

The way forward – PPG17 steps 4 and 5

Background

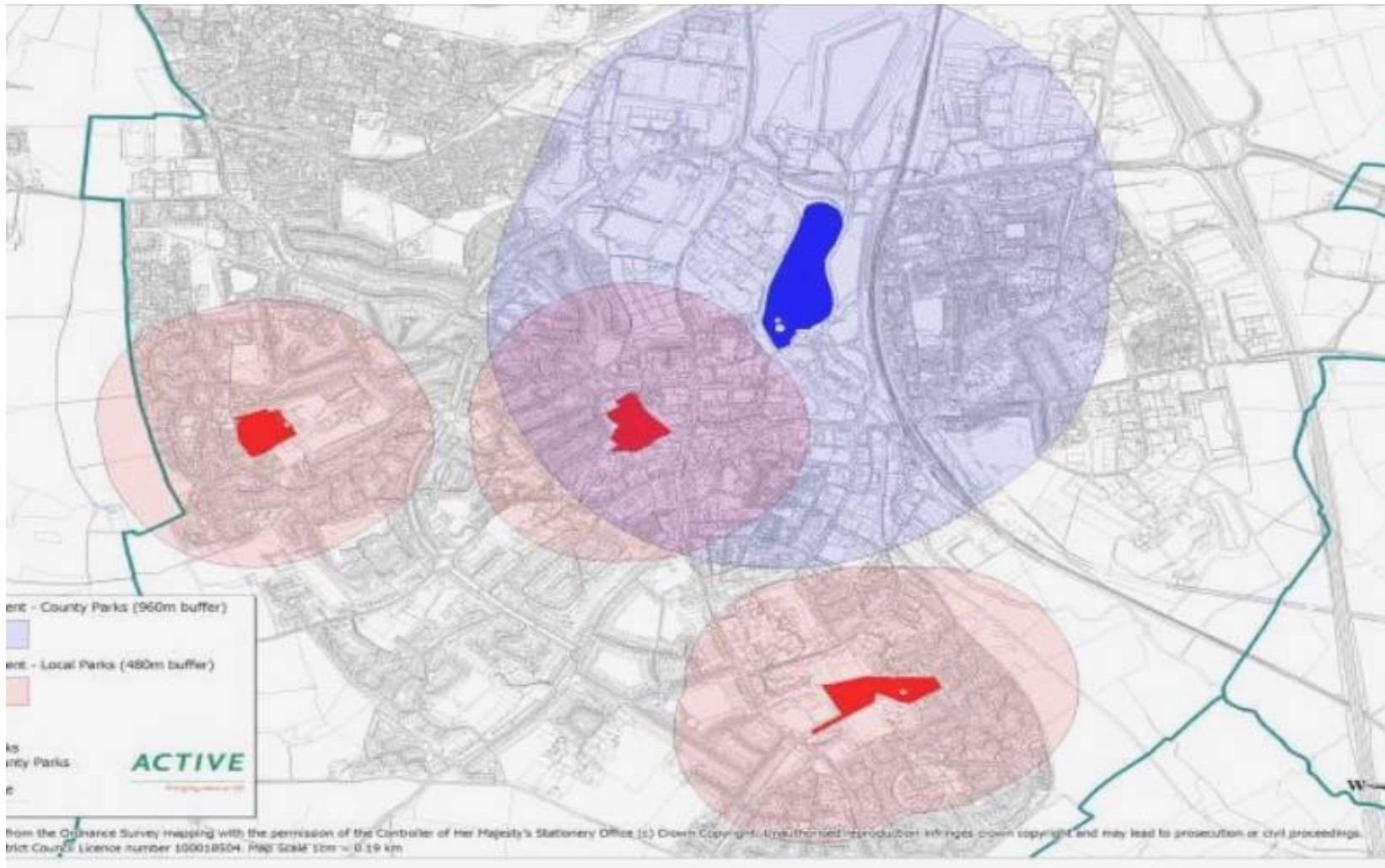
- 12.1 As detailed in Section 2, the PPG17 Companion Guide sets out a logical five-step process for undertaking a local assessment of open space.
- 12.2 This report and associated appendices summarise the key findings of stages 1, 2, and 3, specifically:
- Step 1 – Identifying Local Needs
 - Step 2 – Auditing Local Provision
 - Step 3 – Setting Provision Standards
- 12.3 The recommended provision standards are derived directly from the findings of the local needs assessment and audit and have been outlined in this report.
- 12.4 Steps 1-3, as undertaken, inform the Council's Local Development Framework documents and provide an evidence base for further development.
- 12.5 In order to understand the adequacy of current levels of provision, both in terms of quality and quantity, but also spatially, steps 4 and 5 need to be undertaken, specifically:
- Step 4 – Applying Provision Standards; and
 - Step 5 – Drafting Policies – recommendations and strategic priorities.
- 12.6 The implementation of steps 4 and 5 are instrumental in the identification of issues and should lead to the production of an open space, sport and recreation strategy which will identify future priorities for the delivery of greenspace across the Borough. CABE space identifies the production of a green space strategy as the 6th Stage.
- 12.7 Completion of steps 4 – 5 will inform further, more detailed stages of the LDF and will be undertaken in due course.
- 12.8 The suggested processes that will need to be followed as part of the production of an open space, sport and recreation strategy (following adoption of the local standards) are set out below.

Step 4 - Applying the recommended local standards

- 12.9 Local standards have been recommended for quality, quantity and accessibility. Following agreement of these standards, these standards should first be used to identify individual areas deficient in quantity, quality, and accessibility. The key principles behind each of these are summarised below:
- 1) *identify areas deficient in accessibility***
- deficiencies in accessibility are defined by applying the locally derived accessibility standards to give an indication of those areas served and not served by existing provision. Map 12.1 overleaf provides an example of this.

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Map 12.1 – Accessibility catchment map



2) identify areas of quantitative deficiency or surplus

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

3) identify quality deficiencies and value of site

- the site assessment data produced as part of stage 3 should be plotted on the same maps as the accessibility assessment by coding spaces or facilities in terms of their quality and **value**. This will spatially identify those open spaces or sport and recreation facilities most in need of enhancement and also put them in the context of overall accessibility. An example map is provided overleaf in Map 12.2.

12.10 As noted in PPG17, **value** is an entirely different and separate concept from quality, and relates mainly to context (in terms of site accessibility and local quantity of provision, level and type of use and the wider benefits). The initial site assessments undertaken as part of this study provide the majority of the information required in terms of wider benefits etc.

12.11 When making decisions about specific sites, consideration should be given to both the value of the individual site and the quality of the site. Without combining these two factors, it is impossible to identify those spaces or facilities which should be given the highest level of protection by the planning system, those which require enhancement in some way and those which may no longer be needed for their present purpose.

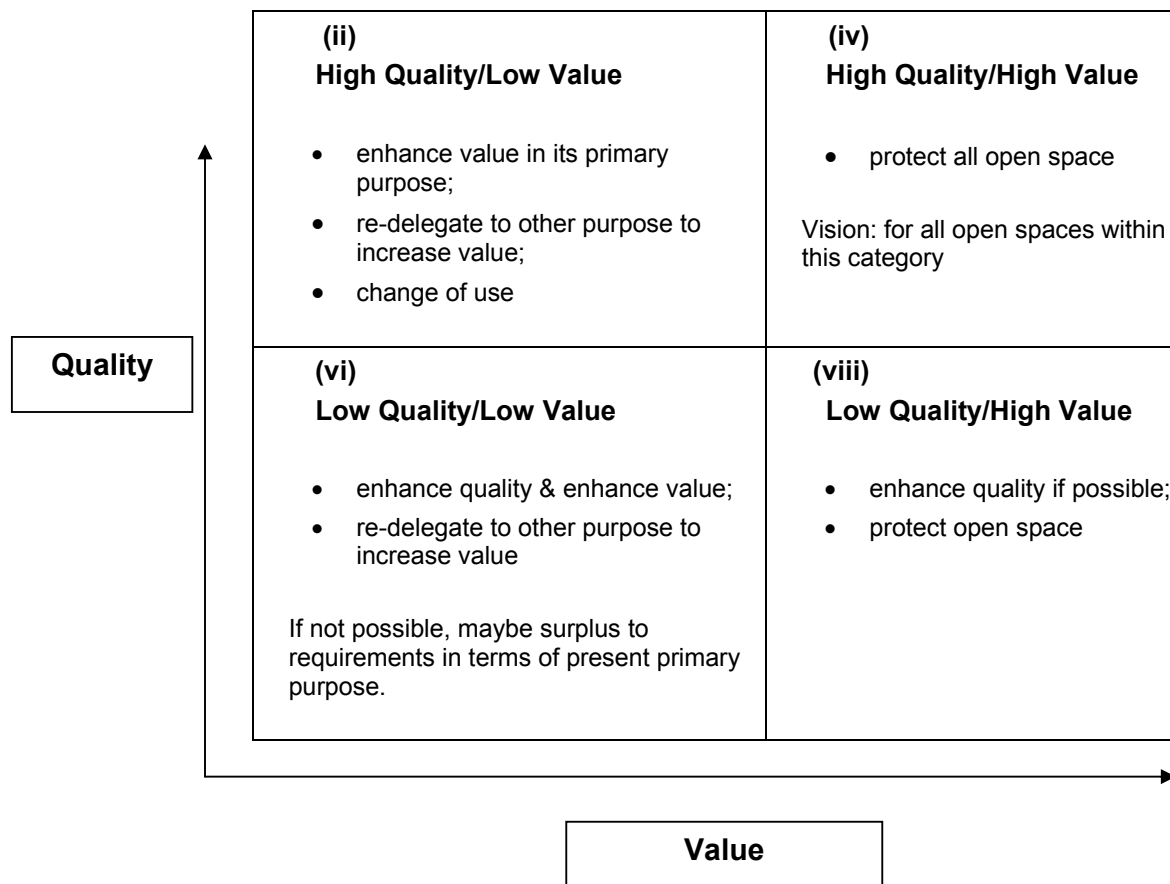
SECTION 12 – THE WAY FORWARD

Map 12.2 – Mapping the quality of sites



12.12 Figure 12.1 below illustrates the various outcomes of combining value and quality and their implications that will be investigated as part of the development of a green space strategy.

Figure 12.1 – Assessing the value of open space sites



12.13 It is then essential to consider the application of the quantity, quality and accessibility standards in the context of each other.

4) identify the spatial distribution of unmet needs

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

5) forecast future needs

- to complete stages 1-3 some assumptions have been made regarding the future population in order to estimate the amount of provision required over the new plan period. It is essential that the application of local standards considers future need in addition to existing unmet deficiencies and areas of surplus. This will include consideration of planned changes in provision and the likely location of future population growth.

Step 5 - Drafting policies

12.14 In accordance with the PPG17 Companion Guide, a strategic framework or Open Space, Sport and Recreation Strategy for the planning, delivery, management and monitoring of open space, sport and recreation facilities should have four basic components, specifically:

- existing provision to be protected
 - where the existing level of provision is below or the same as the recommended quantity standard, sites should be protected to ensure that the situation is not made worse over time whilst remedial action is planned
- existing provision to be enhanced
 - there are two discrete instances where existing provision may be in need of enhancement. In areas where there is a quantitative deficiency of provision but no accessibility issues the Council may wish to increase the capacity of existing provision. Alternatively, in areas where facilities or spaces do not meet the relevant quality standards, enhancements will be required. Site assessments will inform qualitative improvements
- existing provision to be relocated
 - in order to meet local needs more effectively or make better overall use of land it may be necessary to relocate existing sites
- areas where new provision should be considered
 - new sites should be located either in areas within the accessibility catchments of existing provision but where there is a quantitative deficiency or in areas outside of catchments. More generally, the Council should deliver a plan led approach to significant housing growth and open space and test potential housing locations against the findings of the open space, sport and recreation study.

12.15 The Open Space, Sport and Recreation Strategy should also include a series of aims and objectives linked to the action plan and implementation programme. It should also identify investment priorities and partnership opportunities. It may also consider the existing and future management of open spaces within the Borough.

Funding opportunities – developer contributions

- 12.16 Whilst locally determined provision standards (as developed in stage 3) can be used as a basis for planning conditions or obligations in appropriate circumstances, it is only through the application of these standards that what is appropriate or otherwise can be determined.
- 12.17 PPG17 states that the need for either on site provision or developer contributions towards off site provision requires the application of the adopted provision standards within the context of defined areas of accessibility, quality or quantity deficiency or surplus in order to determine the need for either additional provision or the enhancement of existing provision.
- 12.18 In principle, planning authorities will be justified in seeking either on site provision or contributions towards new off site provision or the enhancement of existing off site provision, for the full range of open space, sport and recreation facilities for which they have adopted provision standards. The relative priority of different forms of provision should be informed by the assessment of local needs and this is the main objective of stage 4 of the PPG17 process.

Summary

- 12.19 The completion of a local needs assessment and audit, and the subsequent use of the findings of these stages to produce local standards provides a sound basis upon which to develop an Open Space Strategy.
- 12.20 The application of the standards will enable the identification of key issues and will drive the future delivery of open space provision across Allerdale.