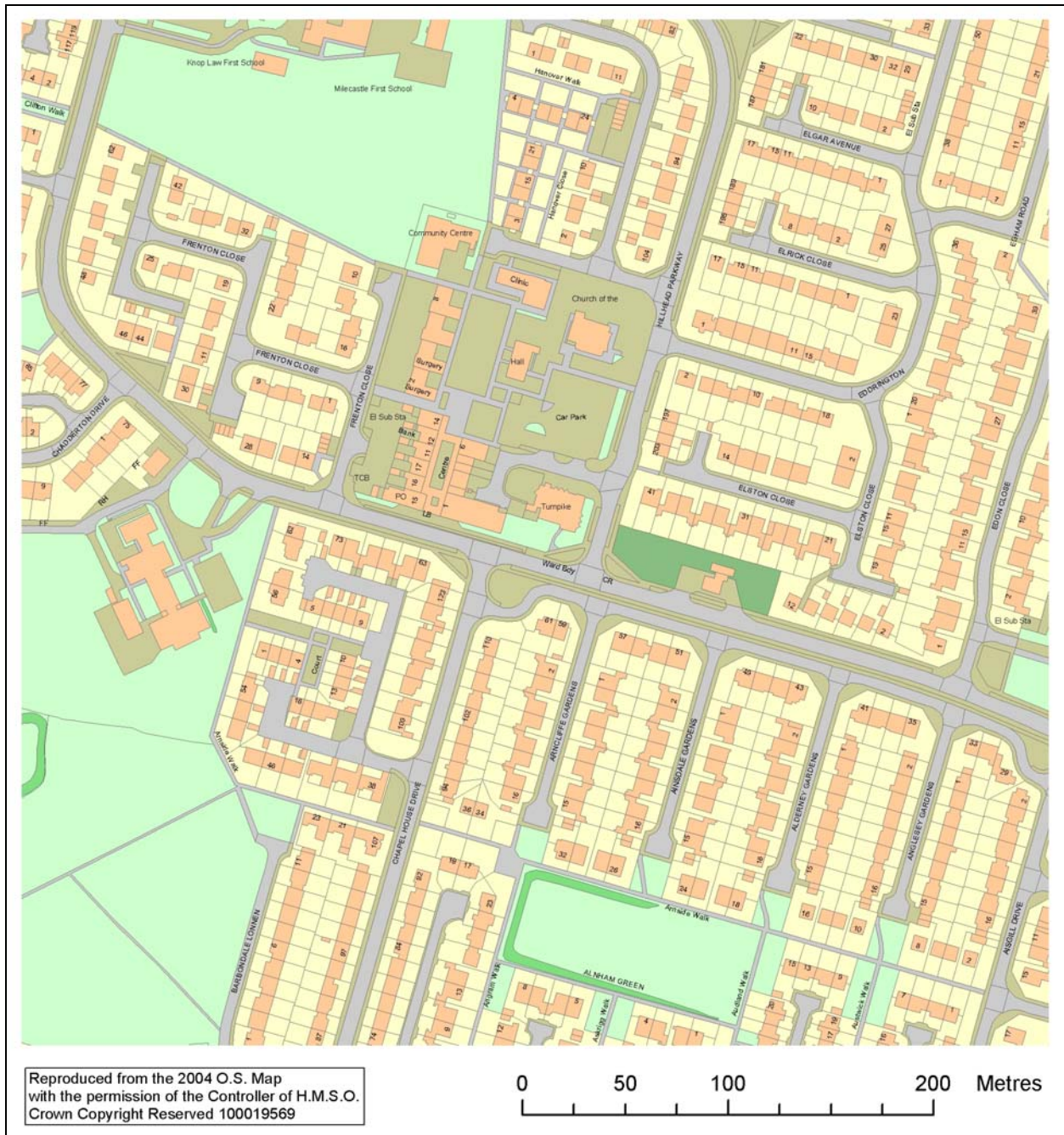
Benwell offer facilities about 1 to 1.5 kilometres away. The nearest park over 6 hectares is Hodgkin Park. Smaller doorstep amenity spaces are limited to two.

There were no comments from this area or the immediate surroundings but two Scotswood residents said the following.

“Variable standards of maintenance, safety in the park. Litter and dumping is a problem. Some spaces are not utilised to the best of their potential. More mixed use parks needed.”

“Good to sit where it is peace and quiet. Bad to see things like the youth of today spoiling things. Like to see many more places.”

10 Chapel Park (NZ 1866NW) (Straddles Denton and Westerhope Wards)



This is an edge-of-city private post war estate of moderate sized low rise family housing with front and back gardens. Average density is 26 per hectare up to a maximum of 32 almost matching the Scotswood example above.

Garden size is typically 153 square metres, largest 375 and smallest 25 with a large number of homes having open plan shared front garden areas.

The area is far (4 kilometres) from a large park over 6 hectares but has countryside nearby and some amenity grassed spaces at Alnham Green and south of Chapel House and Westlands schools and around the community facilities at Hillhead Parkway.

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

This area had many responses to green space consultation, though none from within the sample area.

Concerns about “dog and human litter bins and more deposit facilities for same”
“I would not expect sports facilities such as tennis courts or a bowling green in the local park but they would be welcome.”
“A bit of countryside in town – a space to breathe.”
“Dog fouling allowed by careless owners.”
“I don’t have to walk far to be almost out in the country.”
“Litter, fly tipping of rubbish (on small scale). Children play football on the greens between houses instead of on the large playing field nearby. Can anything be done to make the playing field more attractive?”
“Kids play football...fight with Council every year to have trees cut.”
“Good that they are there. Dog Fouling, irregular and poor maintenance of green spaces and Rights of Way on Chapel House Estate. Why is cut grass not collected for composting ?”
“It is nice to keep them without litter.”
“Bad that too many being taken up for building more houses. (More Council Tax.)”
“Please do not keep building on green spaces – remember that young people need them for recreation.”

11 Valley View, Lemington (NZ 1865 SW) (Lemington Ward)

Insert aerial photo and map.

This area is inter and post war, low rise and predominantly modest sized council homes in terraces with some semi-detached. Average density is 31, maximum 53 for a small pocket of older terraces at Woodburn street. most homes have front and rear enclosed gardens, typically 136 square metres, largest 342 and smallest 40 as rear yards in the terraced houses. Most amenity green space is grassed roadside verge and corners. There is a central playing field with equipped play at Valley View , a large allotments site at the Letch way and Lemington Cemetery. The nearest large parks (over 6 hectare) are a long way away at Hodgkin, Newburn or Gala Field.

Residents said:

“Security, vandalism.”

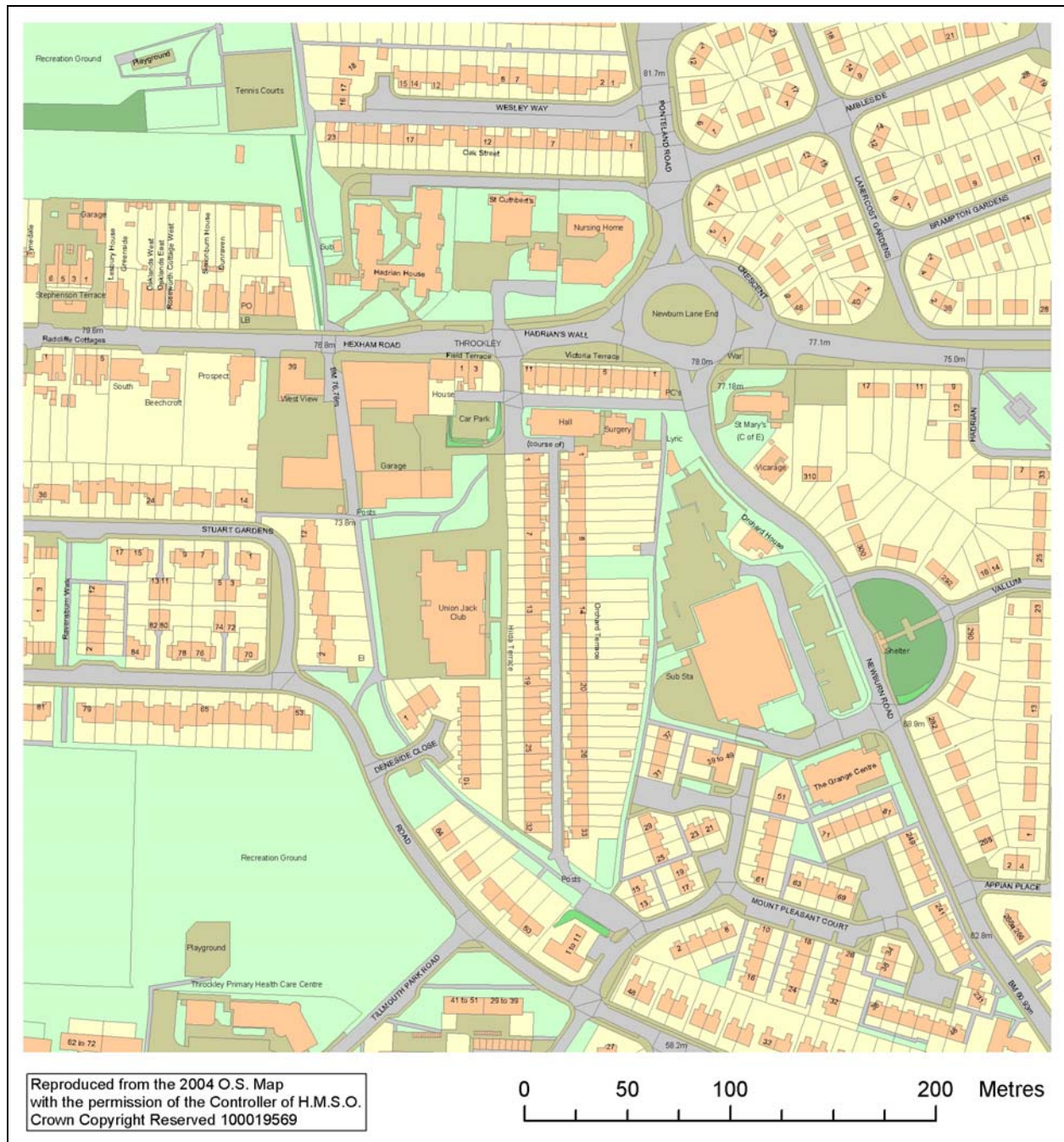
“They make a vast difference to how people feel.”

“Potential to be better, litter, broken glass etc.”

“Most areas are well kept ...higher fence should be built...keep out teenagers playing football and ruining the green.”

“Attracts wildlife/provides leisure and sports facilities / pleasant walking, relaxing areas/educational. Attracts vandals/littered with paper and glass. Not always accessible for disabled and able bodied. Under-utilised and not fully maintained. Fantastic richness and diversity of green space available in and around Newcastle which needs to be maintained/enhanced and added to for all generations especially for future generations.”

12 Throckley (NZ 1566NE) (Newburn Ward)



This is a suburban village with an unusual diversity of house types and ages compared to other sample areas. Tenure is mixed too. Average density is low at 25 per hectare up to a maximum of 44 where there is a terrace of older houses. Most homes have gardens but again with very variable sizes. An average size is 219 square metres, the largest a vast area of 1800 square metres at the villa-style "Prospect House", Hexham Road, and the smallest is a 12m² back yard.

Green space provision appears good with two recreation grounds one north and one south of the main road plus other smaller spaces and countryside within easy reach. A large park over 6 hectares is further away, the nearest being at Newburn Riverside.

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

Residents said:

"Would like to see surveillance cameras."

"Not enough. Too much dog fouling for children to play, no railings – access to roads."

"Fresh air and lots of freedom. Would like dogs dirt cleaned up more."

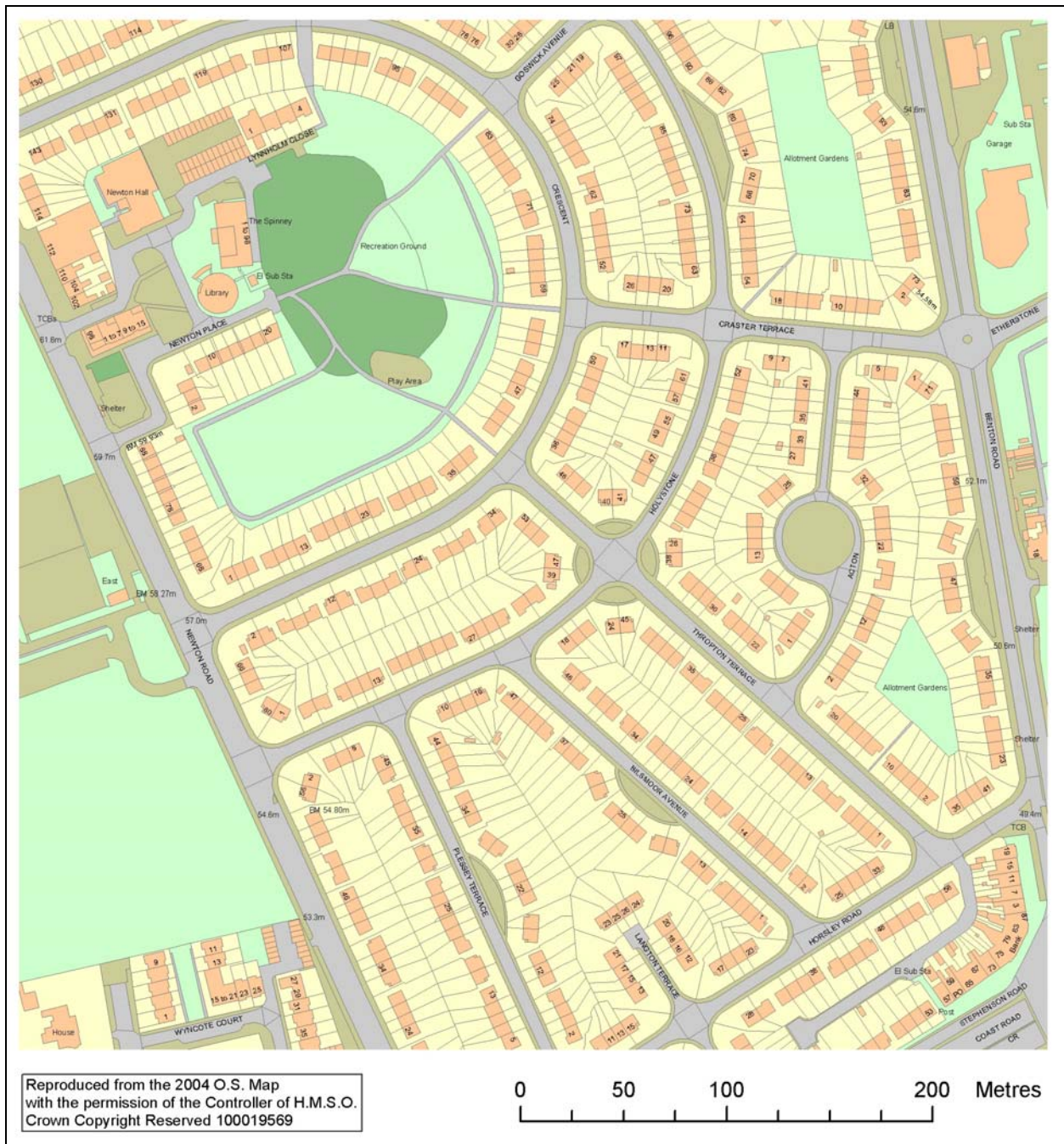
"Lends character to town, city and village. Throckley Woods are a disgrace from lack of attention."

"There should always be green space about housing."

"Pleasant to look at. Bad that kids hang around. Rubbish area for people."

"Good for wildlife , outdoor exercise."

13 High Heaton (NZ 2666NE) (North Heaton Ward)



This area is an interwar council development mainly two storey family homes plus a single sixties tower block of flats at The Spinney. Average density for the area is 30 with a high of 103 for the tower block. Most houses have modest enclosed front and rear gardens typically 126 square metres, largest 222 and smallest 45.

There is a reasonable amount of green space with allotment sites located in areas behind rear gardens and a local recreational ground with trees and equipped play at The Spinney. The area is within a kilometre on average of Heaton, Armstrong and Paddy Freeman's parks though these parks are across a busy road.

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

Residents made lots of comments about the Heaton area.

"Too much anti-social behaviour ...eg people using it to drink and take drugs."

"Would like fountains to drink from. The dene is covered in dog dirt – why isn't this area patrolled – why not have a certain area for dogs."

"Streets should be thought of as green highways with more trees planted and gardens with more shrubs and trees. Cycleways should run to green spaces with signs interlinking them."

"We have 15 minute walk to Paddy Freeman's. When we get there we have to walk quite a way to get a seat as the two nearest are generally full. No seats at Spinney. Dog dirt, litter and vandals."

"I like the differences between Armstrong Park which is more rugged and Heaton Park which is more formally laid out – a nice blend. Should be more waste bins – outside of park areas – streets etc."

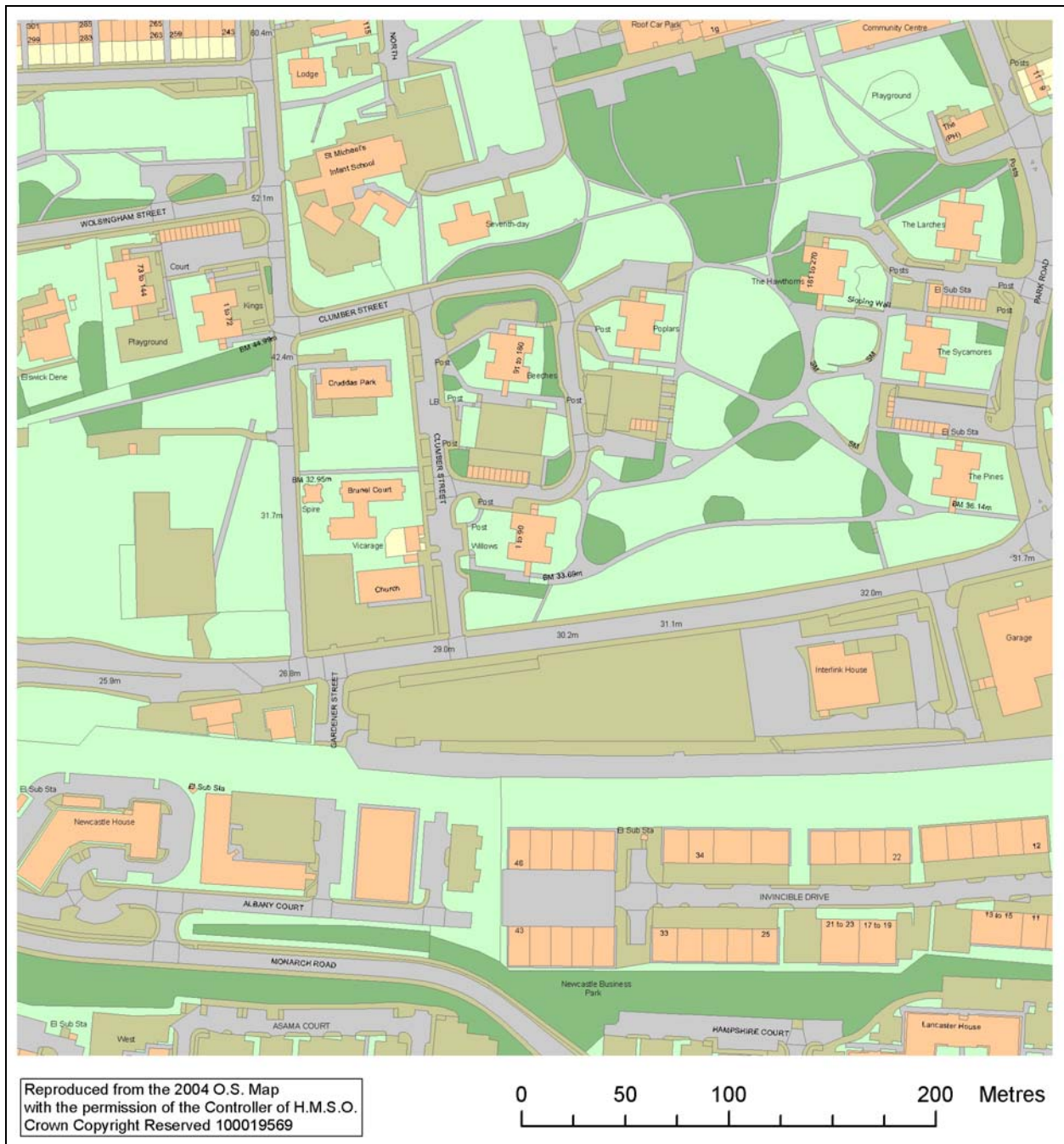
"Help you relax, make you feel healthy. Bad that keep deciding to build on green land."

"Peaceful. Not enough. Need to be preserved and increased."

"Need plenty of bins for dog waste. Cyclists go too fast on footpaths in parks. Dog owners are the major users of green spaces and we pay a lot of Council Tax between us."

"Would like grass maintained and trees looked after as well as litter removed. The Victorians perfected their green areas. And we just look after what is left – why do we not take such a pride in our parks ? Eg Jesmond Dene. The water is polluted. Why ? Please do something about this."

14 Cruddas Park (NZ 2363 SW) (Elswick Ward)



This sample contains Newcastle's highest density houses in the group of seven, high rise, sixties Cruddas Park flats, now mainly occupied as student housing. Average density is 82 per hectare up to a maximum of 139. The towers have no gardens but are set in generous amenity grassed areas with some trees and shrubs and an equipped playground.

New green space has been acquired through demolition at Wolsingham Street and Scotswood Road. There are only 32 houses within this sample area and these are terraced with gardens of 60 square metres. There is also attractive landscaped green space and waterfront promenade at Newcastle Business Park to the south but getting there involves crossing the main A695 Scotswood Road. The nearest large park is at Nuns Moor.

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

Local and tower block residents comment.

"There needs to be more education starting at home and in primary schools to encourage people especially young children to look after these areas so that everyone can enjoy them." "Small hideaways which encourage anti-social behaviours" are not liked. "More cycle routes, educational nature areas, litter wardens, local art projects and textural and interactive gardens for the very young and disabled people." are suggested.

"The Cruddas Park Estate needs much needed care." Concerns are crime, drug dealers and cars.

"Local community centres could organise visits for groups of people, eg children and OAPs where transport is provided. Would like litter wardens. Art works. Activities for teenagers and keep them out of trouble. Small hideaways encourage anti-social behaviour. There needs to be more education starting at home and in primary schools to encourage young people especially young children to look after these areas so that everyone can enjoy them. Would like cycling routes, educational nature areas, textural and interactive garden for very young and disabled people.

"Badly lit during night and street lamps do not work."

Summary

The sample area studies illustrate the range of densities in the different parts of Newcastle and also some similarities: Byker and Blakelaw had similar densities but are very different in character and appearance and in the nature of their green spaces. The private estates at Kingston and Chapel Parks had similar densities to Walker, Scotswood/East Denton and the suburban village of Throckley.

There is little correlation between the comments people made in our consultation and the nature of the area they live in. There is no strong message from the higher density localities that they have insufficient green space. Not enough green space is mentioned by respondents in higher density Byker and Heaton but from Kingston Park there is a request for a park.

Comments about the threat of building on green spaces were made by people in Byker, Heaton and Melton Park. The value of the Town Moor, Green Belt and countryside had a number of mentions from outer suburbs: Kingston Park, Gosforth, Newbiggin Hall and Chapel Park. Wildlife was important to respondents from Sandyford, Walker, Blakelaw, Lemington and Throckley.

Comments complaining about the various forms of anti-social behaviour came from every sample and reinforce the messages from all of our consultation that this is of concern to everyone, regardless of where they live.

People were not asked specifically about their views on local green space but this may be something that the council will undertake in the preparation of individual park or green space improvement plans and Ward Plans in coming years.

ANNEXE D

Consultation Results

Consultation exercises undertaken for the Green Spaces Strategy have been analysed and written up for reference. Those referred to in this paper are listed below. Copies are available on request and those marked with an asterisk are available on the Newcastle City Council website (www.newcastle.gov.uk parks and green spaces /nsf)

Report on Landscape and Green Space Focus Groups 2000

Results of a Survey of Uses and Perceptions Of Green Spaces (Citylife questionnaire response) November 2002)*

Public Expectations of Green Spaces (Citylife questionnaire response) October 2003)*

Green Places, Open Spaces (Report on focus groups with young people) 2003*

Newcastle Allotment and Garden Show Comment Forms November 2003*

Journeying to Green Spaces (Analysis of picture questionnaire) November 2003 and April 2004*

The draft green spaces strategy suggested some new standards of provision and distance for Newcastle. The following are the comments on standards made on feedback sheets and in other correspondence, at key officer group discussions and at the consultative forum in September 2003.

GREEN SPACES YOUR SPACES

Comments on draft strategy relating to proposed standards (June – November 2002).

Comments received as at 21 November 2003-11-21

Letters and E Mail messages received

E Mail (Forum member NE3)

“NPFA Standards

The document as published makes too much of standards, These may very well be irrelevant in the circumstances in which they are supposed to be applied. What is needed, I suggest, is to establish first of all just how realistic these standards are for the city. To the best of my knowledge Newcastle has been nowhere near the N.P.F.A. 1926 standards for the last half century, and probably since they were propounded. The arrival at a solution based on standards has bedevilled established communities ever since these were introduced, and will continue to do so as long as it is attempted There was an alternative to the NPFA system put forward by the Sports Council in, I think,

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

1968 under the title 'Planning for Sport, which attempted to be more responsive to individual circumstances. It did not provide standards that could be applied direct, involving instead the need to make calculations to cater for the needs of different communities. I believe it was for that reason it was not widely taken up. It can still be argued that an approach which accommodates local circumstances must be the basis of any strategy, and that this requires not formal standards but a best fit approach.

City Standards

I would suggest, therefore, that the draft standards for the city (page 36) should be tested very thoroughly to see just how realistic they are, in terms of how they relate to the extent and, perhaps, more importantly the location of existing open space before they are published. How well do the existing open spaces respond, for example, to the wish lists revealed in the local survey of views (para 4.4.4.)? It must be assumed, I suppose, that there is not likely to be any new open space created within the built up areas of the City. The pressure will certainly be to build on open spaces, which from the responses received it is clear must be robustly resisted, and it seems that, in theory at least, this is supported by Central Government!"

"Any strategy or plan should be regarded as only a statement of general principles, not so much as a template even, but as an outline strategy."

"Document as published makes too much of standards. These may well be irrelevant in the circumstances in which they are to be applied. What is needed I suggest is to establish first of all just how realistic these standards are for the city. To the best of my knowledge Newcastle has been nowhere near the NPFA 1926 standards for the last half century."

"I believe that all spaces should have at least dual objectives."

E-mailed letter from Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens

"A city the size of Newcastle should have a city farm if this is what the residents want. Projects such as these and community gardens work best if the demand comes from within the community. The city could probably sustain more than one city farm (one in the east, one in the west)."

E-mailed comments from Steering Group member

"I agree with most of the standards but I think we need to have a debate on them internally and after feedback on the strategy. I have some discomfort with promoting a lot of **smaller** open spaces that will be difficult to maintain and do not make good neighbours. The first standards and the one for young and primary children cause most concern. This will probably be achievable for new developments given government guidelines on new build. Not sure of applicability to existing communities.

"Should we state explicitly that the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy will become Supplementary Planning Guidance - similar to Biodiversity Action Plan."

Letter from local MP

"Need for Supplementary Planning Guidance to protect parks and open spaces. This particularly applies to informal and often unacknowledged open space."

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

Letter from Landscape Institute

"Need to include all green space within the strategy including those small pieces of land on estates. We feel it is very important that the strategy doesn't end up just concentrating on measures to improve the big parks."

"There are some interesting innovations on quality standards for example the proposed provision of off-road cycling facilities is very welcome."

Telephoned Comments recorded from CABA Space

"Need to show you have looked at demand and are doing what people want. Establish areas of greatest need and agree this with the community. Need to address the demographics."

Individual Comments from Citylife Questionnaires

CITYLIFE QUESTIONNAIRE NOVEMBER 2002

INDIVIDUAL COMMENTS ON LEVELS OF PROVISION

COMMENT	POSTCODE
I think as much green space should be available to City residents, tourists and those who look in the City.	NE1 8YW
Not enough walking routes for dog walkers.	NE1 4QL
Should be some on Quayside Riverside instead of the car park.	NE1 5BU
Cycle tracks need to be properly incorporated into the road/path system.	NE2 3DY
It is vital to have even small green spaces close to home/work for recovering.	NE2 3HX
To have green spaces close to the City Centre, important to retain them.	NE2 3DY
Not enough of them. Must not lose any to "development". Essential to maintain all of these areas and encourage the public to value and look after them.	NE2 2HL
Areas such as the allotments are precious – please don't let developers get their hands on them!! Variety of formal laid-out parks, sport areas and informal parkland, wildlife areas. We are really fortunate to have the variety and expanse of green areas all around the City. More linking of these with safe cycle/walking routes would be great.	NE2 3NS
More cycleways needed	NE2 4BA
Too far away.	NE2 1AW
Please make sure we increase cycle routes (off road)	NE2 3LA
There should be more to help the environment and peoples health.	NE2 4RJ
Please promote wildlife conservation in all green space/residential areas of Newcastle.	NE2 1RN
In my case areas are outside my door. I would like to	NE2 4AP

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

see grass outside my door used for shrubbery or flower beds.	
Vital for our sanity! Must be preserved at all costs.	NE2 4LH
Sandyford Park needs a park for the elderly. The cemeteries should be a place for wildlife and a place of beauty and should be in order.	NE2 1TA
Playing fields for kids. Not enough local areas for non drivers.	NE3 1UQ
We are very fortunate to have so many. Please restrict the developers to prevent any loss.	NE3 1SP
A bit more needed and accessible and safe.	NE3 1AT

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

COMMENT	POSTCODE
It is vital to preserve all existing green spaces and not allow development thereon. Children need to roam and play freely.	NE3 1RQ
Easy to get to.	NE3 4EY
I am too old to play, but I walk a lot. More of them please.	NE3 4DY
Too old for sport, etc. I am not aware of any <u>local</u> walking routes, rights of way, areas for wildlife or allotments.	NE3 2UA
Have garden. You keep building on them.	NE3 3RL
I do not use the sporting facilities because, alas, I am too old. I very much enjoy the parks – especially Gosforth Central Park and Jesmond Dene.– there are not enough of them.	NE3 1NH
Bad points - not enough of them and poorly designed. Green space is not a luxury, but is essential. We need much more of it and it must harmonise the needs of people and wildlife.	NE3 3PP
Local parks are well looked after. Becoming fewer due to housing developments.	NE3 4DH
Improved air quality. Important to retain green spaces – not to be too built up.	NE3 3NX
Concerned about developments in green belt areas i.e. Newcastle Great Park.	NE3 2UG
Big total area. The Town Moor is brilliant, most cities would kill for that! Bad points – disregard for Green Belt (e.g. Newcastle Great Park development) Talking to some older people Kingston “Park” needs a <u>Park</u> - with seats and plants to look at, somewhere central. Lack of cycle routes connecting green spaces – there are bits but often they don’t link up.	NE3 2XF
So few places for safe cycling – we are criticised for riding occasionally on <u>quiet</u> footpaths, it would be nice to be able to cycle on our marked official cycle tracks.	NE3 1NN
Good points - there are a lot. They are big and diverse and well looked after.	NE3 1QB
Bad points – they may be used up by more buildings and car parking areas (instead of brown field sites). The areas are getting smaller around the surrounding area I live near e.g. Northern Rock buildings, new housing developments, Great North Park.	NE3 3HS
When living in the City having vast green spaces is beneficial for my children. Some green spaces are near the roadside and don’t have a boundary, also more seating for tired mothers who just wish to observe!!	NE3 4HE

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

COMMENT	POSTCODE
I love the Moor – just having an open space energises the mind. Preserve <u>it</u> e.g. why is a private investor allowed to exploit the Proctor and Gamble site in Gosforth.	NE3 4AP
I value the areas and feel lucky to live close to Jesmond Dene and Paddy Freemans Park. Other children's play areas are not as well looked after. I feel sorry for the families who do not have a well maintained local park, close to where they live.	NE3 1YS
This is probably the worst City for parks I have lived in. There is little "botanical" to be proud of, compare with Saltwell Park.	NE3 4BA
Not relevant to my age group (65-74). Being very local is a good advantage. We are fortunate to have open areas, for example the Town Moor and similar locations.	NE3 5AJ
I do not have the time and there are not that many near where I live. There should be more.	NE3 2HS
Bad point – the fact that they are disappearing.	NE3 2SR
Work in Gateshead, tend to use facilities in that Borough. Good points - Plentiful/easily accessible. Too much space is being lost to Developers who should be forced to develop brown field sites instead of greenbelt.	NE3 5PA
Easy access – all less than a mile (parks) pretty good cycleways Gosforth to City and West.	NE3 1XS
There are no maps readily available of cycling and walking routes in Newcastle readily available when I rang Civic Centre. So what is there available/interesting around us?	NE3 2DN
I am of retirement age, Good points – there are so many of them. Perhaps more fun areas for the young people.	NE3 5TA
Keep them.	NE3 1DE
Free access and maintained. Bad points – insufficient in town centre. More provision for a major green space in City Centre should be made e.g. Bigg Market area.	NE3 1ED
Did not know about existence of "Green Space" cycle routes or walking routes. Good points – plenty of local green spaces. Green spaces in Newcastle must not be developed on, all must be kept as they are or improved.	NE3 1ED
Some are easy to get to. Some are out of the area. Exhibition Park is nice but should have more for older people.	NE3 2SL
Every place needs green space.	NE3 3TJ
COMMENT	POSTCODE

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

It is nice to find somewhere local to take your grandchildren for a while. I think it is very important to keep some green spaces some like the Town Moor is a bit barren it would be nice to see it made a bit more interesting.	NE4 8JB
More play areas for young kids or playing activities with assistants.	NE4 6PU
Although I love to visit a green space park there are none easily accessible within my area.	NE4 8UL
Not enough of them! Especially cycle routes.	NE4 9BR
I am limited to some extent because I do not have a car. I use the bus for Leazes Park (when the lake is restored). Good points – the green spaces have been created in the North Benwell terraces.	NE4 8AH
They do not function as green lungs with route from inner City to countryside as in Sir Frederick Gibberds Harlow New Town model.	NE4 5AY
Plenty of them.	NE4 5JN
There are a lot of necessary well kept green spaces. Some schools do not have sufficient green space.	NE4 9UQ
Keep or create more green spaces.	NE4 8PQ
Housing estates have not generally facilities for children's play.	NE4 9LE
Because I am too lazy. This questionnaire has prompted me to get out more. Good points – because they are there. Bad points – that “developers” are constantly trying to encroach on them.	NE4 9BX
Being disabled I have problems actually accessing the local park due to no dropped kerbs from house.	NE5 1SE
There are a number of places within a reasonable distance.	NE5 4BG
Bad points – not enough of them	NE5 3SH
There should be more of it in the City.	NE5 1SN
If any of these places exist in my area, they are continually vandalised by kids. Bad points – there are no areas for younger children.	NE5 2BD
They are very important and are relaxing, working full time and with no transport I wish there were green spaces nearer to home.	NE5 1TU
Good points - plenty of them.	NE5 1XB
Bad points – too many being taken up for building <u>more</u> houses (more council tax). Please do not keep building on green spaces – remember that young people need them for recreation.	NE5 1RU

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

COMMENT	POSTCODE
I would like to see more green spaces in Newcastle and surrounding areas, i.e. especially wildlife areas, flowers, shrubs, plants, trees, parks, etc.	NE5 3EX
Because they are there, but we need more. Not enough in our area – FENHAM.	NE5 2ED
More green spaces appearing in places like Scotswood and Benwell.	NE5 1QG
Good points - accessibility (Town Moor) size – unique (do not build on it).	NE5 2HU
Do not have children nor am I a sporty person. Good points – plenty of places to go.	NE5 2SL
Brings a bit of the countryside to the City. We are losing too many. They are used up for commercial rather than pleasure.	NE5 2UT
I am not a “sports” person but I do a lot of walking. Good points - I do not have to walk far to be almost out in the country. Children play football on the greens between houses instead of on the large playing field nearby annoying residents, can anything be done to make the playing field more attractive?	NE5 1JQ
Good points - the green spaces are easily accessible from where I live.	NE5 1YB
First never let us lose them,	NE5 5AD
There are not enough areas for wildlife.	NE5 3TN
Easily accessible to most of us, good use made of them. Need more!	NE6 5AQ
I have no transport, I am not allowed on the school playing field near my home, which in any case is now up for sale. It is good that they are there at all. It is bad that they are inaccessible to me. Although creating green space near by home is out of the question I heartily approve of the “Green Space Strategy” in particular the creation of new “Green Routes”.	NE6 2HU
No comprehensive plan to link use of different green space – no specific direction/plans. No forward looking plans.	NE6 5BE
At 80+ years now less energetic. Keep them – no building thereon.	NE6 5QR
Space to relax and areas to walk in away from city life, we need more. Too many small green areas being sold to developers – especially for housing.	NE6 5TJ

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

COMMENT	POSTCODE
Not enough green spaces. Not protected (conservation) site, always under threat from development, litter. It supports a huge diversity of wildlife, creates fresh air combating air pollution, is a safety valve against modern life stress. <u>WE NEED MORE!</u> Child friendly, quality of life.	NE6 5TJ
I do not know where they are in my area other than around the multi storey flats.	NE6 5AD
Should be more in the City Centre.	NE6 4NW
Because public transport and many areas remain inaccessible to disabled people I cannot travel to the green spaces. Accessible transport roads and footpaths ought to lead to the green spaces.	NE6 5SS
Keep green space, it is scarce enough.	NE6 5RH
Green spaces - there are not enough of them.	NE6 1EF
We need green space to be able to breathe. Newcastle has some lovely green space I hope it is kept and not got rid of.	NE6 2QA
It has improved greatly, the effort is there for all to see, but there should be more of it, make more use of old strips of land, i.e. wildlife corridors,	NE6 4JU
Green spaces - not enough of them.	NE6 2AH
Lack of facilities and playing frames, etc Newcastle Council needs to put the laughter and fun back into parks!	NE6 4BQ
Need to be preserved and increased.	NE7 7HA
Green spaces – there is too much of it.	NE7 7SR
Not enough space where is all the space? I would like to see more green space, not enough, everywhere you look private houses going up.	NE7 7PN
The more green spaces the better.	NE7 7JX
Good points – plentiful. More kids play equipment in parks.	NE7 7QH
Good points - good for wildlife. Need more of it. Increase green spaces in the suburban areas.	NE7 7EB
Not enough parking. As a frequent visitor to Newcastle it is a shame that there is not more green space near the Centre.	NE10 OAW
The green space is being built on unnecessarily.	NE13 7DQ
No children in family. Not sporty. Have own garden. We must preserve them. Bad points – not enough of them – slowly disappearing. Please do not sell any more off to developers. It is important to have these green spaces.	NE13 6JD

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

COMMENT	POSTCODE
Too much being built on, causing more traffic congestion and pollution. Green belt land does not exist anymore. Anything, <u>anywhere</u> can be built upon.	NE13 6JG
There is not enough in the area.	NE15 6NA
No green spaces available.	NE15 8RY
More 'mixed use' parks needed.	NE15 6AN
Fantastic richness and diversity of green space available in and around Newcastle which needs to be maintained/enhanced and added to for all generations especially for future generations.	NE15 8AB
There are no bowling, tennis, etc facilities within Dumpling Hall Estate. Not enough greenery on new developments on Quayside.	NE15 7SU
Bad points – no suitable green space is within walking distance from where I live.	NE15 7PP
There should always be green space about housing.	NE15 9JG
I would like to see more green spaces.	NE15 6UJ
Parks must be improved to get me and my family back to using them all the time. We want more green spaces for leisure and relaxing.	NE15 9NT
Bad points – keep deciding to build on green land.	NE24 2FJ

Comments from Forum workshop 23/9/03

“Availability of existing green space e.g. school fields, Big Waters, often have large areas but don't have access into it e.g. Wildlife Trust bit of Big Waters.”

“Realistic for new development/redevelopment. Standards not just for new development but how do you address the issues in existing areas.”

“Aspirational standards.”

“Still important (possibly thought it so obvious it should happen.)”

“Need to ensure existing open space is protected from being sold off e.g. threat to school playing fields by Private Finance Initiatives.”

“Frequently built on and use more restrictive - need a new action point.”

Comments on Feedback sheets

“Never use standards as an excuse for reducing existing green areas.”(NE5)

“A lot of figures and promises.”

“ But it depends on how it is managed – there could be too much of the wrong sort.”
(NE 2)

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

"Is a distance stated for office workers ?"

"Recognise the value of green spaces less than 0.4 hectares."

"Many office workers will walk to local green space." (NE1)

Maintain and secure what we have." (NE4)

"Developers building large apartment blocks should compensate for this greedy cramming by being required to include in their plans some space for shrubs, small trees, grass etc within the site when they build." (NE2)

"Not much indication of how the standards are to be achieved in areas that already fall short of the specified standards. It will probably be quite difficult to create more green spaces retrospectively. Perhaps the five year time period mentioned is a little ambitious." (NE3)

"Perhaps some method of identifying areas of under-provision so that potential development sites in that area could also be identified. In that way the development of some sort of accessible open space could be included as a requirement in the development brief."

"Green spaces can be urban in character - they don't have to be mainly grass."

"Gardens can contribute to the green character of streets and loss of them to parking can detract from it as well " (NE2)

"The council must not sell off land to developers without consideration of open space in the city." (NE1)

"Strategy needs more information on details of implementation and prioritisation."

Enterprise, Environment and Culture Officer comments on standards

Fine assuming we provide standards

Change text to say (Local Development Framework -LDF) "*produced by 2004-2007*"

Talk to Bill Taylor who recently held an event in Old Assembly Rooms eg regeneration team are interested

Yes

Standards will need to be in LDF.

Amend wording LDF will be commenced in April 2004 not written by then. First draft by 2005

Needs to be in LDF

Amend wording LDF will be commenced in April 2004 not written by then. First draft by 2005

Needs to be in LDF

Links would be very important, linked to standards

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

Could you refuse planning permission because a development site is not close enough to a green space?

New development of sufficient size should provide its own green space

Yes, agree with this action

It is aspirational and that is good.

Is it the same as Highways S38? Perhaps this model should be used for green space

Needs working out how this will operate in practice

Use GIS (Note after meeting D Webb who suggested this got back in touch to say he'd spoken to ESRI and not possible to do.)

Agree

Speak to Trevor Arkless re GIS modelling of catchments for bus stops etc. Has specialist software for this

Helpful to have different types of adopted standards to differentiate between different uses

"Going for Growth" Regeneration Team

Ward plan could be vehicle

Is it achievable? Very aspirational, its possible to develop local standards with residents but has to be within existing budgets

Ward plans will implement

It needs the word 'achievable' and 'attainable' in there

There are some gaps, not realistic

Managing expectation is an important aspect of this

The word 'local' needs to be inserted, develop local standards

Private standards in wards eg greening schemes

Need people to work with us to achieve

Influencing - external, internal designers, those who will need to manage

It is the maintainers who need to live with the design so they should lead

Needs to have teeth - not just guidelines

Linked to management team - someone needs to take the first step

A stand alone project

Support. Need now. Who to do?

ANNEXE E

References

Copies of publications are available on request (there may be a charge) or can be inspected at the Civic Centre. Those publications marked with an asterisk are available via the internet.

Newcastle upon Tyne Unitary Development Plan 1998*

Gateshead Unitary Development Plan 1998

North Tyneside Unitary Development Plan 2002

South Tyneside Unitary Development Plan 1999

Sunderland Unitary Development Plan 1998

Liverpool Unitary Development Plan November 2002

Sheffield Unitary Development Plan 1998

Birmingham Unitary Development Plan 1993

Brent Unitary Development Plan 2001

Glasgow (City plan, February 2002)

Doncaster Audit (Final)

Bristol Local Plan February 2003

Blyth Valley (District Local Plan 1999)

Middlesbrough (Local Plan 1999)

Castle Morpeth (District Local Plan 2003)

Green Spaces Better Places.* Report of Urban Green Spaces Task Force. 2002 (including reports of Working Groups)

Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 ODPM 2003 *

Assessing Needs and Opportunities.* A Companion Guide to PPG 17 ODPM 2003

Green spaces ...your spaces. Newcastle's Parks and Green Spaces Strategy Consultation Draft July 2003 *

The use of Public Parks in England 2003 *

***Children's Play: Guidelines for Housebuilders* Newcastle City Council
Supplementary Planning Guidance No 14 March 1990**

Green spaces...your spaces

Background paper: Green Spaces...using planning

A Study of Playing Pitch Needs.(2002 – 2012) Newcastle upon Tyne Playing Pitch Strategy Draft 2003

Places for Living Birmingham City Council Supplementary Planning Guidance. March 2001

Urban Design Compendium English Partnerships/Housing Corporation

A Space for Nature English Nature

Biodiversity Indicators and Targets for the North East of England English Nature NE office 2003

Accessible Natural Greenspace in Towns and Cities: A Review of Appropriate Size and Distance Criteria

Accessible Natural Green Space Standards in Towns and Cities: A review and toolkit for their implementation. Final Draft Report May 2002 English nature/CURE

Green Cities and why we need them David Nicholson-Lord

Making Space Wendy Lutley/Open Spaces Society

Improving Environmental performance within the Best Value process I&DEA

Community Participation Plan Newcastle City Council March 2002

“Recreation, your future” A strategy for sport and recreation in South Tyneside 2000 – 2005

The Six Acre Standard National Playing Fields Association Review Paper

“Green Places,Open Spaces.” The Views of Children and Young People in Newcastle upon Tyne. Research and Development Section. Leisure Services. Newcastle upon Tyne.*

“I Never Use Them” Non Use of Parks and Green Spaces. Research and Development Section. Leisure Services. Newcastle upon Tyne.*

Views of Young People on Green Spaces. Going for Growth Social Exclusion Project.*

“Journeying to Green Spaces” The Distance People are willing to Travel to Green Spaces Research and Development Section. Leisure Services. Newcastle upon Tyne.*

“Public Expectations of Green Spaces” Questionnaire analysis 2002 and 2003. Research and Development Section. Leisure Services. Newcastle upon Tyne.*

“Journeying to Parks and Open Spaces” April 2004 Research and Development Section. Leisure Services. Newcastle upon Tyne.*