

## City of York Council

# Local Plan Evidence Base: Open Space and Green Infrastructure

Final Report



AMEC Environment & Infrastructure UK Limited

September 2014

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Doc Reg No. 34938rr004

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## City of York Council

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## Final Report

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UK Limited

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# Executive Summary

## Purpose and Scope of this Report

This report has been produced for the purpose of providing an evidence for the emerging York Local Plan in respect of the provision of open spaces<sup>1</sup> (collectively part of ‘green infrastructure’<sup>2</sup>), the likely implications for strategic development sites, the basis for the development of supplementary planning guidance on open space standards, and potentially a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the City.

A PPG17 compliant open space study was undertaken in 2008 which analysed open space resources across the City in respect of its supply, demand and quality. The results of this study needed to be revisited in light of updated survey information on the supply of open spaces across the City, providing the York Local Plan with a robust evidence base, particularly in respect of appropriate open space standards to be applied in the City’s proposed strategic development sites.

The updated open space supply data has been mapped and ward profiles developed as the basis for the checking of the appropriateness of current standards of provision. These were found to be reasonable and not requiring revision, notwithstanding the identified (and continuing) deficits in certain categories, notably provision for children and teenagers and outdoor sports facilities.

Further analysis using clusters of wards was undertaken to reflect more realistic local usage patterns provide the basis for benchmarking the likely implications of strategic development across the City through mapping of provision and accessibility.

In light of the above, the expectations of the City Council in respect of the provision of open space and related green infrastructure as part of new development can be formulated. In addition, the findings of the study can be used to help inform the development of a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the City which addresses issues of current provision and its best use, along with the strategic opportunities associated with new development.

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<sup>1</sup> Includes: parks and gardens, natural and semi-natural areas, amenity areas, children’s playspace, teenagers’ playspace, outdoor sports pitches and allotments. It is assumed that cemeteries, whilst being important community and biodiversity resources, being are planned for separately.

<sup>2</sup> Green Infrastructure includes parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, wetlands, grasslands, river and canal corridors, allotments, cemeteries and private gardens  
(<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/planningdevelopment/greeninfrastructure/default.aspx>)

## Key Report Findings

- Using updated survey data, the open space standards established in 2008 are still valid and can be applied as benchmarks for future development at strategic and local scales, namely:

Category	Recommended standard of provision across York	
Parks	0.18ha/1,000	
Natural/Semi Natural	2.13ha/1,000	
Amenity	1.45ha/1,000	
Children's playspace*	0.48 facilities/1,000	0.25ha/1000 (FIT benchmark)
Teenagers' playspace*	0.21 facilities/1,000	
Outdoor sports facilities	1.78ha/1,000	
Allotments	0.29ha/1,000	

\*incorporated into amenity open space

- Notwithstanding some changes in the overall provision of open space types (due to population growth and some re-classification of open spaces principally relating to Parks and Gardens to natural/semi-natural open space and outdoor sports pitches which do not meet quality standards) the overall standards remain valid as locally-established benchmarks of provision. These reflect the character and extent of established local provision but nevertheless stand comparison with national and comparative benchmarks from other local authorities.
- The 2013 update gives the opportunity to assess local provision (by ward/area) in terms of the supply/demand balance and likely change in context of growth.
- Open space provision is always a blend of the consideration of quantity, quality and accessibility, both in terms of existing and potentially new facilities.
- Policy needs to reflect the updated open space figures, both in terms of the expectations for provision associated with new development and the likely impacts of additional demands on particular localities.
- There is an opportunity to develop a systematic approach to Green Infrastructure, using the provision of open space within development as a starting point for considering the multifunctional role of open space and the contributions which can be made to City-wide and sub-regional networks. The Biodiversity Strategy and Green Corridors Study are important inputs to this process.

## Recommendations

### *Survey*

- Retain the standards established in 2008 as a benchmark for provision, with attention on the findings of the 2013 survey in respect of local provision (by ward and area).

- Whilst the quality and accessibility of open space is generally acceptable/good, there is the opportunity to identify and address gaps/investment opportunities in light of proposed growth at local and strategic scales which will meet new demand and help to address deficits.
- The updated GIS/database should be used as a monitoring tool to help co-ordinate leisure and planning activity.

### *Strategic Provision*

- As a benchmark, the total proportion of open space to be provided as part of new development is 5.83ha/1,000 population as a minimum level of provision, with detailed attention required to the split between open space categories and extent of off-site provision in light of the nature of the site and existing local provision. Cemeteries would need to be provided in addition to this figure.
- Site-by-site provision needs to be guided by area profiles and further detailed work on the current demand for and quality of facilities in the locality. It would be reasonable to expect this to be carried out as part of the masterplanning work.
- Strategic sites can make a particularly valuable contribution to the provision of natural/semi-natural open space and help to develop links with accessible countryside and potentially broader aspirations for a City-wide Green Infrastructure network. Site masterplanning needs to take particular account of natural/semi-natural open space provision and the natural links with the needs for sustainable drainage.

### *Policy*

- The policy position needs to be resolved in respect of minimum expectations in respect of a broad quantum of open space to be provided as part of new development, and where the mix can be varied in light of local circumstance and enhancements/synergies to be achieved in the light of new provision.
- Stronger reference between enhancing the quality of Natural/Semi-natural open space and Local Plan policy on promoting biodiversity could be made.
- The current seven policies relating to Green Infrastructure could be simplified into a more coherent framework.

### *106/CIL/SPD*

- A revised SPD is required as a basis for commuted sums to be demanded of strategic sites. The current SPD is probably underestimating the commuted sum requirement by around 30% (roughly equivalent to the likely proportion of natural/semi-natural open space).
- Close monitoring of the implementation of developer contributions is required such that there is a clear link between open space provision (either on or off-site) and the context within which that provision is situated.
- The revised SPD needs to be founded on a robust model of provision (compare other councils such as Harrogate) and reconciled with recent large scale 106 agreements.

### *Green Infrastructure Strategy*

- A Green Infrastructure Strategy should be developed which advances the policy objective of enhancing the provision of open space and biodiversity across the City, helps to create potential synergies between interested parties and strategies, and justifies ‘off-site’ provision associated with strategic developments, particularly in respect of natural/semi-natural open space.

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background and Purpose of the Report

City of York Council is assembling the evidence base as part of the preparation of the Local Plan for the City. As part of this process, updates are required to the Open Space Study (the PPG17 Assessment) carried out in 2008 by PMP Consultants. This Report is an update to that PPG17 Study, taking account of new data on the provision of open spaces throughout the City, and review the suitability of the open space standards established in 2008 as a basis for policy development and implementation.

The Report provides:

- an up-to-date evidence base for Local Plan policy relating to the protection, enhancement and provision of greenspace across the City;
- justification for standards to be applied in development management, particularly for strategic development sites;
- analysis of the implications of the application of the standards to strategic development sites.
- links to the IDP and CIL schedule; and
- comment on the potential for developing a Green Infrastructure Strategy which could promote the multifunctional use of open space across the City.

## 1.2 Scope of the Report

In light of the above, this Report is not a full review of the 2008 PPG17 Assessment (which includes a detailed assessment of demand), but concentrates on updating and sense-checking provision of open space standards set out in that Report<sup>3</sup>. The key tasks have comprised:

- a review and remapping of the supply of open space resources;
- a sense-checking of the standards established in the PPG17 analysis in the light of the 2013 survey of provision;
- identification of in-principle surpluses and deficits of provision by ward, groups of wards and across the City as a whole;
- a review of applicability of standards, in the context of localities, particularly in light of proposed strategic sites;

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<sup>3</sup> For Development Management purposes, CoYC currently applies standards which were first established in 1998 Local Plan and which are set out in the SPG: Commuted Sum Payments for Open Space in New Developments (July 2011). See Table 2.4 for a comparison between these and the 2008 Standards.

- identification of in-principle levels of open space provision required by the proposed strategic developments, according to their population and the existing provision in their receiving locality; and
- background to the review of Supplementary Planning Guidance on open space requirements and commuted sums associated with new development and a Green Infrastructure Strategy which could help guide City-wide provision.

In updating and reviewing the open space provision and standards for the City, the relationship between the quantity of provision, its accessibility and quality needs to be born in mind, for it is only in considering these three elements together that a full picture is drawn. This relationship is particularly significant in the context of new development where alongside new facilities to serve new residents, a good fit with the locality needs to be achieved.

This aspect of the Local Plan evidence base concerns open space which is generically referred to as Green Infrastructure (GI). This Study is not a Green Infrastructure Strategy, but contains analysis of GI assets which could be the starting point for a Green Infrastructure Strategy in determining the location and characteristics of current provision, opportunities for protection and enhancement and the implications of new development in terms of their geography and demands.

## 2. Evidence Base Update

### 2.1 Methodology

During 2013, the City Council re-surveyed the supply of open space across York, excluding outdoor sports facilities<sup>4</sup>. These data are used as the basis for quantifying and mapping establishing current patterns of provision and the benchmark for the validation (and potential refinement) of open space standards set out in the 2008 Report as well as those currently used in Supplementary Planning Guidance as a basis for developer contributions.

As a means of benchmarking provision in particular localities, ward profiles have been developed. Ward-based provision is a reasonable starting point for local analysis i.e. amenity, provision for children/teenagers, and allotments, from which wards can be grouped into areas of similar type to establish levels of provision and gaps for wider localities into which significant development is likely to be introduced, requiring neighbourhood, local and City-wide provision. Understanding open space supply, demand and quality in the locality and City-wide is central to ensuring that opportunities for additional provision are used to best effect. Detailed demand assessment via workshops/household surveys has not been undertaken in light of a judgement that there was no convincing case that there would be significantly different messages and/or added value as a result of this work<sup>5</sup>.

Although the demand for open space across the City has not been updated in terms of user surveys, updated population statistics have been used, and estimates made of population change associated with the proposed growth of the City to 2030. In addition, the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) has been used as a proxy for the potential accessibility of residents, whereby areas with a higher IMD score (i.e. more deprived) are likely to be more dependent upon local provision of amenities because of relatively limited access to a car. Of course, the relative 'deprivation' of specific groups such as the elderly and young people in respect of access to transport can also be masked within affluent areas.

The justification for the open space standards which were set by the 2008 PPG17 Study are summarised in Appendix A. The analysis reflects the adoption of a pragmatic approach to the setting of standards which reflects the current level of provision and modified in light of an assessment of demand, the benchmarking of similar studies, and the setting and application of standards of provision which reflects a balancing of quantity, quality and accessibility.

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<sup>4</sup> Undertaken as part of the Playing Pitch Strategy 2013

<sup>5</sup> The re-surveying of local communities is a significant exercise which would have limited added value in providing a significantly different perspective or different basic messages on provision only 5 years on. The key messages from the 2008 Study and the demand analysis in particular are summarised in section 2.3.

## 2.2 Data Sources and Analysis

This Study draws on the baseline data established in the 2008 Assessment, which has subsequently been modified by the 2013 survey of provision and quality. Table 2.1 sets out the characteristics of the open space types considered in the analysis.

**Table 2.1 Types of Open Space**

Type	Definition	Primary Purpose
Parks and Gardens	Includes urban parks, formal gardens and country parks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>informal recreation</li> <li>community events</li> </ul>
Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspaces	Includes publicly accessible woodlands, urban forestry, scrub, grasslands (e.g. downlands, commons, meadows), wetlands, open and running water and wastelands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>wildlife conservation</li> <li>biodiversity</li> <li>environmental education and awareness</li> </ul>
Amenity Greenspace	Most commonly but not exclusively found in housing areas. Includes informal recreation green spaces and village greens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>informal activities close to home or work</li> <li>enhancement of the appearance of residential or other area</li> </ul>
Children and Young People	Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving children and young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>equipped play areas</li> <li>ball courts</li> <li>outdoor basketball hoop areas</li> <li>skateboard areas</li> <li>teenage shelters and 'hangouts'</li> </ul>
Outdoor Sports Facilities	Natural or artificial surfaces used for sport and recreation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>playing fields and outdoor sports pitches (football, rugby, cricket, hockey)</li> </ul>
Allotments	Opportunities for those people who wish to do so to grow their own produce as part of the long-term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion. May also include urban farms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>growing vegetables and other root crops and fruit and flowers</li> <li>does not include private gardens</li> </ul>

### 2.2.1 City of York Playing Pitch Strategy

The Playing Pitch Strategy complements this Green Infrastructure Study and analyses the current and projected supply and demand for playing pitches within the City of York. It identifies areas of under and over provision of pitches, future needs and issues affecting pitch quality. This strategy also makes a series of recommendations on how to address the issues and concerns raised by the analysis. The study considers:

- mini, 9v9, junior and senior football pitches;
- junior and senior rugby union pitches;
- junior and senior rugby league pitches;
- cricket pitches; and

- other outdoor playing facilities bowls, tennis and artificial grass pitches.

The pitches identified in the strategy (identified as pitches within the outdoor sports category within this Green Infrastructure work) are those that meet Sport England standards. All other sports pitches or informal kick-about areas are classified as amenity greenspace in this work.

## 2.2.2 City of York Green Corridors Technical Paper and the Biodiversity Action Plan

The Green Corridors Technical Paper defines three tiers of corridor (of regional, district and local significance) which together form the basis of a coherent network of open space resources across the City. Some 28 corridors are identified along with their primary function (being combinations of open space, nature conservation, transport and flood alleviation). The Green Corridors Strategy is not a Green Infrastructure Strategy but constitutes an important part of the understanding of the way in which open space and biodiversity assets can be enhanced and linked either through continuous open spaces or stepping stones. Significant areas of open (and generally accessible) countryside are identified within the corridors. These have varying amounts of public access, and as such are excluded from the open space survey. Strensall Common is one example which could be classified as natural/semi-natural open space but has limited public access.

The Biodiversity Action Plan is derived from the existing BAP for the City and the audit of biodiversity assets completed in 2010. The BAP concentrates on sites with biodiversity interest but acknowledges that: *“This network of sites is one aspect of York’s green infrastructure. Retaining and enhancing this infrastructure network is key to ensuring that York’s biodiversity is maintained and is resilient enough to cope with the uncertainties and vagaries of both a changing climate and a changing environment.”* The BAP sets out the opportunities for enhancement across the 28 corridors identified in the Green Corridors Technical Paper (see below) as well as updates on BAP targets for specific habitats and species. The Strategy advocates enhancing green networks through the City and beyond by:

- maintaining and improving the quality of current sites by better habitat management;
- increasing the size of current wildlife sites;
- enhancing the connections between or join up sites either through direct physical corridors or through ‘stepping stones’ of new habitats;
- creating new sites; and
- reducing the pressures on wildlife by improving the wider environment, including buffering of existing sites.

The Green Corridors identified in this Technical Paper and subsequently analysed in the BAP have been used in this Study to inform recommendations on developing a Green Infrastructure Strategy for York.

## 2.3 The City of York's Open Space Standards

The key point about setting local standards is that they are locally determined and reflect the open space assets and historic patterns of provision across a particular area. The PMP approach is to establish current supply per 1,000 population and adjust this according to further considerations of quality (through survey), accessibility (through buffering and survey), demand (through stakeholder consultation) and benchmarking against other studies (principally those carried out by PMP). Whilst quantity standards vary between authorities, reflecting their particular geographies, continuity between accessibility standards is of particular importance. This is critical where new development is proposed to ensure consistency of provision and to meet aspirations for sustainability, where securing a high degree of self-containment (i.e. reducing the need to travel) should be the starting point.

A locally-led approach inevitably produces locally-specific standards which reflect the geography of the study area. York is a relatively green City with a significant amount of natural greenspace radiating from the City Centre as well as being centred around two river corridors. The baseline and hence 'local standards' will inevitably reflect this and be unlikely to bear direct comparison with other authorities, or indeed nominal national standard. The standard set by Fields in Trust (FIT) is the so-called '6 acre standard' and which reflects provision for playspace in the context of amenity space. The FIT standard for equipped playspace is 0.25ha/1,000. Provision of children's and teenagers' play facilities is poor across the City when calculated by ha/1,000 (as identified in the PMP Report). One 'solution' to this appears to be the adoption of a 'facilities/1,000' standard which better reflects the local situation in York which is well provided for in terms of amenity space. The justification for this approach is set out as follows: "*Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving children below aged 12. While it is recognised that a wide variety of opportunities for children exist (including play schemes and open spaces not specifically designed for this purpose), as per PPG17, this typology considers only those spaces specifically designed as equipped play facilities*" (PMP, 2009 p.iii).

Analysis of the updated supply data (see section 2.3) does not significantly alter the baseline, although there has been a notable increase (around 50%) in the provision of children's playspace between 2008 and 2013. There is therefore no reason to amend the standards set in 2008 which compare reasonably with national recommendations (Table 2.2).

**Table 2.2 Derivation and Comparison of York's Open Space Standards**

Type of Open Space	2013 provision/ 1,000 population	PMP's 2008 recommended adjusted standard/1,000 population	PMP 2008 recommended accessibility standard	Other guidance/ 1,000 population
Parks and Gardens	0.16ha	0.18ha	20 minute walk (960m) (City Park); 15 minute walk (720m) (Local Park)	
Natural/ Semi-natural	2.53ha	2.13ha	15 minute walk (720m)	2.0ha (ANGSt)
Amenity	1.60ha	1.45ha	5 minute walk (240m)	
Children	0.47 facilities (0.06ha)	0.48 facilities (0.053ha)	10 minute walk (480m)	0.25ha (FIT) for equipped playspaces (LAP/LEAP/NEAP)
Teenagers	0.10 facilities (0.009ha)	0.21 facilities (0.0022ha)	15 minute walk (720m)	
Outdoor Sports	1.66ha	1.78ha	15 minute walk (720m) for pitches/ tennis/bowls; 20 minute public transport for synthetic turf pitches	1.6ha (FIT) of which 1.15ha for pitch sports
Allotments	0.27ha	0.29ha	15 minutes walk (720m)	0.22ha (NSALG)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6.77ha</b>	<b>5.83ha</b>		
	<b>Total assumes children's/ teenagers' playspace is incorporated into amenity space</b>			

#### Acronyms:

ANGSt – Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard

NEAP = neighbourhood equipped area for play. A minimum area of 1,000m<sup>2</sup> with at least eight activities and should be located 1,000 metres or 15 minutes walking time along pedestrian routes (600 metres in a straight line)

LEAP = local equipped area for play. A minimum area of 400m<sup>2</sup> with at least five activities and should be located 400 metres or 5 minutes walking time along pedestrian routes (240 metres in a straight line)

LAP = local area for play. Formally designated area for play to be at least 100m<sup>2</sup> in size with up to three activities and should be located 100m or 1 min walk along pedestrian routes (60m in a straight line)

FIT – Fields in Trust

NSALG – National Society of Allotment Gardeners

## 2.4 Updated Open Space Supply Data

The updated survey of open spaces (CoYC, 2013) is set out in (Appendix C) and the results assembled into a summary table which identifies that, overall, the City is well served for open space, notwithstanding clear deficiencies in provision for children/teenagers, a problem which was identified in the 2008 Report. As a record of the location of different types of open space provision, this material is a helpful baseline for subsequent analysis. Drawing on the summary of current open space provision, profiles of the City's 22 Wards have been developed (Appendix D) to illustrate current open space resources and opportunities for highlighting locality-specific gaps.

Is the 2008 Standard still applicable? As with similar studies undertaken by PMP, the 2008 standard was calculated by establishing the overall level of provision per 1,000 population and adjusting this in light of comparative studies to arrive at figures which reflect local circumstances and which provide a reference point for a realistic improvement in provision where required. Thus there would be little point in providing an unrealistic standard derived from good practice elsewhere, for example, which could not be achieved in the context of the City of York's urban form. The standards are therefore pragmatically derived and in turn have to be applied pragmatically. That said, there are important benchmarks provided by national recommendations on provision and accessibility (notably by the National Playing Fields Association [NPFA] and Fields in Trust [FIT]) and these are useful in establishing a reference point for local standards.

Ward-by ward characterisation of provision is only starting point for understanding the patterns of use in a locality. Thus many types of facility have catchments which spread across ward boundaries for a variety of types of provision. Thus it is better to understand the nature of provision in areas of similar character. Inevitably, there will be cross-boundary movement between these groupings (notably for the use of parks and gardens), but for those uses with a limited catchment (children's/teenagers' play areas, amenity space, allotments), the degree of self-containment is relatively high. Therefore, in order to assist the definition of City-wide open space priorities in respect of the development of a Green Infrastructure Strategy and consideration of strategic development sites, York's wards have been grouped on the basis of their geography (using boundaries such as rivers and the extent of urban development). The groups are illustrated in Figure 2.1 (see also Appendix G for Ward groupings in the light of the 2015 re-organisation).

#### 2.4.1 Open Space Provision by Ward Grouping

Although open space provision across the City as a whole is reasonably good (apart from some localised deficits of children's/teenagers' playspace), an understanding of the character of area provision is helpful in identifying surpluses/shortfalls in localities as the starting point for intervention and where population change could require further investment. Table 2.3 sets out the levels of provision by grouping of Wards.

**Table 2.3 Open Space Surpluses and Deficiencies (Against the 2008 Standard) by Grouping of Wards**

Ward	Parks (ha)	Natural (ha)	Amenity (ha)	Children (sites)	Teenagers (sites)	Sports (ha)	Allotments (ha)
<b>Urban West</b>							
Acomb	0	2.21	4.28	3	4	5.62	0.77
Dringhouses	0	49.63	7.02	3	0	11.79	0.92
Holgate	4.48	5.00	16.4	9	2	11.30	7.55
Micklegate	8.34	13.21	97.23	3	1	35.73	10.29
Westfield	0	3.22	11.82	5	0	20.26	1.96
Total provision	12.82	73.27	136.75	23	7	84.7	21.49
Population (000s)	58.647						
Surplus/Deficit	2.26	-51.65	51.71	-5	-5	-19.69	4.48

Ward	Parks (ha)	Natural (ha)	Amenity (ha)	Children (sites)	Teenagers (sites)	Sports (ha)	Allotments (ha)
<b>Urban East</b>							
Heworth	0.91	5.86	4.93	4	1	9.13	4.74
Heworth W/O	0	40.70	7.57	1	0	17.86	0.21
Hull Road	5.48	1.58	1.77	4	0	11.49	0
Osbalwick	0	0	2.28	3	1	3.01	0
Total provision	6.39	48.14	16.55	12	2	41.49	4.95
Population (000s)	28.080						
Surplus/Deficit	1.34	-11.67	-24.17	-1	-4	-8.49	-3.19
<b>Central</b>							
Clifton	5.47	10.50	7.88	5	0	17.75	1.02
Fishergate	0	31.27	11.26	4	0	5.58	6.05
Guildhall	5.21	8.79	10.78	3	0	2.21	0
Total provision	10.68	50.56	29.92	12	0	25.54	7.07
Population (000s)	32.394						
Surplus/Deficit	4.85	-18.44	-17.05	-4	-7	-32.12	-2.32
<b>East/South-east</b>							
Derwent	0	44.81	2.53	1	0	14.89	2.22
Fulford	0	0.01	2.97	2	1	9.36	0.81
Heslington	1.35	14.70	60.77	1	0	26.35	0.58
Wheldrake	0	0	0.62	3	0	6.41	2.12
Total provision	1.35	59.52	66.89	7	1	57.01	5.73
Population (000s)	15.36						
Surplus/Deficit	-1.41	26.80	44.62	-0	-2	29.67	1.28
<b>West/South-West</b>							
Bishopthorpe	0	0	0.11	1	0	3.72	1.44
Rural West	0	52.48	7.97	8	0	27.14	3.23
Total provision	0	52.48	8.08	9	0	30.86	4.67
Population (000s)	14.424						
Surplus/Deficit	-2.60	21.76	-12.83	2	-3	5.19	0.49
<b>North</b>							
Haxby	0	5.33	7.77	4	1	8.53	1.2
Huntington	0	42.87	11.73	6	2	34.88	2.24
Skelton	0.58	157.05	25.76	9	6	35.37	5.36
Strensall	0	11.37	14.09	3	0	9.6	1.02
Total provision	0.58	216.62	59.35	22	9	88.38	9.82
Population (000s)	45.589						
Surplus/Deficit	-7.63	119.52	-6.75	0	-1	7.23	-3.40
<b>CITY OF YORK</b>							
Total provision	31.82	500.59	317.54	93	19	327.98	53.73
Population (000s)	198.051						
Surplus/Deficit	-3.83	78.74	30.37	-2	-23	-24.55	-3.70

The 2013 survey of open space across the City demonstrates that, apart from provision for teenagers and to a lesser extent outdoor sports facilities, there is broadly balanced provision against the 2008 Standards. The deficit in outdoor sports facilities has been exacerbated between 2008 and 2013 by the re-classification as amenity open space of sports pitches which do not meet the Sport England quality standard. This has implications for the provision of outdoor sports pitches in particular localities (notably wards in urban east, urban west and central areas) but also across the City where patterns of accessibility of facilities are important considerations.

The open space standards remain valid in terms of the quantity of provision City-wide, although there is significant variation between areas of the City, as can be observed in Table 2.2. The pattern of provision reflects the historic development of the City, with urban areas generally having more extremes of provision against the 2008 Standard, such as the Central Area which performs a City-wide role in respect of the provision of parks and gardens, but has limited provision across other types and relies on adjacent areas. There are also clear deficits in some areas which have undergone rapid growth in the past few decades, notably 'Urban East'. Some clusters of wards (of a more rural character) are relatively self-contained in their provision (east/south-east, west/south-west and north) reflecting their settlement pattern, and where certain kinds of provision such as formal parks would not be expected. By contrast, many rural areas hold a significant proportion of the City's natural open space resource.

It is proposed that from 2015, Fulford Ward is to be combined with Heslington Ward and Osbaldwick Ward combined with Derwent Ward. Appendix G sets out Table 2.3 with these changes applied.

The relationship between the pattern of IMD (Figure 2.2) and levels of provision, indicating very broadly where there is likely to be greater reliance on local provision, either directly within an area or close by. However, across the City, deprivation is probably not a significant factor, notwithstanding concentration in certain wards and hidden deprivation in relatively affluent areas. Consequently, apart from recognising that particular attention to accessibility to greenspace is likely to be required in the Urban West, Central and Urban East areas, there are no clear implications of the pattern of deprivation for green infrastructure policy.

## 2.5 Validation and Refinement of Open Space Standards

As noted in the introduction, the purpose of this study is not to critique or redefine the open space standards already established through the 2008 study. It is more productive to use the updated information on supply to ensure that the standards remain valid, to re-visit the conclusions of the 2008 Study, and provide the basis for the updating of advice on developer contributions in light of the proposed growth of the City, both in terms of strategic sites and localised development. Thus whilst the onus should be on new development to provide for their own need, particularly on strategic sites, and where possible contributing to making good existing deficits, there is a need to ensure that existing provision also benefits through investment.

### 2.5.1 Quantity

The key observations from the 2008 PPG17 Assessment were:

- Across all typologies, the greatest quantitative shortfall is in provision for young people. In order to meet the standard, an increase of over 100% of current provision will be required.

- The City has a slight overall shortfall of open space, sport and recreation provision in quantitative terms and there are particular quantitative shortfalls relating to provision for young people, children, outdoor sports facilities, natural open space and amenity green space. As specified throughout the report, the quantity standards need to be applied in conjunction with the accessibility standards in order to identify the location of any deficiencies.
- It must be noted that in some instances while local standards indicate that the quantity of provision is sufficient to meet needs at the current time, additional sites may be required in the event of residential development (and the consequential increase in population) in an area, as well as in those locations where the quantity of provision is currently insufficient to meet local need.

The updated survey results from 2013 by Ward are set out in Appendix C, and these indicate that City-wide (as Table 2.4 shows), there appears to be a widening gap in deficits across all open space types except natural/semi-natural. This reflects adjustments to the data in terms of improving its accuracy (through re-survey and re-classification) and the physical increase in population. Notwithstanding the progress made on the provision of additional open space resources (notably for children), the current gaps in provision will be exacerbated by the proposed growth of the City to 2030 (see section 3), which could offer opportunities for new strategic provision and the enhancement of existing facilities to increase their capacity.

**Table 2.4 City-Wide Surpluses and Deficits by Open Space Type - Comparison of the 2008 Study and 2013 Update**

	Population (000s)	Parks and Gardens (ha)		Natural/semi-natural (ha)		Amenity (ha)		Children (sites)		Teenagers (sites)		Outdoor Sports (ha)		Allotments (ha)	
		Current provision	In-principle surplus/deficit	Current provision	In-principle surplus/deficit	Current provision	In-principle surplus/deficit	Current provision	In-principle surplus/deficit	Current provision	In-principle surplus/deficit	Current provision	In-principle surplus/deficit	Current provision	In-principle surplus/deficit
2013 Update	198.05	31.82	-3.83	500.59	78.74	317.54	30.37	93	-2	19	-23	327.98	-24.55	53.73	-3.70
2008 Calculation	193.60	35.40	0.55	411.42	-0.95	274.83	-5.89	83	-10	6	-35	328.95	-15.66	56.04	-0.10
Difference (2013 over 2008)	4.45	-3.58		89.17		42.71		10		13		-0.97		-2.31	

## Notes:

- As a result of the 2013 Survey, there has been some limited re-classification of open spaces principally relating to Parks and Gardens, accounting for the decrease in the provision of this resource.
- The rising deficit in respect of outdoor sports is accounted for by re-classification, from outdoor sports to amenity open space, of sports pitches which do not meet the Sport England quality standard has taken place.
- The rise in the number of children's/teenagers' playspaces reflects investment by the City of York over the past 5 years.
- Other differences are accounted for updates to calculated areas.

## 2.5.2 Provision Associated with Current Permissions

Across the City there is a range of committed housing development which includes provision of open space and financial contributions in lieu of direct provision (and combinations of both). At December 2013, there were 67 sites with permission and data recorded on open space; these are summarised in Table 2.5.

**Table 2.5 Summary of Open Space Provision Associated with Current Permissions**

	Number of permissions	On-site provision	Contribution	Types of provision
Sites <10 dwellings	25	1	24	Amenity
Sites 10-50 dwellings	25	13	21	Amenity; children's playspace (LEAP)
Sites 50+ dwellings	17	12	10	Amenity; children's playspace (LEAP, LAP); Sport
	<b>67</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>55</b>	

Source: City of York Council

Whilst it is difficult to draw generalised conclusions from the detail associated with site-by-site characteristics and negotiations, the figures in Table 2.5 demonstrate that the stock open space is being added to, although it is unclear how consistently, both in particular localities and across the City as a whole, and in terms of the types of provision. The consistent application of open space standards is important, both for larger sites to ensure adequate provision, but also for smaller sites where on-site provision is not feasible but developer contributions can assist in ensuring that there is sufficient local provision of an adequate quality e.g. bringing sports pitches of inadequate quality up to standard. This is the role of policy in specifying standards and associated SPD guidance on their specific application (see section 4).

There are important links to be made with a Green Infrastructure Strategy in ensuring that the outcomes of agreements on open space provision contribute to the enhancement of the City as a whole through understanding provision with individual wards and where new provision could contribute to the City-wide network. Systematic monitoring of the type and location of new provision is therefore critical.

## 2.5.3 Quality

The key observations from the 2008 PPG17 Assessment were:

- The quality of parks is perceived to have improved over recent years, reinforced by the achievement of several green flag awards across the City. Residents highlighted that improvements to the ancillary provision with parks would further enhance their quality. Drainage at parks was also of particular concern.
- The quality of natural sites was perceived to be important to residents and the wider benefits of these sites were recognised. Natural sites were perceived to have a particularly important role in enhancing biodiversity and developing habitats.

- There is a greater variation in the quality of amenity green spaces than any other type of open space with analysis of the quality scores indicating that sites range from 30% to 90%. This was also reflected through the consultation.
- Although there were numerous concerns relating to the quantity of provision for children and young people several issues regarding the quality of existing provision also emerged. The majority of comments focused around the need for provision to be more challenging and innovative.
- The quality of allotments is varying with site scores ranging from 44% to 86%.

The 2013 update identified broadly similar results, with average quality scores by each open space type shown in Table 2.6. Notwithstanding the variance of quality for some types of open space (notably Natural/Semi-natural and Amenity), the overall quality appears to be good. Stronger reference between enhancing the quality of Natural/Semi-natural open space and Local Plan policy on promoting biodiversity could be made.

**Table 2.6 Average Quality Scores by Type of Open Space, 2013**

Open Space Type	Average Quality Score (%)	% Range	Count
Parks and Gardens	80	58-90	12
Natural/Semi-natural	65	40-100	83
Amenity	69	31-100	257
Children's	69	50-100	96
Teenagers'	68	60-76	9
Outdoor Sport <sup>6</sup>	66	44-80	101
Allotments	64	44-92	47

### 2.5.4 Accessibility

The key observations from the 2008 PPG17 Assessment were that:

- On the whole there is a good level of access to the parks within the urban areas of the City, with City and local parks equitably distributed. There are greater access issues for residents in the outlying settlements, with many unable to reach a park on foot.
- Access to natural and semi natural open space is high across both the urban area and the rural settlements. In addition to smaller sites, there are numerous larger sites such as Bootham Stray in close proximity to residential areas.

<sup>6</sup> 2008 data

- The urban area is surrounded by smaller settlements and green belt, ensuring access for residents to areas of nearby countryside.
- The distribution of amenity space is uneven across the City, although many residents devoid of amenity green space have access to a park.
- Despite the emphasis placed on the lack of local facilities for children, the distribution of sites is even across the City although some deficiencies were identified. While play areas are more sporadically distributed in the rural settlements, many residents have access to facilities.
- Analysis of access to facilities for young people highlights that there are few residents within the recommended catchment of a facility. This is unsurprising, given that there only four facilities across the City. The achievement of the recommended standard will represent a significant challenge for the Council.
- While the distribution of both local and strategic sports facilities is good, access to facilities at school sites presents the greatest issues to residents, with many schools not permitting community use at the current time. Enhanced access to existing facilities would reduce pressure on existing sites and ensure that all residents have genuine access to local facilities.
- The distribution of allotments is sporadic and there are many residents outside of the catchment area for facilities. This is compounded by the waiting lists that are evident at existing sites.

### 2.5.5 Mapping of Accessibility Standards

The following maps illustrate the application of accessibility standards to open space resources across the City, updated by the 2012 survey. They visually demonstrate the accessibility conclusions of the 2008 Report set out above, and show that:

- Access to parks and gardens is limited to the City Centre and immediate surrounds (Figure 2.3), but their central location and availability of amenity and natural/semi-natural greenspace to some extent compensates for apparent deficiencies across the rest of the City.
- Access to amenity and natural/semi-natural greenspace is generally high across the City (Figures 2.4 and 2.5) with some gaps in the eastern wards.
- Access to children's and teenagers playspace is patchy (Figures 2.6 and 2.7) with provision for teenagers being particularly poor. The provision of children's playspace has seen notable improvement over the past five years.
- Access to outdoor sports facilities is, in principle, good across the City (Figure 2.8), although the balance between public and private provision, the extent of community access and these are important considerations at the local level.
- Access to allotments is inconsistent (Figure 2.9).
- The relatively compact character of the City means that there is ready access to the wider countryside beyond the ring road.

The implications of these patterns are that there remains a significant task of addressing current shortfalls in provision, particularly in respect of children's/teenagers' playspace and allotments. 'Local' development on relatively small sites within the existing urban area is likely to exacerbate current shortages and would need to be addressed through off-site contributions where direct provision is not possible. In these cases, and with strategic development, local context is critical, beginning with the quantum of provision in a locality and subsequently refined through the analysis of accessibility and quality against the scale of the proposed development, as scale will determine the levels and feasibility of provision by type of open space.

To complement the mapping of in-principle accessibility, the 2012 survey scored the accessibility of sites in terms of:

- general accessibility (entrance to site, roads, paths and cycleway access, disabled access);
- information and signage (is the information and signage to the open space appropriate where required and is it clear?); and
- transport (accessible by public transport; accessible by cycleways; accessible by walking).

These scores are summarised in Table 2.7 and demonstrate that there is good or average accessibility for open space across the City, but with some significant variations, notably in respect of information and signage.

Addressing deficiencies in access to open space will be an important part of developing a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the City, which in turn can provide a structured framework for new provision.

**Table 2.7 Average Accessibility Scores (percentage) by Type of Open Space, 2012**

Open Space Type		Count	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor
Parks and Gardens	General	10	10.0	80.0	10.0	0.0	0.0
	Information & Signage	10	0.0	50.0	10.0	20.0	20.0
	Transport	10	10.0	80.0	10.0	0.0	0.0
Natural/Semi-natural	General	81	3.7	33.3	35.8	24.7	2.5
	Information & Signage	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Transport	81	6.2	38.3	44.4	11.1	0.0
Amenity	General	255	4.7	53.7	28.6	12.5	0.4
	Information & Signage	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Transport	256	19.1	47.3	28.1	5.5	0.0
Children's	General	94	3.2	39.4	46.8	9.6	1.1
	Information & Signage	90	2.2	23.3	32.2	10.0	32.2
	Transport	94	4.3	45.7	47.9	2.1	0.0
Teenagers'	General	9	0.0	33.3	66.7	0.0	0.0
	Information & Signage	9	0.0	44.4	33.3	22.2	0.0
	Transport	9	11.1	22.2	66.7	0.0	0.0
Outdoor Sport	General	101	0.0	40.6	47.5	11.9	0.0
	Information & Signage	99	0.0	6.1	48.5	16.2	29.3
	Transport	100	2.0	50.0	46.0	2.0	0.0
Allotments	General	46	0.0	19.6	54.3	23.9	2.2
	Information & Signage	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Transport	46	6.5	41.3	50.0	2.2	0.0
<b>AVERAGE</b>			<b>4.61</b>	<b>41.58</b>	<b>39.27</b>	<b>9.66</b>	<b>4.87</b>

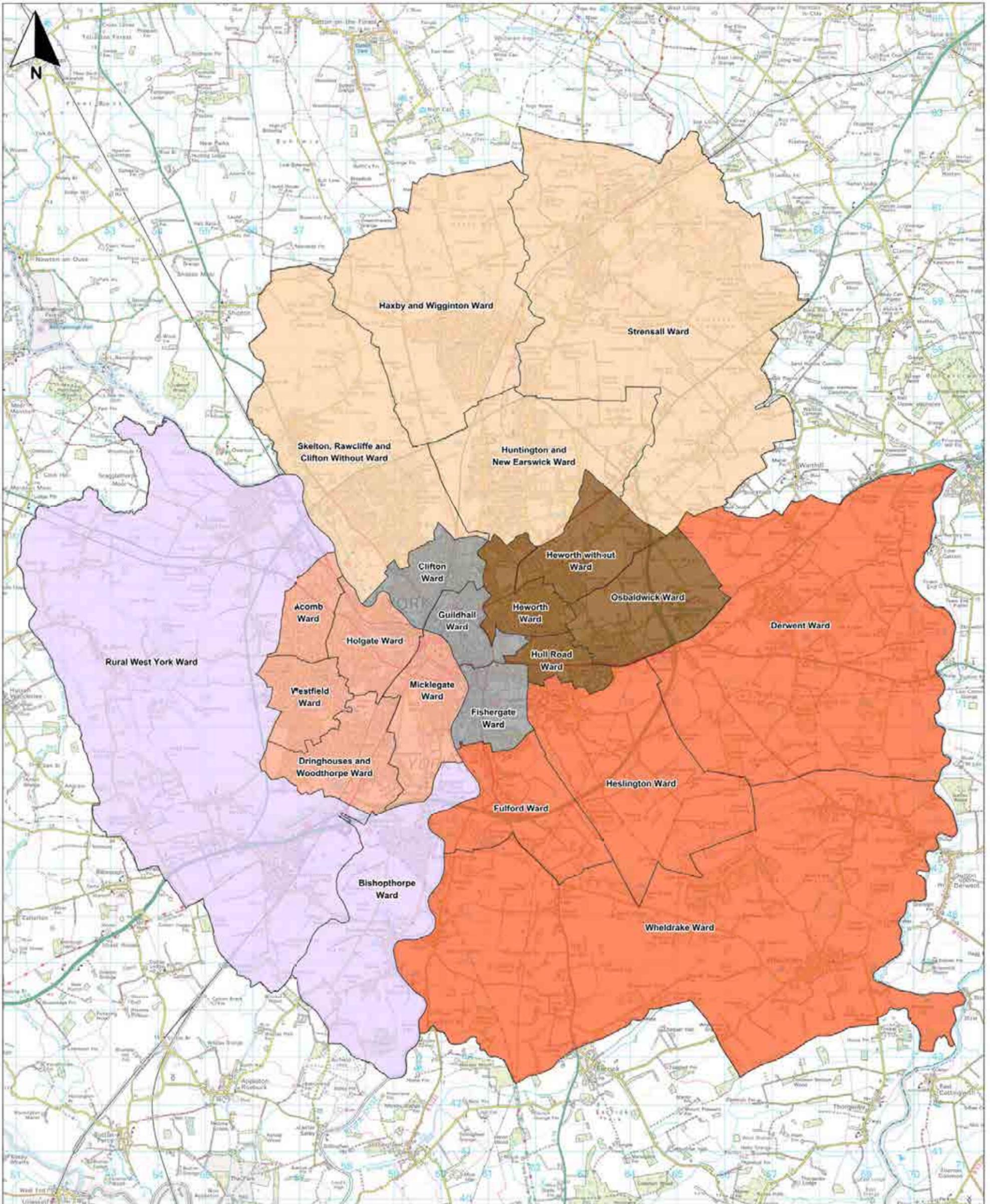
Note: scores relating to information & signage for natural/semi-natural, amenity and allotments have been excluded as it is not expected that these resources would be signposted.

## 2.6 Conclusion

The overall conclusion is that 2008 standards are a reasonable basis for developing policy and a reference point for new development. Table 2.2 sets out the standards with national ‘benchmarks’ where available. The differences reflect local conditions and a pragmatic approach to the setting of standards whereby deficiencies can be highlighted and addressed through additional provision as part of new development or wider local authority investment. Setting standards which are out of proportion to current provision would set an unduly onerous and realistic target, where improvement is better secured through scrutiny of locality-specific deficits. More critical is a balance of provision by type of open space and spatially between neighbourhoods, wards or wider areas. In York’s case, the size of the City means that overall deficits identified in one locality can, to a degree, be compensated for by provision elsewhere; this is most notable in respect of formal parks and gardens which are concentrated in the City Centre and immediate environs. In all cases, close monitoring of permissions in respect of the types of provision being made in its local context is critical.

The provision of open space is not static. New sites and areas can be created as well fall out of use or, for various reasons, be lost to development. More widely, growth of the City through strategic and local site development along with natural change in the existing population will place new demands on provision across the City and in particular localities which will demand additional provision and increases in capacity of existing facilities. Attention to issues such as provision of information and signage, whilst more of a matter of practical management than policy, could assist with making better use of existing resources.

In terms of the implications of change in York’s population to 2030, in addition to strategic development there will be additional ward-specific change associated with changes in household size, and/or cumulative minor development. Such change will have to be addressed through either increasing capacity and/or make links to new provision in the vicinity.



**Key:**

- North
- East / South East
- Central
- Urban East
- Urban West
- West / South West

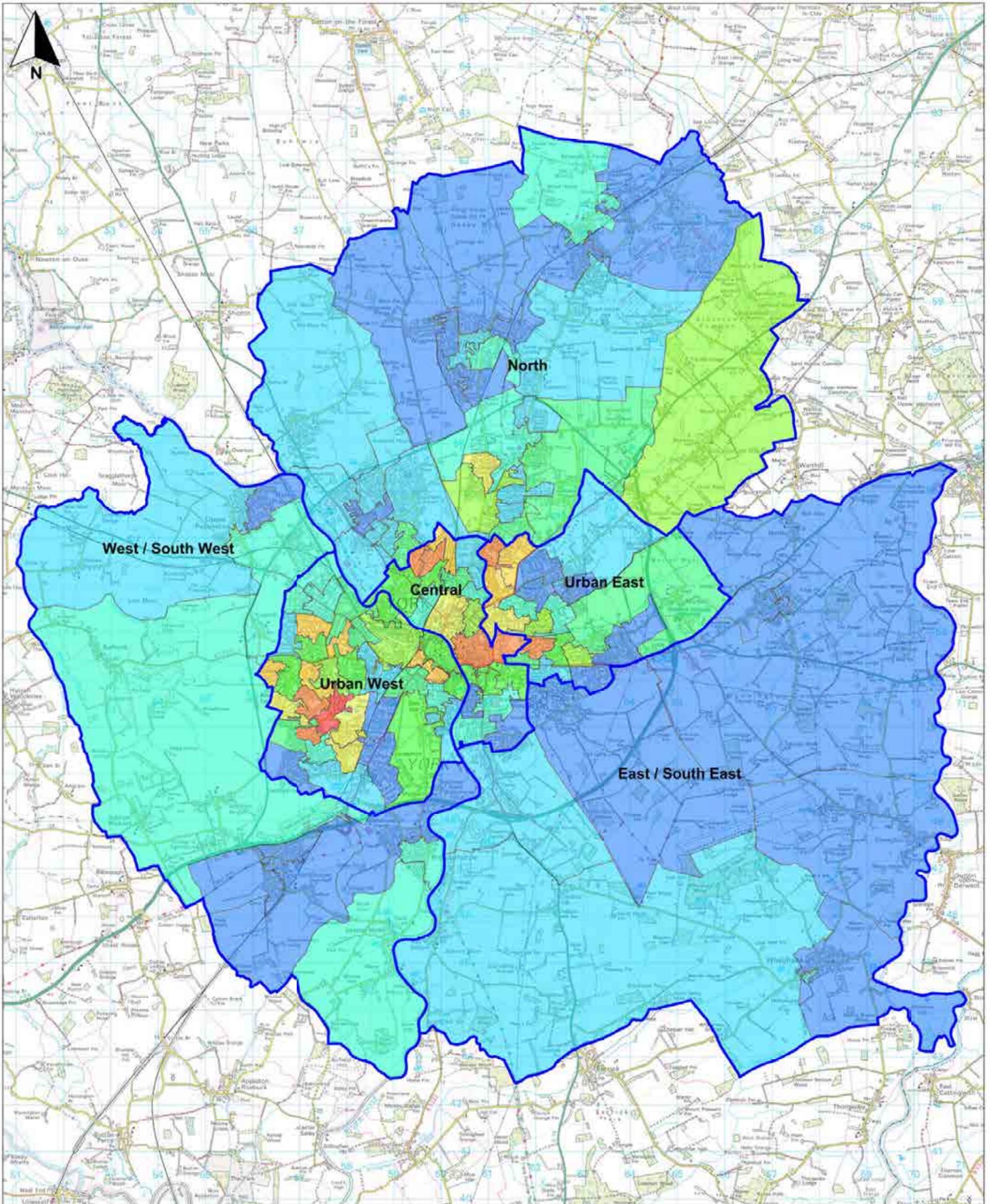
City of York Council  
Green Infrastructure Study

**Figure 2.1**  
**Ward Grouping**

0 km 3 km  
Scale 1:75,000 @ A3

December 2013  
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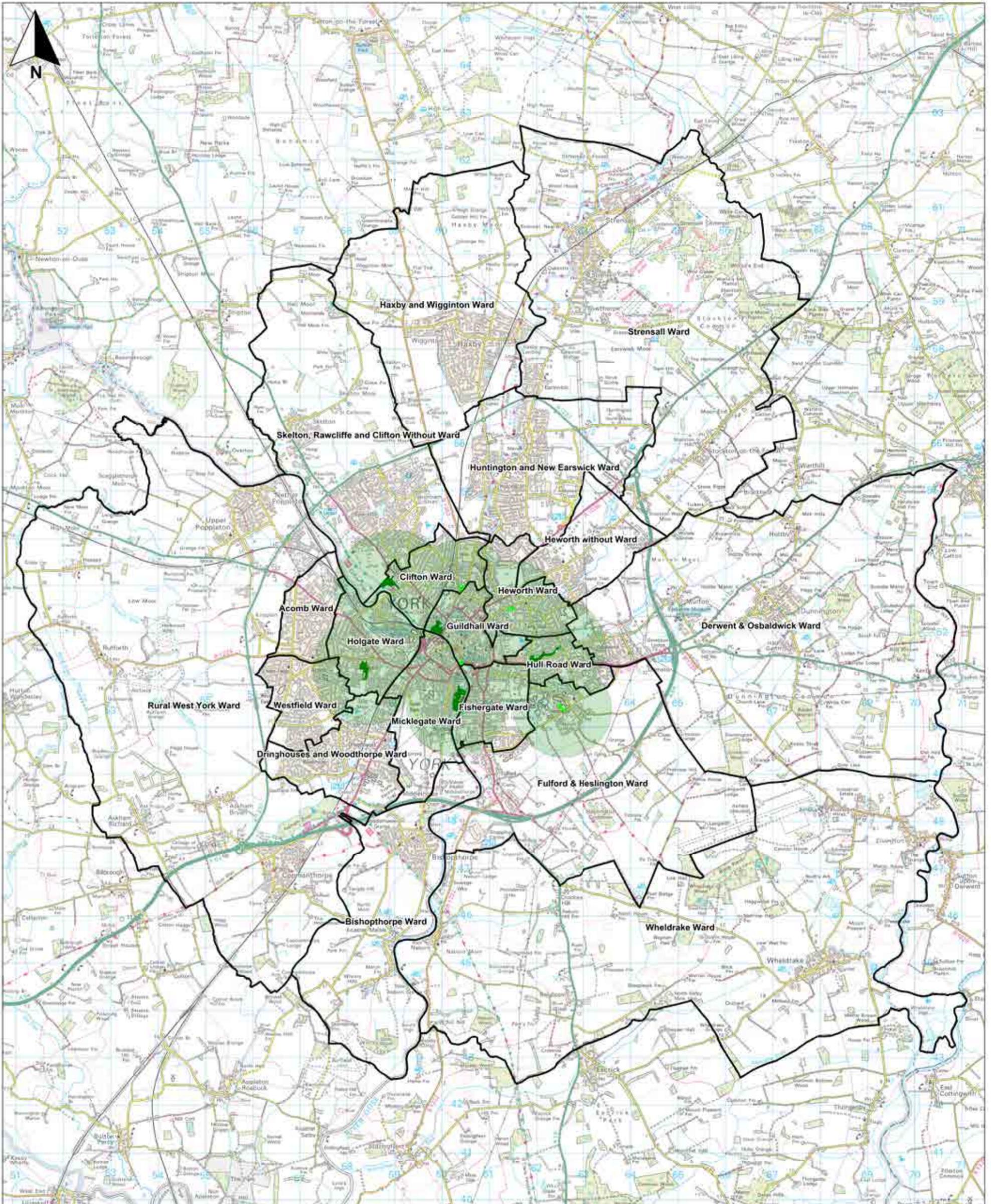
City of York Council  
Green Infrastructure Study

**Figure 2.2**  
Index of Multiple Deprivation by  
Ward Grouping



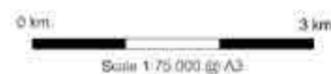
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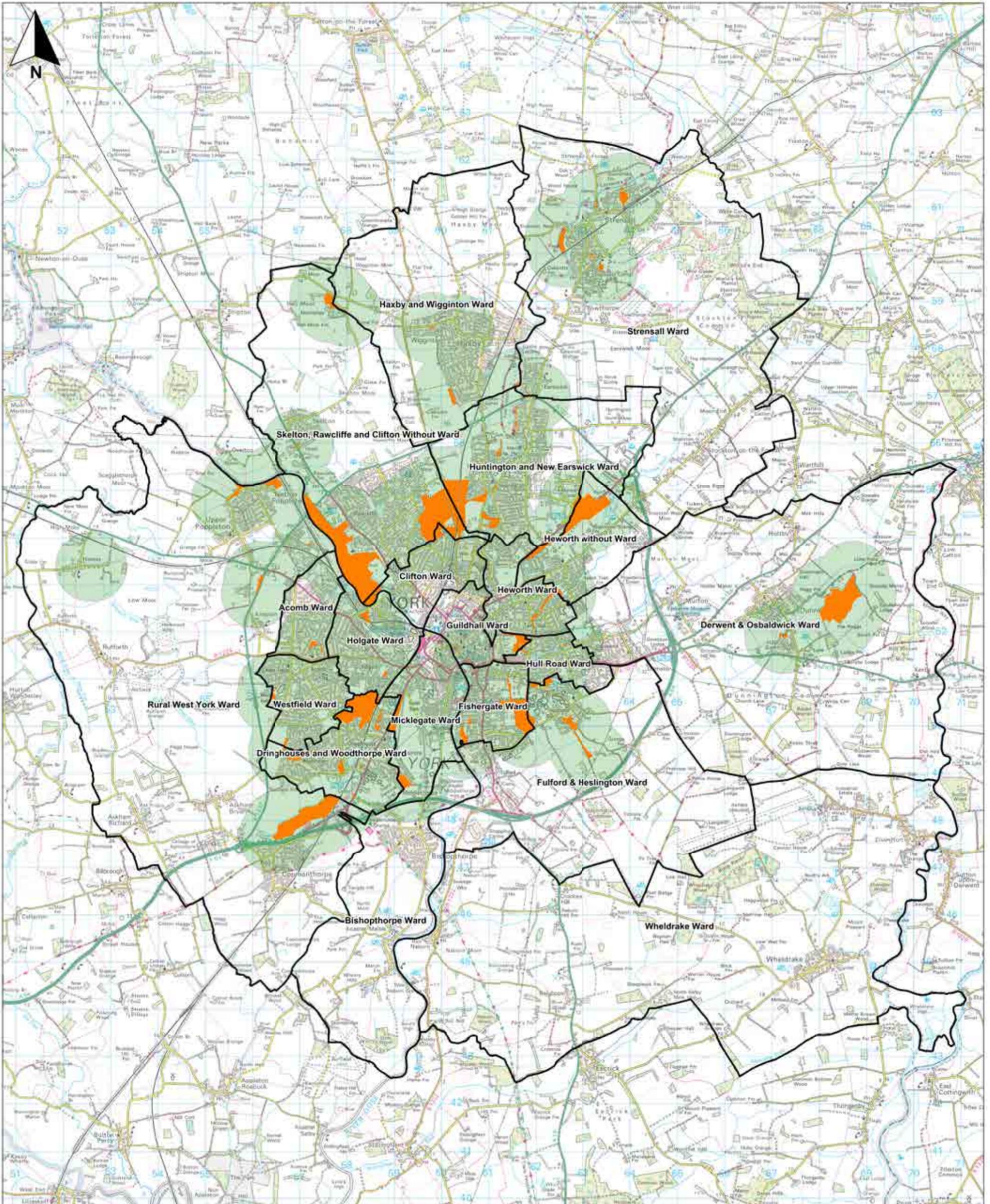
City of York Council  
Green Infrastructure Study

**Figure 2.3**  
Accessibility of Parks & Gardens



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**Key:**

- Natural / semi-natural greenspace
- 720m buffer
- York ward boundary

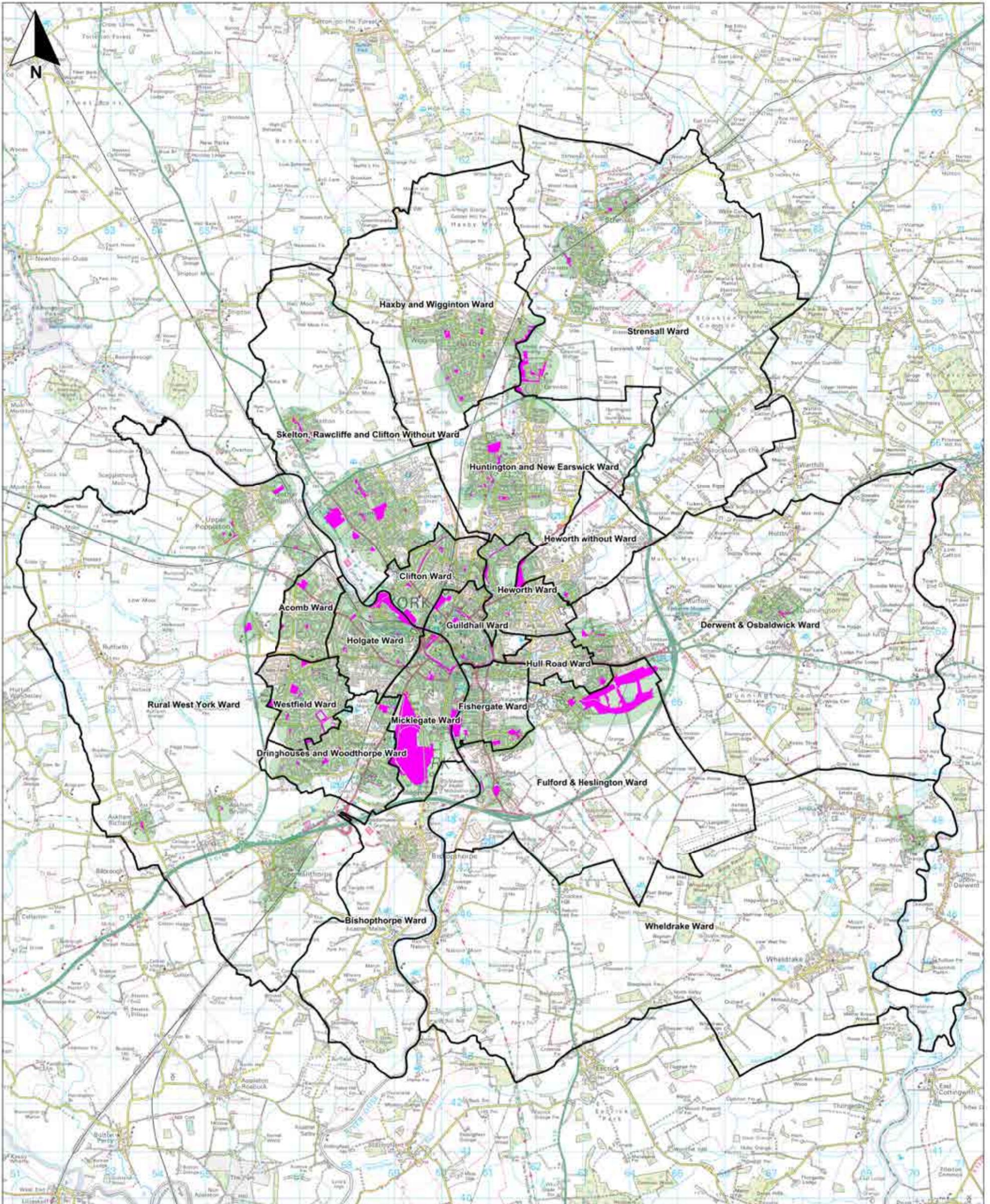
City of York Council  
Green Infrastructure Study

**Figure 2.4**  
Accessibility of Natural /  
Semi-Natural Open Space

0 km 3 km  
Scale 1:75 000 @ A3

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**Key:**

- Amenity greenspace
- 240m buffer
- York ward boundary

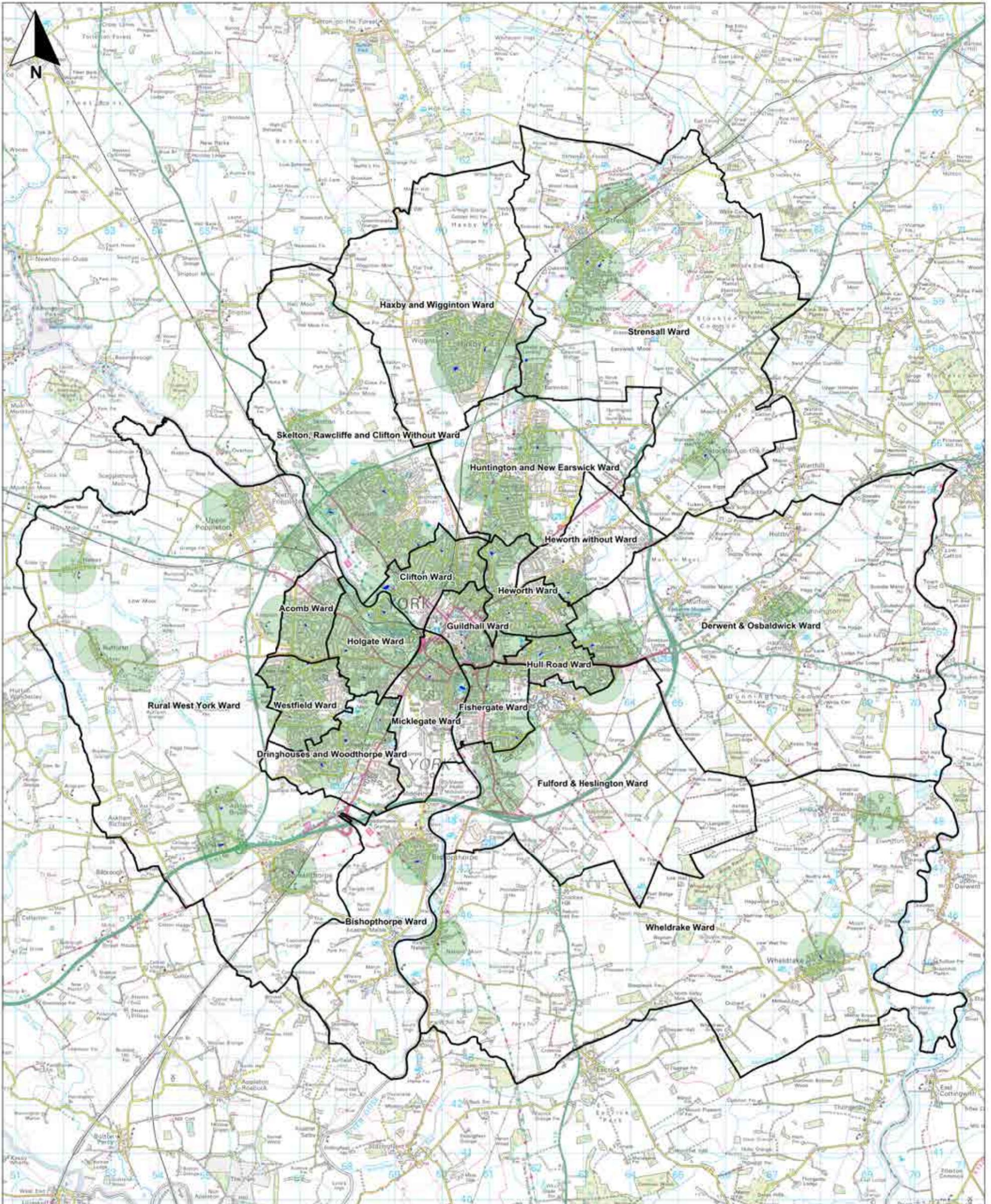
City of York Council  
Green Infrastructure Study

**Figure 2.5**  
Accessibility of Amenity  
Open Space

0 km 3 km  
Scale 1:75 000 @ A3

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**Key:**

- Playspace children
- 480m buffer
- York ward boundary

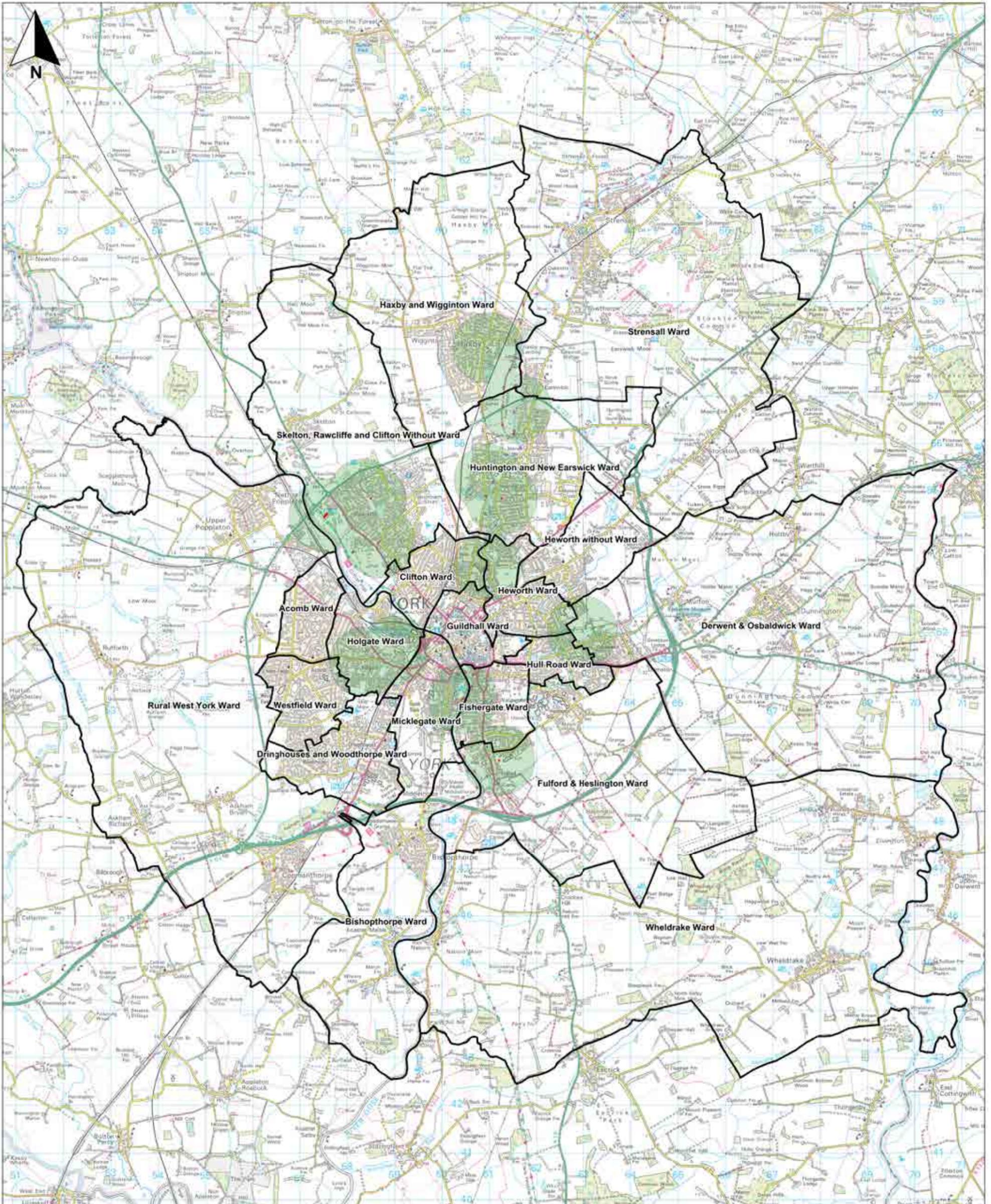
City of York Council  
Green Infrastructure Study

**Figure 2.6**  
Accessibility of Children's  
Playspace, plus in key Children's  
playspace

0 km 3 km  
Scale 1:75 000 @ A3

September 2014  
34938-Lea06b.wor brow

**amec**



- Key:**
- Playspace teenagers
  - 720m buffer
  - York ward boundary

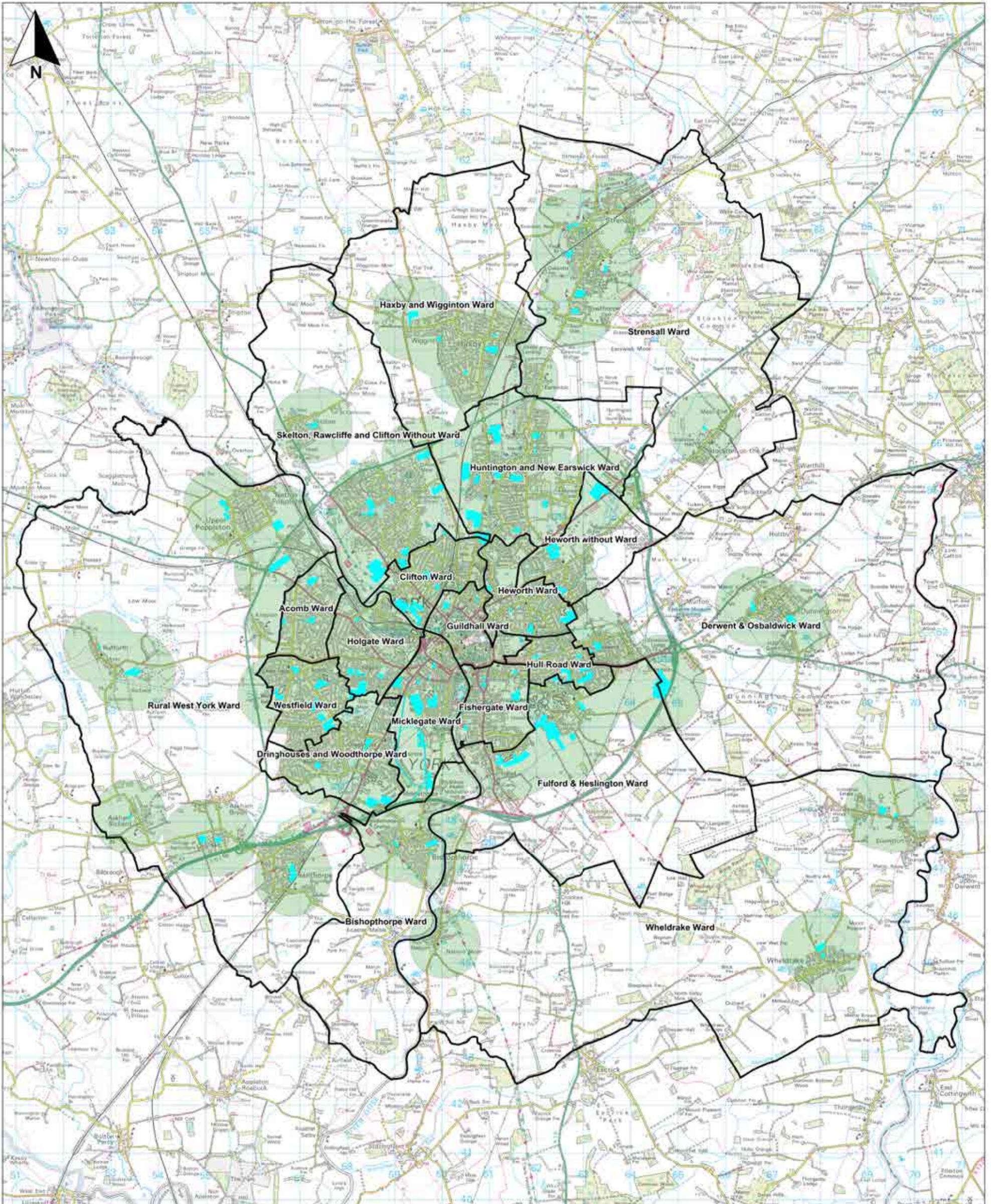
City of York Council  
Green Infrastructure Study

**Figure 2.7**  
Accessibility of Teenagers' Playspace, plus in key Teenagers' playspace

0 km 3 km  
Scale 1:75 000 @ A3

September 2014  
34938-Lea07c.wor.browj





**Key:**

- Outdoor sports facilities
- 720m buffer
- York ward boundary

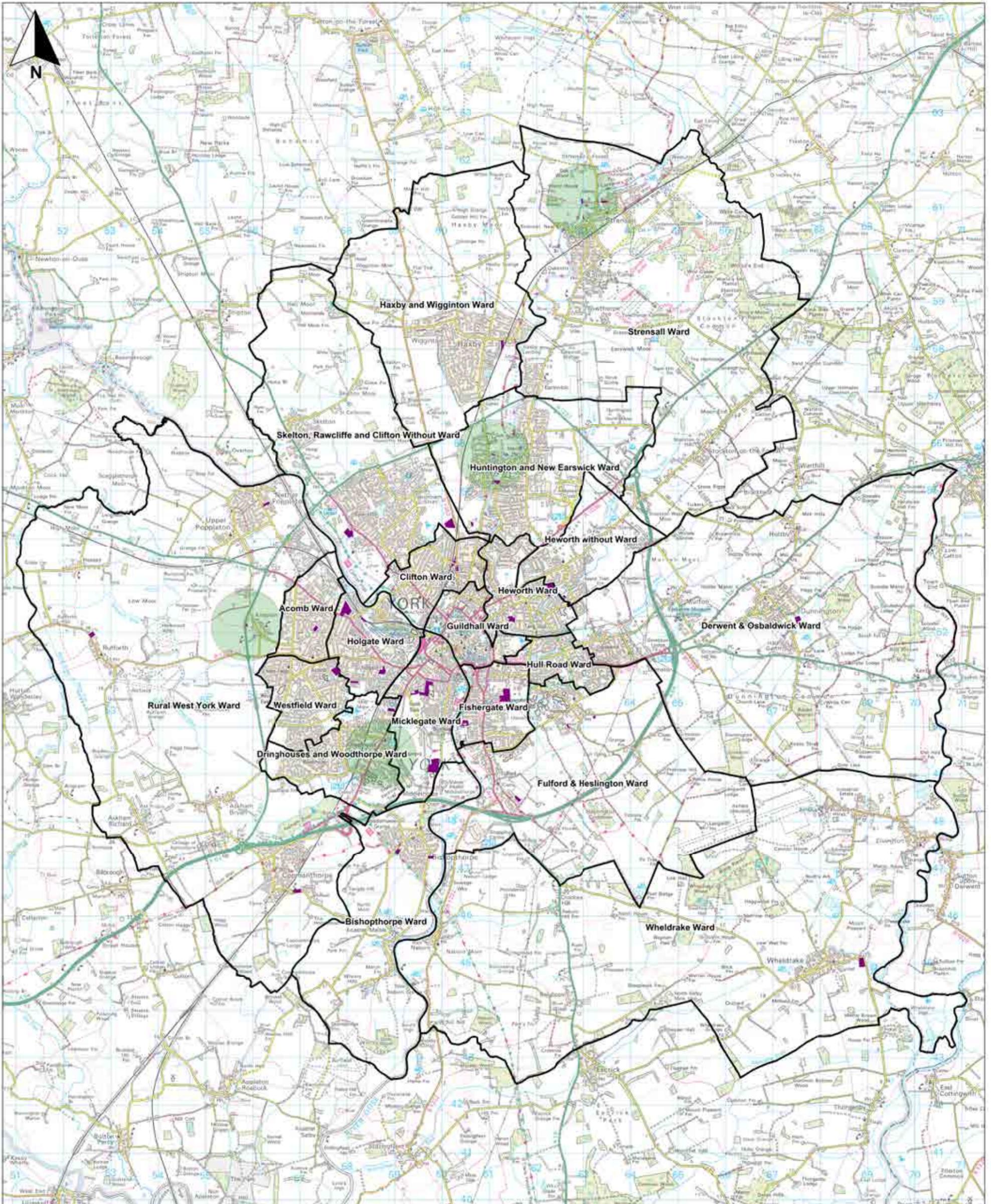
City of York Council  
Green Infrastructure Study

**Figure 2.8**  
Accessibility of Outdoor Sports  
Facilities

0 km 3 km  
Scale 1:75 000 @ A3

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Green Infrastructure Study

**Figure 2.9**  
Accessibility of Allotments



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### 3. Application of Open Space Standards to Strategic and Local Development Sites

The planning of open space in new developments is to some degree a circular process within which there are two reference points - in-principle standards of provision which should inform the preparation of a masterplan, yielding basic provision for new residents focused on play and amenity space. Supplementing and modification of these standards is the size of the new development and existing provision locality in which it is to be placed. Thus there will be very different masterplanning approaches to a free-standing new settlement, an urban extension and an urban redevelopment site.

It is therefore important that there is a secure starting point for specifying basic standards of provision in respect of playspace, amenity space and potentially outdoor sports and allotments. The previous sections have explored the integrity of the standards established through the 2008 survey and concluded that these remain a reasonable basis for benching marking provision, albeit part of a balanced view of quantity, quality and accessibility in particular localities.

Consideration of the impacts of new development is also an important part of the development of a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the City both because of their contribution to the City's open space resource and the opportunity to locate this provision within a wider strategic framework for its protection and enhancement.

The remapping of open space supply across the City and the application of ward clusters assists the identification of likely requirements in localities which are to host new development. By way of background, Figure 3.1 maps the location of proposed strategic development within ward clusters, Table 3.1 lists the approximate dwellings and population associated with each site and Figure 3.2 maps the strategic sites against the IMD scores for the City.

**Table 3.1 Proposed Strategic Developments in York to 2030**

Development Name	Ward	Ward grouping	Dwellings	Likely Population (@2.3persons/dwelling)
ST1: British Sugar	Acomb	Urban west	998	2,295
ST2: Former sports ground Millfield Lane	Acomb	Urban west	308	708
ST3: The Grainstores	Skelton	North	216	497
ST4: Land adjacent to Hull Road/Grimston Bar	Heslington	East-south-east	211	485
ST5: York Central	Holgate	Urban west	483	1,111
ST6: Land east of Grimston Bar	Osbalwick	Urban east	154	354
ST7: Land east of Metcalfe Lane	Osbalwick	Urban east	1,800	4,140
ST8: Land north of Monks Cross	Huntington	North	1,569	3,609
ST9: Land north of Haxby	Haxby	North	747	1,718

Development Name	Ward	Ward grouping	Dwellings	Likely Population (@2.3persons/dwelling)
ST10: Land at Moor Lane, Woodthorpe	Rural West	West-south-west	511	1,175
ST11: Land at New Lane, Huntington	Huntington	North	348	800
ST12: Land at Manor Heath Road, Copmanthorpe	Rural West	West-south-west	354	814
ST13: Land at Moor Lane, Copmanthorpe	Rural West	West-south-west	115	265
ST14: Land to the north of Clifton Moor	Skelton	North	4,020	9,246
ST15: Holme Hill	Heslington	East-south-east	5,580	12,834
ST16: Terrys Factory	Micklegate	Urban West	270	621
ST17: Nestle South	Clifton	Central	130	299
ST22: Germany Beck	Fulford	East-south-east	700	1,610
ST23: Derwenthorpe	Osbalwick	Urban east	540	1,242
ST24: York College	Dringhouses	Urban west	360	828
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>19,432</b>	<b>44,694</b>

Note: population calculated from 2.3 persons per household (the current average household size in York)

Source: York City Council

Using the clusters of wards identified in Figure 3.1, the likely demands associated with the proposed strategic housing developments across the City are set out in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2 In-Principle Additional Open Space Demands Associated with Proposed Strategic Developments by Cluster of Wards**

Area	Dwellings	Population	Parks and Gardens (ha)	Natural/ Semi-Natural (ha)	Amenity (ha)	Children & Teenager Playspace (ha)*	Outdoor Sport (ha)#	Allotments (ha)
Urban west	2,885	6,636	1.19	14.13	9.62	1.66	11.81	1.92
Urban east	2,494	5,736	1.03	12.22	8.32	1.44	10.21	1.66
Central	130	299	0.05	0.64	0.43	0.07	0.53	0.09
East-south-east	6,491	14,929	2.69	31.80	21.65	3.73	26.57	4.33
West-south-west	469	1,079	0.19	2.30	1.56	0.27	1.92	0.31
North	6,963	16,015	2.88	34.11	23.22	4.00	28.51	4.64
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,432</b>	<b>44,694</b>	<b>8.04</b>	<b>95.20</b>	<b>64.81</b>	<b>11.17</b>	<b>79.55</b>	<b>12.96</b>

\*based on FIT benchmark standard for equipped playspaces (LAP, LEAP, NEAP) of 0.25ha/1000

# the typical land requirement for a playing pitch is 0.9ha for the playing area and 0.5ha for ancillary facilities, if required.

It is important to note that these are in-principle requirements and analysis of localities is required to situate specific developments in their context, in this case the extent and location of existing provision and how well it is

used. The nature and extent of demands on current provision and therefore the need for new open space (and, crucially, of what type) will vary with the scale and location of proposed development. Thus in some localities the improvement of types of open space (such as natural/semi-natural) could be a pragmatic approach which helps to realise the potential of wider green infrastructure resources, for example. Equally, provision of a new outdoor sports facility, for example, might markedly improve their accessibility for existing communities. In addition, the allocation of small development sites across City will cumulatively create significant additional demand on existing facilities. Table 3.3 sets out the likely demands for open space resources associated with these developments.

**Table 3.3 In-Principle Additional Open Space Demands Associated with Proposed Local Developments by Cluster of Wards**

Area	Dwellings	Population	Parks and Gardens (ha)	Natural/ Semi-Natural (ha)	Amenity (ha)	Children & Teenager Playspace (ha)*	Outdoor Sport (ha)#	Allotments (ha)
Urban west	426	980	0.18	2.09	1.42	0.25	1.74	0.28
Urban east	662	1,523	0.27	3.24	2.21	0.38	2.71	0.44
Central	211	485	0.09	1.03	0.70	0.12	0.86	0.14
East/South-east	294	676	0.12	1.44	0.98	0.17	1.20	0.20
West/South-west	182	419	0.08	0.89	0.61	0.10	0.75	0.12
North	286	658	0.12	1.40	0.95	0.16	1.17	0.19
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,061</b>	<b>4,740</b>	<b>0.85</b>	<b>10.10</b>	<b>6.87</b>	<b>1.19</b>	<b>8.44</b>	<b>1.37</b>

\*based on FIT benchmark standard for equipped playspaces (LAP, LEAP, NEAP) of 0.25ha/1000

# the typical land requirement for a playing pitch is 0.9ha for the playing area and 0.5ha for ancillary facilities, if required.

The likely total requirement for new park provision associated with strategic developments of 8.89ha suggests that a case for one or two new City parks could be made. Clearly, this would be a significant investment and would ideally serve new and existing residents, although finding a suitable location would be challenging.

Significant efforts are likely to be required to address new demands for outdoor sports provision as well as remedying existing deficiencies. This can be addressed to some extent on larger development sites, but given the capital and revenue expenditure associated with such facilities, provision is likely to have to be considered strategically.

The following sections explore the potential implications for additional provision by the six areas of the City grouped for analysis.

### 3.1.1 Testing Strategic Site Provision

The following protocol for strategic site evaluation in terms of open space provision is suggested:

- What is the in-principle level of provision according to the application of existing open space standards?

- What is the current level of provision in the locality (by number and accessibility buffer)?
- How might current provision be integrated with the proposed development such that existing and new residents benefit from new and enhanced open spaces?
- What should be provided on site on a pro-rata basis, and what should be negotiated (in terms of off-site contributions) according to the nature of provision locally and City-wide?

Use the analysis to test proposed level and types of provision, and/or as a basis for evaluating what might be required in terms of direct provision and/or off-site contributions. In order to assist with understanding the potential interaction between the proposed strategic sites and existing open space provision, three buffers have been applied. These are 240m, 480m and 720m which broadly equate to 5, 10 and 15 minute walk times respectively<sup>7</sup>. These buffers are then combined with each type of open space provision (Figures 3.3 to 3.9) to illustrate the broad spatial relationship between current provision and likely demand. Thus large, stand-alone sites will have a different relationship with existing resources to smaller sites in close proximity to the urban area. Table 3.4 sets out by each proposed strategic site the in-principle requirements of each type of open space as a starting point for the determination of the actual mix and extent of provision which could be included in a masterplanning exercise. The overall open space requirement for types of open space (derived from local standards established in 2008) is 5.83ha/1000. It is important to note that this is a reference point only, and consideration of local circumstances will be critical in terms of the mix of open space which is most appropriate, current provision (quantity, quality and accessibility) and the potential balance between on- and off-site provision (see analysis in section 3.1.2).

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<sup>7</sup> The accessibility standards have been developed by the NPFA to reflect realistic walk times. Thus at an average of 3mph, straight line 400m, 800m and 1,200m can be covered in 5, 10 and 15 minutes respectively, but in reality are 40% less because of the complexities of urban form, yielding buffers to be mapped of 240m, 480m and 720m.

Table 3.4 In-Principle Provision by Strategic Site

Site	Dwellings	Population (@ 2.3 persons/dwelling)	In-principle provision against open space standards						
			Parks & Gardens (ha)	Natural/ Semi-Natural (ha)	Amenity (ha)	Children & Teenager Playspace (ha)*	Outdoor Sport (ha)#	Allotments (ha)	Total open space requirement (ha)
ST1: British Sugar	998	2,295	0.41	4.89	3.33	0.57	4.09	0.67	13.96
ST2: Former sports ground Millfield Lane	308	708	0.13	1.51	1.03	0.18	1.26	0.21	4.32
ST3: The Grainstores	216	497	0.09	1.06	0.72	0.12	0.88	0.14	3.01
ST4: Land adjacent to Hull Road/Grimston Bar	211	485	0.09	1.03	0.70	0.12	0.86	0.14	2.94
ST5: York Central	438	1,007	0.18	2.15	1.46	0.25	1.79	0.29	6.12
ST6: Land east of Grimston Bar	154	354	0.06	0.75	0.51	0.09	0.63	0.10	2.14
ST7: Land east of Metcalfe Lane	1,800	4,140	0.75	8.82	6.00	1.04	7.37	1.20	25.18
ST8: Land north of Monks Cross	1,569	3,609	0.65	7.69	5.23	0.90	6.42	1.05	21.94
ST9: Land north of Haxby	747	1,718	0.31	3.66	2.49	0.43	3.06	0.50	10.45
ST10: Land at Moor Lane, Woodthorpe	511	1,175	0.21	2.50	1.70	0.29	2.09	0.34	7.13
ST11: Land at New Lane, Huntington	411	800	0.14	1.70	1.16	0.20	1.42	0.23	4.85
ST12: Land at Manor Heath Road, Copmanthorpe	354	814	0.15	1.73	1.18	0.20	1.45	0.24	4.95
ST13: Land at Moor Lane, Copmanthorpe	115	265	0.05	0.56	0.38	0.07	0.47	0.08	1.61
ST14: Land to the north of Clifton Moor	4,020	9,246	1.66	19.69	13.41	2.31	16.46	2.68	56.21
ST15: Holme Hill	5,580	12,834	2.31	27.34	18.61	3.21	22.84	3.72	78.03
ST16: Terry's Factory	270	621	0.11	1.32	0.90	0.16	1.11	0.18	3.78
ST17: Nestle South	130	299	0.05	0.64	0.43	0.07	0.53	0.09	1.81
ST22: Germany Beck	700	1,610	0.29	3.43	2.33	0.40	2.87	0.47	9.79
ST23: Derwenthorpe	540	1,242	0.22	2.65	1.80	0.31	2.21	0.36	7.55

Site	Dwellings	Population (@ 2.3 persons/dwelling)	In-principle provision against open space standards						
			Parks & Gardens (ha)	Natural/ Semi-Natural (ha)	Amenity (ha)	Children & Teenager Playspace (ha)*	Outdoor Sport (ha)#	Allotments (ha)	Total open space requirement (ha)
ST24: York College	360	828	0.15	1.76	1.20	0.21	1.47	0.24	5.03
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19,432</b>	<b>44,694</b>	<b>8.04</b>	<b>95.20</b>	<b>64.81</b>	<b>11.14</b>	<b>79.55</b>	<b>12.96</b>	<b>271.7</b>

#### Facility type/size guidelines for children's/teenagers' provision (FIT 6-acre standard<sup>8</sup>)

- NEAP = neighbourhood equipped area for play. A minimum area of 1,000m<sup>2</sup> with at least eight activities and should be located 1,000 metres or 15 minutes walking time along pedestrian routes (600 metres in a straight line)
- LEAP = local equipped area for play. A minimum area of 400m<sup>2</sup> with at least five activities and should be located 400 metres or 5 minutes walking time along pedestrian routes (240 metres in a straight line)
- LAP = local area for play. Formally designated area for play to be at least 100m<sup>2</sup> in size with up to three activities and should be located 100m or 1 min walk along pedestrian routes (60m in a straight line)

\*The FIT benchmark standard for formal play areas is 0.25ha/1000 population.

# the typical land requirement for a playing pitch is 0.9ha for the playing area and 0.5ha for ancillary facilities, if required.

<sup>8</sup> Fields in Trust (2008) Planning and Design for Open Space and Play

### 3.1.2 Strategic Sites and their Relationship with Existing Provision

Table 3.4 suggests that the strategic sites will need to provide for open space to varying degrees, determined by development size, geography and existing provision. Drawing on Figures 3.4-3.9, Table 3.5 sets out observations on the nature of current provision in the vicinity of strategic sites in terms of quantity, accessibility and quality as an input into the masterplanning exercises and potential negotiations around off-site contributions. Using the overall open space provision standard of 5.83ha/1000, new developments should provide for the immediate needs of new residents, notably in respect of amenity space, children's/teenager's playspace and possibly sports and allotments, depending on size, with parks and natural/semi-natural open space being more dependent upon size and local context. However, site size and local context will have a significant bearing the most effective masterplanning solution for all types of open space provision for all the strategic sites.

Appendix E maps the current provision within the locality of the strategic sites, helping to identify where there could be opportunities for off-site provision/enhancement for example, where on-site provision is not feasible or a better strategic solution can be provided. The capacity and quality of individual sites which could be part of off-site provision would need to be considered in detail. Table 3.5 sets out opportunities for contributions to off-site open space provision in the vicinity of the strategic sites, either through funding of site enhancement or new provision on suitable land.

**Table 3.5 Open Space Quantity and Accessibility in the Vicinity of Strategic Sites and Opportunities for Off-Site Enhancement/Provision (for use in Conjunction with Figures 3.4-3.9 and Appendix E)**

Site	Open Space Type	Quantity and Accessibility	Opportunities for off-site enhancement/new provision
ST1: British Sugar	Parks	West Bank Park is approximately 1km to the south-west, with alternative provision to the west in Clifton and the centre of York.	West Bank Park, City Centre parks
	Natural/Semi-Natural	There is limited natural/semi-natural open space in the vicinity apart from Clifton Backies, immediate access to which is severed by the railway line and the Ouse.	Clifton Ings/Acomb Ings/Poppleton Ings
	Amenity	Local provision within Acomb only.	
	Children's	Two sites within 250m.	
	Teenager	No provision in the vicinity.	
	Sport	Various sites within 800m at Acomb.	Various sites within 800m at Acomb.
	Allotments	Allotments at Ouse Acres 100m to the south-east, and the urban west area is generally well provided for. The quality of current provision is assessed as good.	Ouse Acres
ST2: Former sports ground Millfield Lane	Parks	West Bank Park is approximately 1km to the south-west, with alternative provision to the west in Clifton and the centre of York.	West Bank Park, City Centre parks
	Natural/Semi-Natural	There is limited natural/semi-natural open space in the vicinity apart from that to the north of Clifton Park, immediate	Clifton Ings/Acomb Ings/Poppleton Ings

Site	Open Space Type	Quantity and Accessibility	Opportunities for off-site enhancement/new provision
		access to which is severed by the railway line and the Ouse.	
	Amenity	Local provision within Acomb only.	
	Children's	One site within 250m.	
	Teenager	No provision in the vicinity.	
	Sport	Various sites within 800m at Acomb.	Various sites within 800m at Acomb
	Allotments	Ouse Acres 100m to the south-east.	Ouse Acres
ST3: The Grainstores	Parks	Clifton Park is approximately 1km to the south, with alternative provision in the centre of York.	Clifton Park, City Centre parks
	Natural/Semi-Natural	Bootham Stray lies immediately to the east.	Bootham Stray
	Amenity	Local provision in Rawcliffe including Rawcliffe Lake 250m to the west.	
	Children's	One site within 250m.	
	Teenager	No provision in the vicinity.	
	Sport	Various sites within 800m	Various sites within 800m
	Allotments	Provision at Wigginton Road 500m to the north-east.	Wigginton Road
ST4: Land adjacent to Hull Road/Grimston Bar	Parks	Hull Road Park is approximately 1km to the west and more local provision around the University approximately 1km to the south-west.	Hull Road Park
	Natural/Semi-Natural	There are no substantive areas in the immediate vicinity.	
	Amenity	Local provision within Osbaldwick only.	
	Children's	One site within 250m.	
	Teenager	No provision in the vicinity.	
	Sport	Various sites within 800m at Osbaldwick.	Sites at Osbaldwick and Hull Road
	Allotments	No provision in the vicinity.	New provision
ST5: York Central	Parks	There is good access to a number of City Parks including Museum Gardens to the north-east, West Bank Park to the south-west and Clifton Park to the north, all within a 10 minute walk.	City Centre parks
	Natural/Semi-Natural	Hob Moor and Knavesmire are approximately 1km to the south and Clifton Backies 1km to the north-west.	Hob Moor/Knavesmire; Clifton Ings
	Amenity	Areas of varying size surrounding the site, including Water End immediately to the north.	
	Children's	Five sites within 250m.	
	Teenager	One facility 250m to south-west.	
	Sport	Various sites within 800m.	Sites in Micklegate and Holgate Wards
	Allotments	Ouse Acres 100m to the west and in Holgate 50m to the	

Site	Open Space Type	Quantity and Accessibility	Opportunities for off-site enhancement/new provision
		south-west.	
ST6: Land east of Grimston Bar	Parks	Hull Road Park is approximately 1km to the west and more local provision around the University approximately 1km to the south-west.	Hull Road Park
	Natural/Semi-Natural	There are no substantive areas in the immediate vicinity.	
	Amenity	Local provision within Osbaldwick only.	
	Children's	No provision in the vicinity.	
	Teenager	No provision in the vicinity.	
	Sport	Various sites within 800m at Osbaldwick.	Sites at Osbaldwick and Hull Road
	Allotments	No provision in the vicinity.	New provision
ST7: Land east of Metcalfe Lane	Parks	Hull Road Park is approximately 1km to the south-west.	Hull Road Park/new provision
	Natural/Semi-Natural	St Nicholas Fields and Tang Hall beck lie approximately 500m to the west.	Monk Stray
	Amenity	Local provision within Osbaldwick only.	
	Children's	One site within 250m.	
	Teenager	No provision in the vicinity.	
	Sport	Sites 400m to west in Heworth.	Sites 400m to west in Heworth.
	Allotments	Provision at Hempland Lane 500m to the west.	Hempland Lane
ST8: Land north of Monks Cross	Parks	There are no parks in the vicinity.	City Centre parks/new provision
	Natural/Semi-Natural	Bootham Stray is approximately 1.5km to the south-west	Bootham Stray
	Amenity	No provision in the vicinity.	
	Children's	One site within 250m.	
	Teenager	One site at Huntington 500m to the north-west.	
	Sport	Two sites within 800m at Huntington.	Sites at Huntington
	Allotments	No provision in the vicinity.	New provision
ST9: Land north of Haxby	Parks	There are no parks in the vicinity.	
	Natural/Semi-Natural	There are no substantive areas in the immediate vicinity.	New provision
	Amenity	Local provision within Haxby only.	
	Children's	One site within 250m.	
	Teenager	No provision in the vicinity.	
	Sport	Four sites within 800m at Haxby.	Four sites within 800m at Haxby.
	Allotments	Some provision in Haxby 400m to the south-east.	New provision
ST10: Land at Moor Lane,	Parks	There are no parks in the vicinity.	City Centre parks
	Natural/Semi-Natural	Askham Bogs lies around 250m to the south-east.	Askham Bogs

Site	Open Space Type	Quantity and Accessibility	Opportunities for off-site enhancement/new provision
Woodthorpe	Amenity	Local provision within Woodthorpe only.	
	Children's	One site within 250m.	
	Teenager	No provision in the vicinity.	
	Sport	Four sites within 800m at Woodthorpe and Dringhouses.	Four sites within 800m at Woodthorpe and Dringhouses.
	Allotments	No provision in the vicinity.	New provision
ST11: Land at New Lane, Huntington	Parks	There are no parks in the vicinity.	City Centre parks
	Natural/Semi-Natural	Bootham Stray is approximately 1km to the west.	Monk Stray
	Amenity	Local provision within Huntington only.	
	Children's	One site within 250m.	
	Teenager	No provision in the vicinity.	
	Sport	Four sites within 800m.	New provision?
	Allotments	Provision in Huntington 400m to the west.	New provision
ST12: Land at Manor Heath Road, Copmanthorpe	Parks	There are no parks in the vicinity.	City Centre parks
	Natural/Semi-Natural	Askham Bogs lies around 500m to the north-east.	Askham Bogs
	Amenity	Local provision within Copmanthorpe only.	
	Children's	One site within 250m.	
	Teenager	No provision in the vicinity.	
	Sport	Copmanthorpe Sports and Community Centre 750m to north-east.	Copmanthorpe Sports and Community Centre 750m to north-east.
	Allotments	Copmanthorpe 500m to the south-east.	Copmanthorpe 500m to the south-east.
ST13: Land at Moor Lane, Copmanthorpe	Parks	There are no parks in the vicinity.	City Centre parks
	Natural/Semi-Natural	Askham Bogs lies around 500m to the north-east.	Askham Bogs
	Amenity	Local provision within Copmanthorpe only.	
	Children's	One site within 250m.	
	Teenager	No provision in the vicinity.	
	Sport	Copmanthorpe Sports and Community Centre 750m to north-east.	Copmanthorpe Sports and Community Centre 750m to north-east.
	Allotments	Copmanthorpe 500m to the east.	Copmanthorpe 500m to the east.
ST14: Land to the north of Clifton Moor	Parks	There are no parks in the vicinity.	City Centre parks/new provision
	Natural/Semi-Natural	Bootham Stray is approximately 1km to the south-east across the ring road.	Bootham Stray
	Amenity	No provision in the vicinity.	

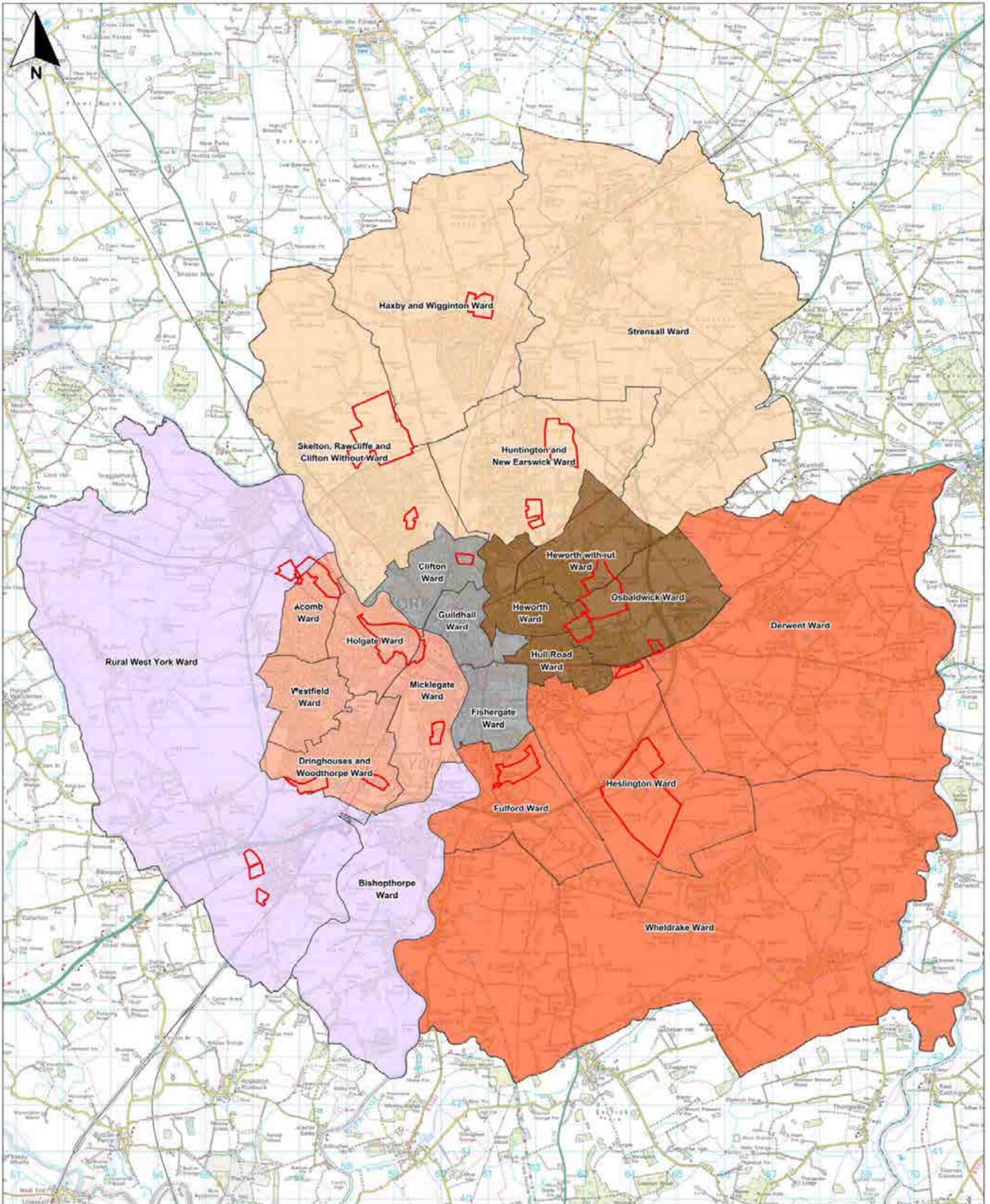
Site	Open Space Type	Quantity and Accessibility	Opportunities for off-site enhancement/new provision
	Children's	No provision in the vicinity.	
	Teenager	One site at Rawcliffe 500m to south-west across ring road.	
	Sport	Various sites 800m to the west.	Various sites 800m to the west.
	Allotments	No provision in the vicinity.	New provision
ST15: Holme Hill	Parks	There are no parks in the vicinity.	City Centre parks/new provision
	Natural/Semi-Natural	Heslington Lane lies around 500m to the north-west across the ring road.	Heslington Common
	Amenity	No provision in the vicinity.	
	Children's	No provision in the vicinity.	
	Teenager	No provision in the vicinity.	
	Sport	No provision in the vicinity.	New provision
	Allotments	No provision in the vicinity.	New provision
ST16: Terry's Factory	Parks	Rowntree Park is immediately to the north-east.	City Centre parks
	Natural/Semi-Natural	Knavesmire lies approximately 500m to the west.	Knavesmire
	Amenity	Micklegate Stray lies adjacent to the south.	Micklegate Stray
	Children's	No provision in the vicinity.	
	Teenager	One site 500m to north-east.	
	Sport	Provision to the north.	Provision to the north.
	Allotments	Knavesmire 100m to the south.	Knavesmire 100m to the south.
ST17: Nestle South	Parks	Bowls Park immediately to the south.	City Centre parks
	Natural/Semi-Natural	Bootham Stray is located approximately 300m to the north-west.	Bootham Stray
	Amenity	Local provision in Clifton and Heworth only, approximately 250m to north-west and south-east.	
	Children's	4 sites within 250m.	
	Teenager	No provision in the vicinity.	
	Sport	Provision immediately adjacent to the south-west and Wigginton Road 250m to the north.	Provision immediately adjacent to the south-west and Wigginton Road 250m to the north.
	Allotments	Sites immediately adjacent.	Sites immediately adjacent.
ST22: Germany Beck	Parks	Rowntree Park is around 1km to the north-west.	Rowntree Park
	Natural/Semi-Natural	Walmgate Stray lies approximately 250m to the north.	Walmgate Stray
	Amenity	Local provision in Fuford only.	
	Children's	Three sites within 250m.	
	Teenager	No provision in the vicinity.	

Site	Open Space Type	Quantity and Accessibility	Opportunities for off-site enhancement/new provision
	Sport	Facilities adjacent at Fulford School and 500m to north-east at the University.	Facilities adjacent at Fulford School and 500m to north-east at the University.
	Allotments	Provision at Knavesmire 500m to the west.	Knavesmire 500m to the west.
ST23: Derwenthorpe	Parks	Hull Road Park is approximately 500m to the south-west.	Hull Road Park
	Natural/Semi-Natural	St Nicholas Fields and Tang Hall beck lie approximately 500m to the west.	St Nicholas Fields and Tang Hall Beck.
	Amenity	Local provision within Osbaldwick only.	
	Children's	One site within 250m.	
	Teenager	No provision in the vicinity.	
	Sport	Site adjacent and several within 400m.	Site adjacent and several within 400m.
	Allotments	Provision at Hempland Lane 500m to the north-west.	Provision at Hempland Lane 500m to the north-west.
ST24: York College	Parks	There are no parks in the vicinity.	City Centre Parks
	Natural/Semi-Natural	Askham Bogs lies around 250m to the south-west.	Askham Bogs
	Amenity	Micklegate Stray lies 200m to the north-east.	Micklegate Stray
	Children's	No provision in the vicinity.	
	Teenager	No provision in the vicinity.	
	Sport	Provision immediately to the south.	Provision immediately to the south.
	Allotments	Provision at Knavesmire 500m to the north-east.	Provision at Knavesmire

## 3.2 Conclusions

The exploration of the anticipated open space requirements associated with development across the City over the next twenty year, through both local and strategic sites, has identified in-principle areas by type of open of open space. These represent a starting point for detailed exploration of the masterplan proposals for individual sites within the context of existing provision and the overall open space requirement (5.83ha/1,000 population). For smaller, local sites, the type of provision will be less diverse than large scale strategic sites, although in both cases, off-site opportunities for provision could be explored in lieu of on-site provision which may inappropriate for certain types of open space.

Given the scale of the proposed developments and their peripheral location, it is important that the interaction between them is properly planned for, maximising opportunities for the creation and enhancement of strategic biodiversity and recreation resources which will meet existing and new demands. Figure 3.10 illustrates the relationship between the strategic sites and strategic green infrastructure across the City and Section 5 explores the potential for realising a Green Infrastructure Strategy for York which responds to these opportunities.



**Key:**

- North
- East / South East
- Central
- Urban East
- Urban West
- West / South West
- Strategic development sites

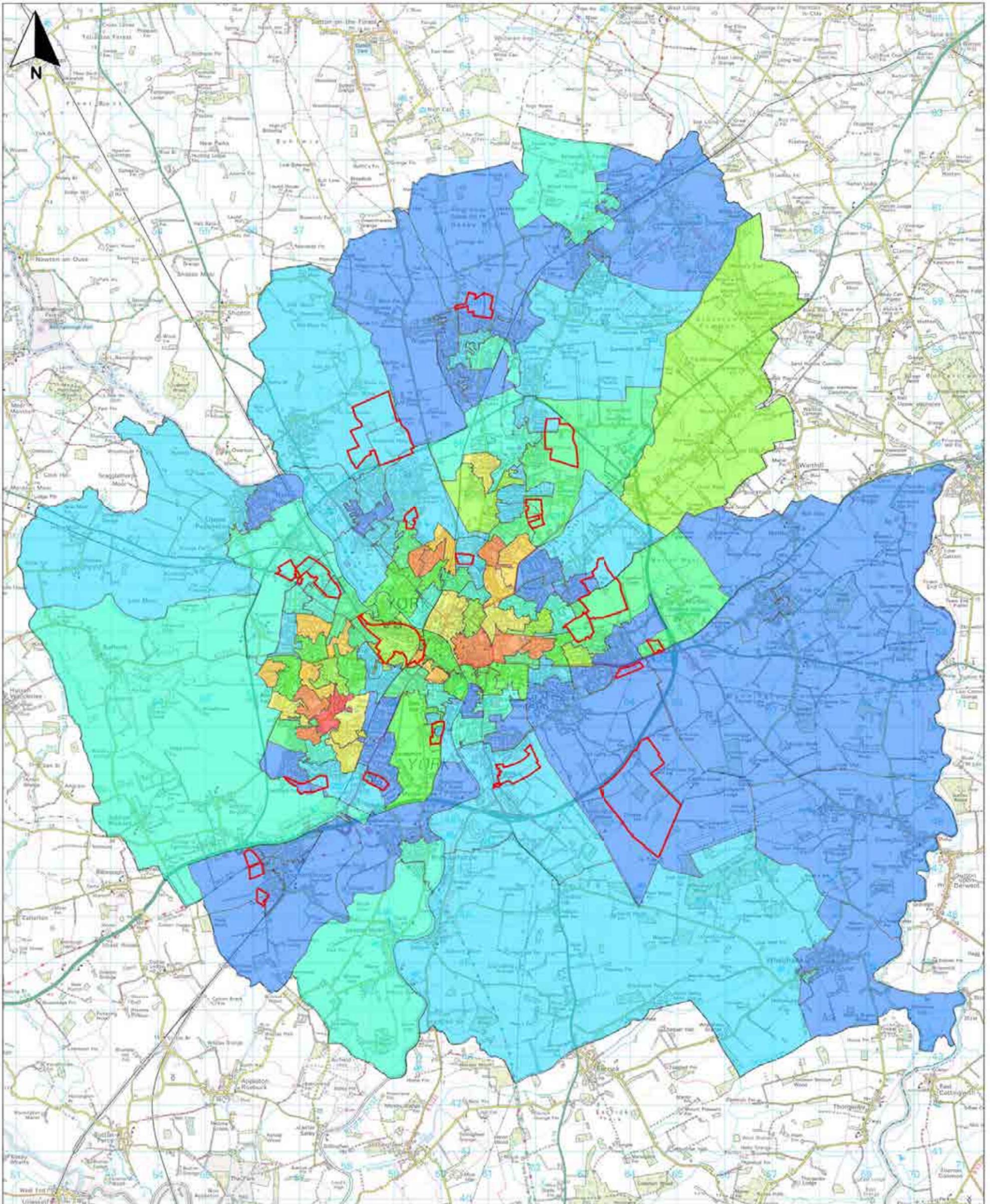
City of York Council  
Green Infrastructure Study

**Figure 3.1**  
Strategic Development Sites by  
Ward Grouping

0 km 3 km  
Scale 1:75,000 @ A3

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**Key:** Deciles of IMD 2010

- Most deprived
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- Least deprived

Strategic development sites

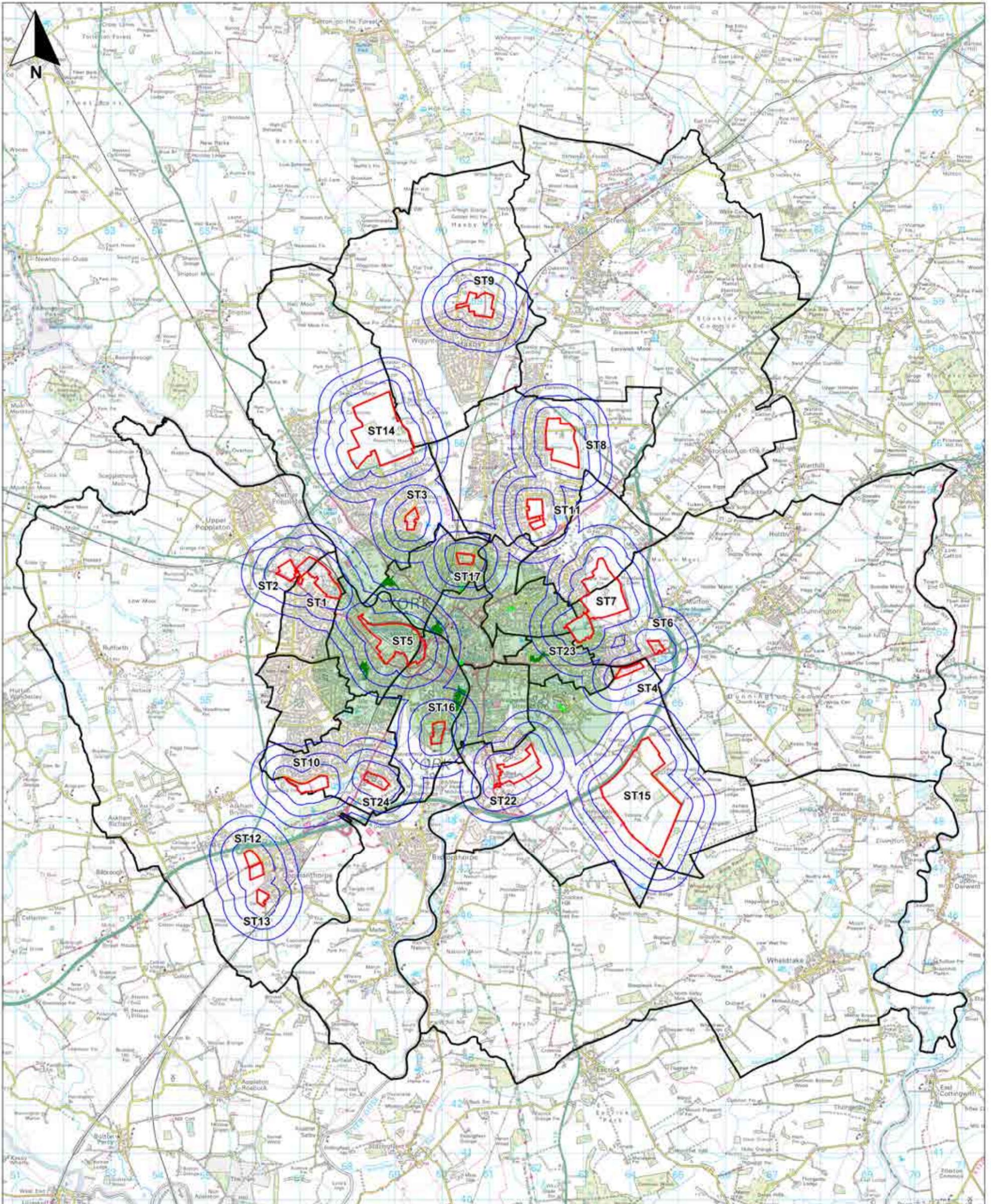
City of York Council  
Green Infrastructure Study

**Figure 3.2**  
IMD distribution and strategic  
development sites

0 km 3 km  
Scale 1:75,000 @ A3

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**Key:**

- Strategic development sites
- Concentric buffers (240m - 480m - 720m )
- City parks
- Local park
- Civic space
- 960m buffer

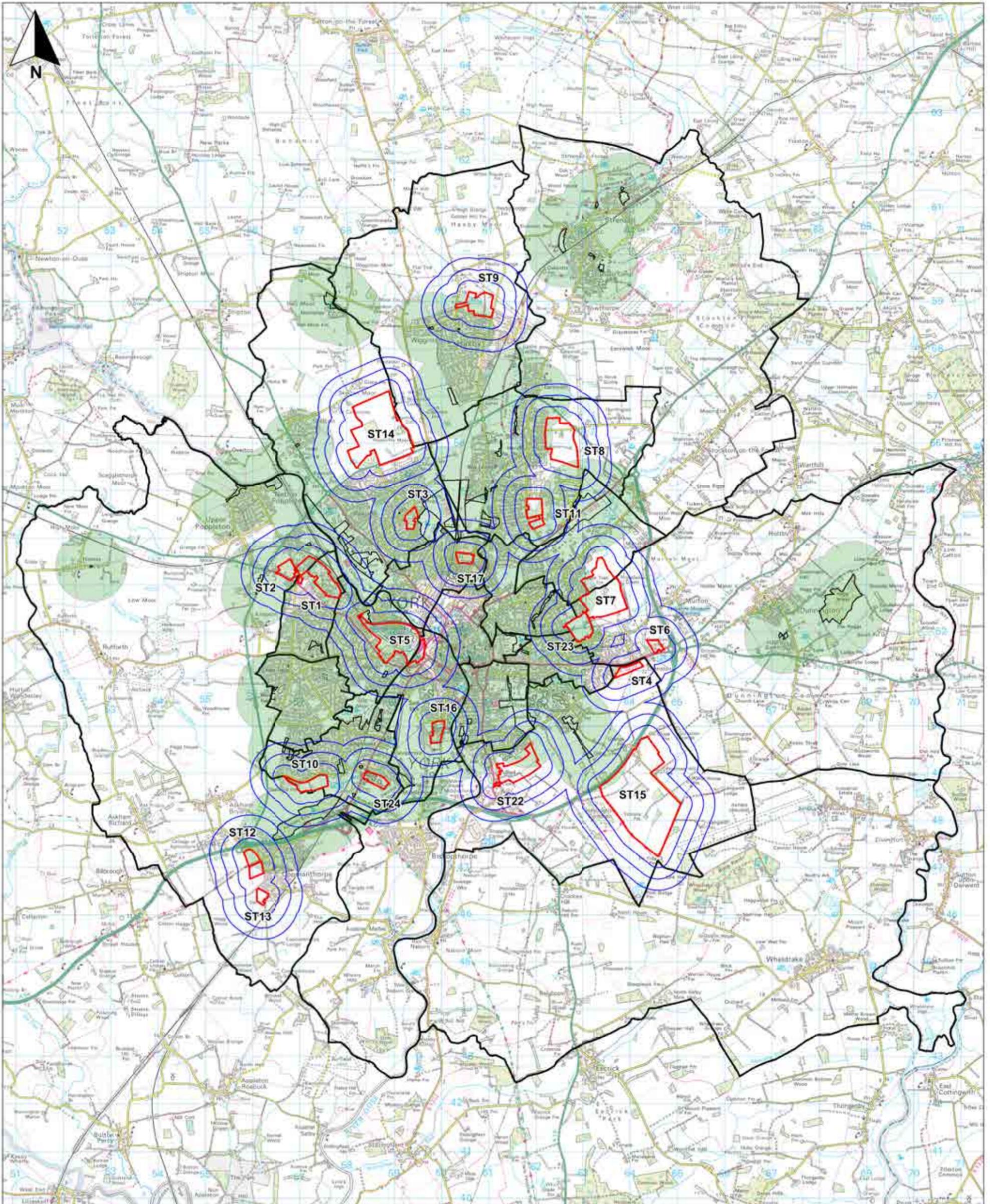
City of York Council  
Green Infrastructure Study

**Figure 3.3**  
Parks 960m buffers 20min walk

0 km 3 km  
Scale 1:75 000 @ A3

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**Key:**

- Strategic development sites
- Concentric buffers (240m - 480m - 720m)
- Natural / semi natural greenspace
- 720m buffer

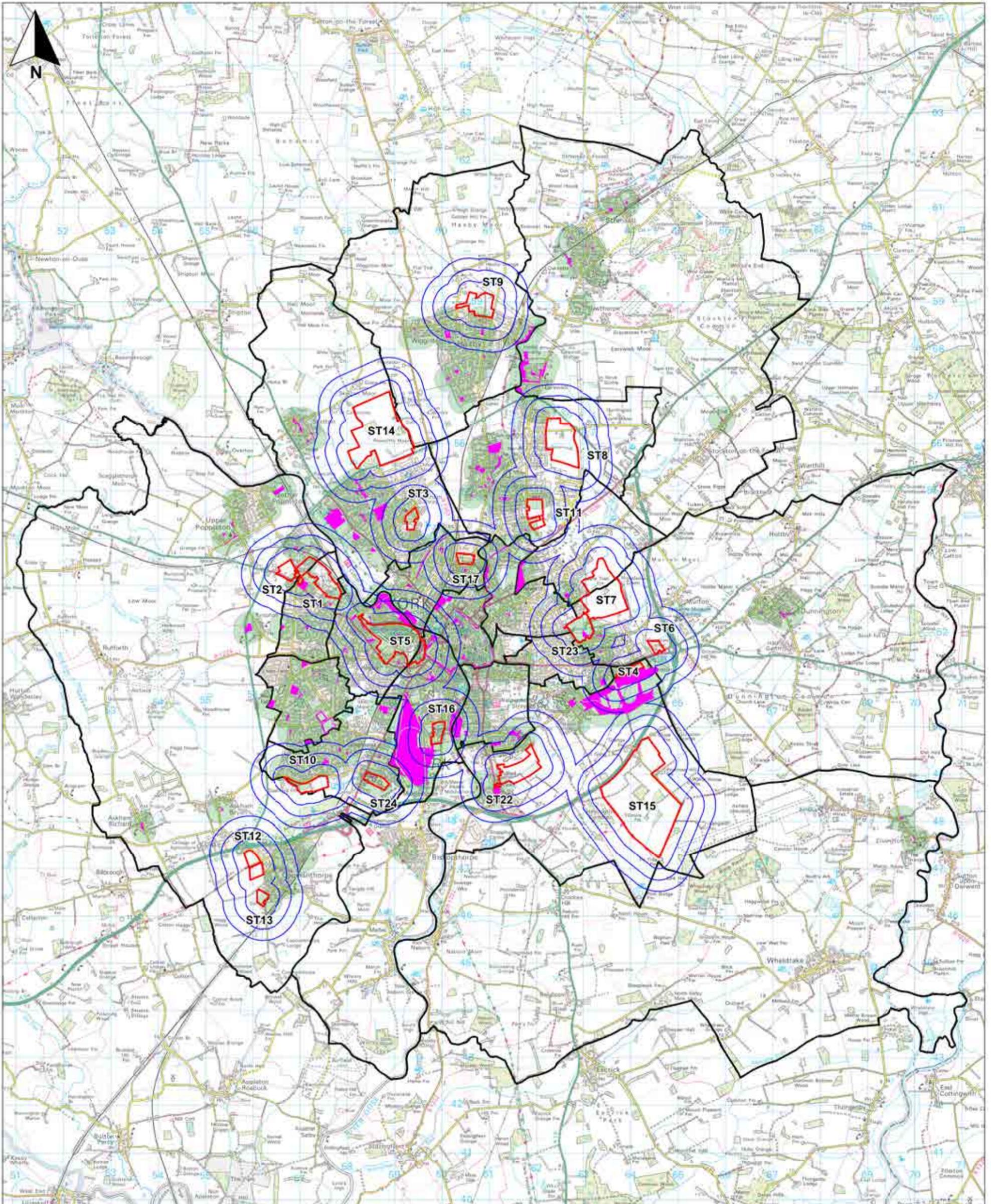
City of York Council  
Green Infrastructure Study

**Figure 3.4**  
Natural/Semi-Natural space 720m  
buffers 15min walk

0 km 3 km  
Scale 1:75 000 @ A3

September 2014  
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**Key:**

- Strategic development sites
- Concentric buffers (240m - 480m - 720m )
- Amenity greenspace.

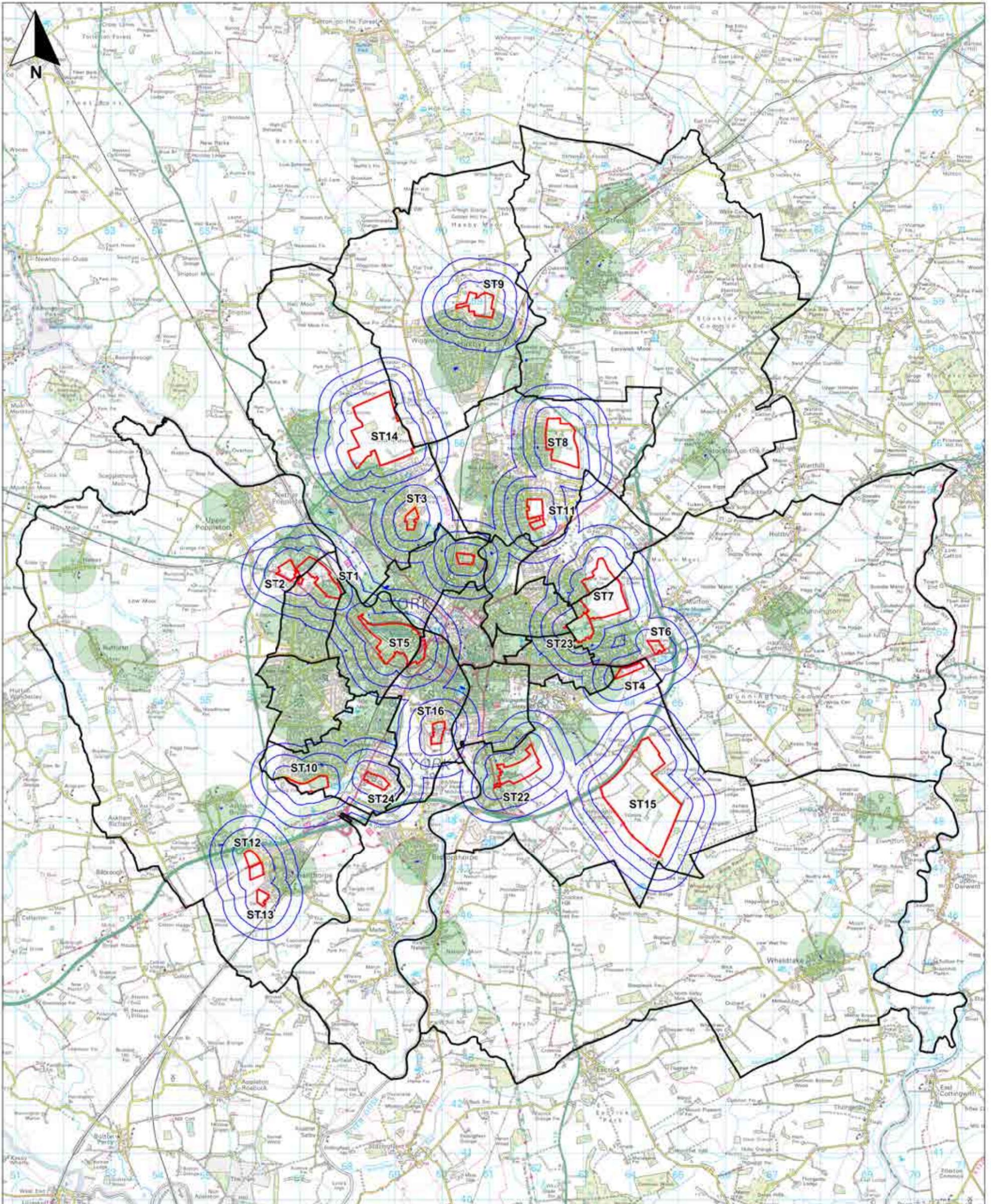
City of York Council  
Green Infrastructure Study

**Figure 3.5**  
Amenity space 240 buffers 5min walk

0 km 3 km  
Scale 1:75 000 @ A3

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**Key:**

- Strategic development sites
- Concentric buffers (240m - 480m - 720m)
- Playspace children
- 480m buffer

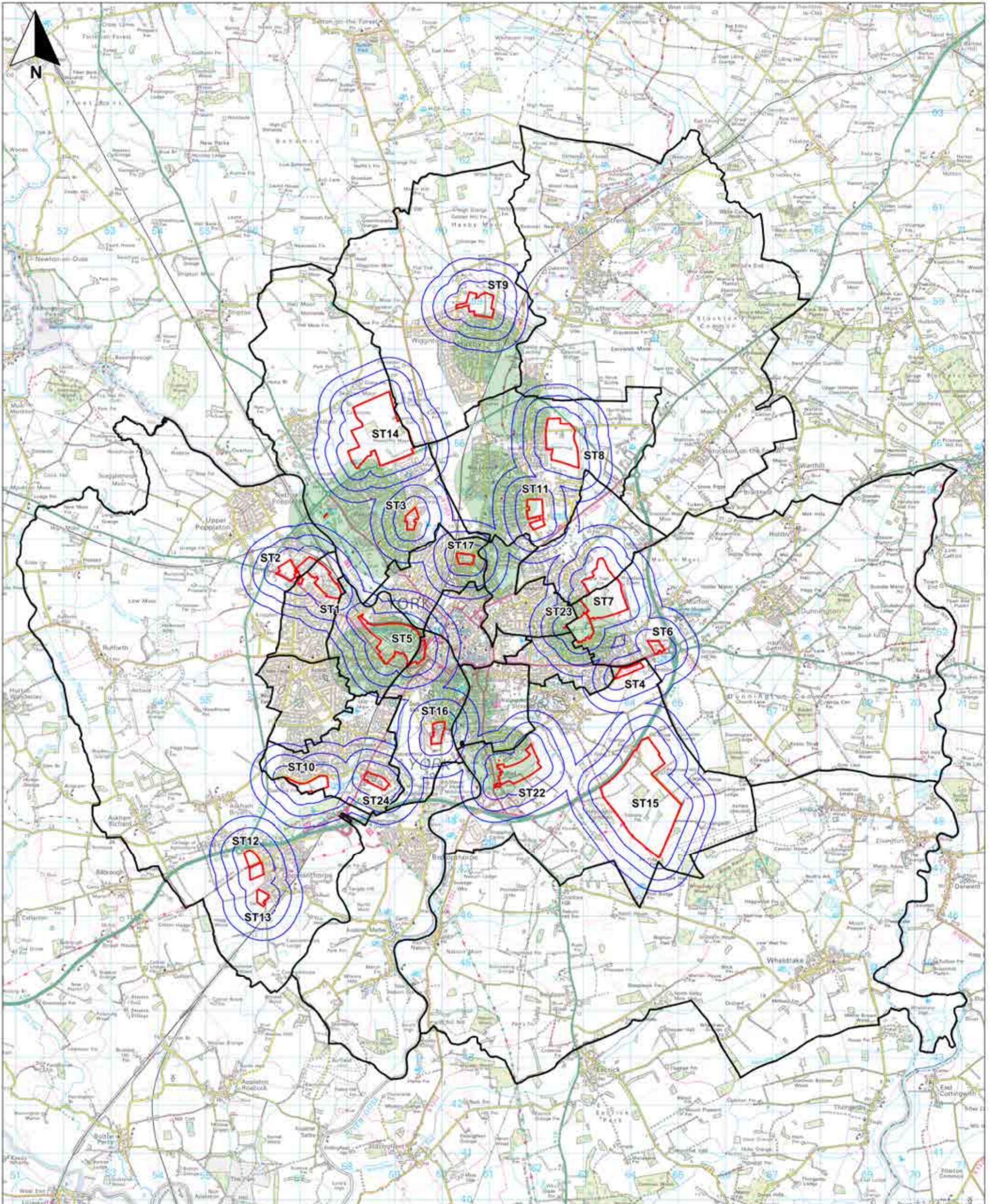
City of York Council  
Green Infrastructure Study

**Figure 3.6**  
Children's Playspace 480m buffers  
10min walk

0 km 3 km  
Scale 1:75 000 @ A3

September 2014  
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**Key:**

- Strategic development sites
- Concentric buffers (240m - 480m - 720m)
- Playspace teenagers
- 720m buffer

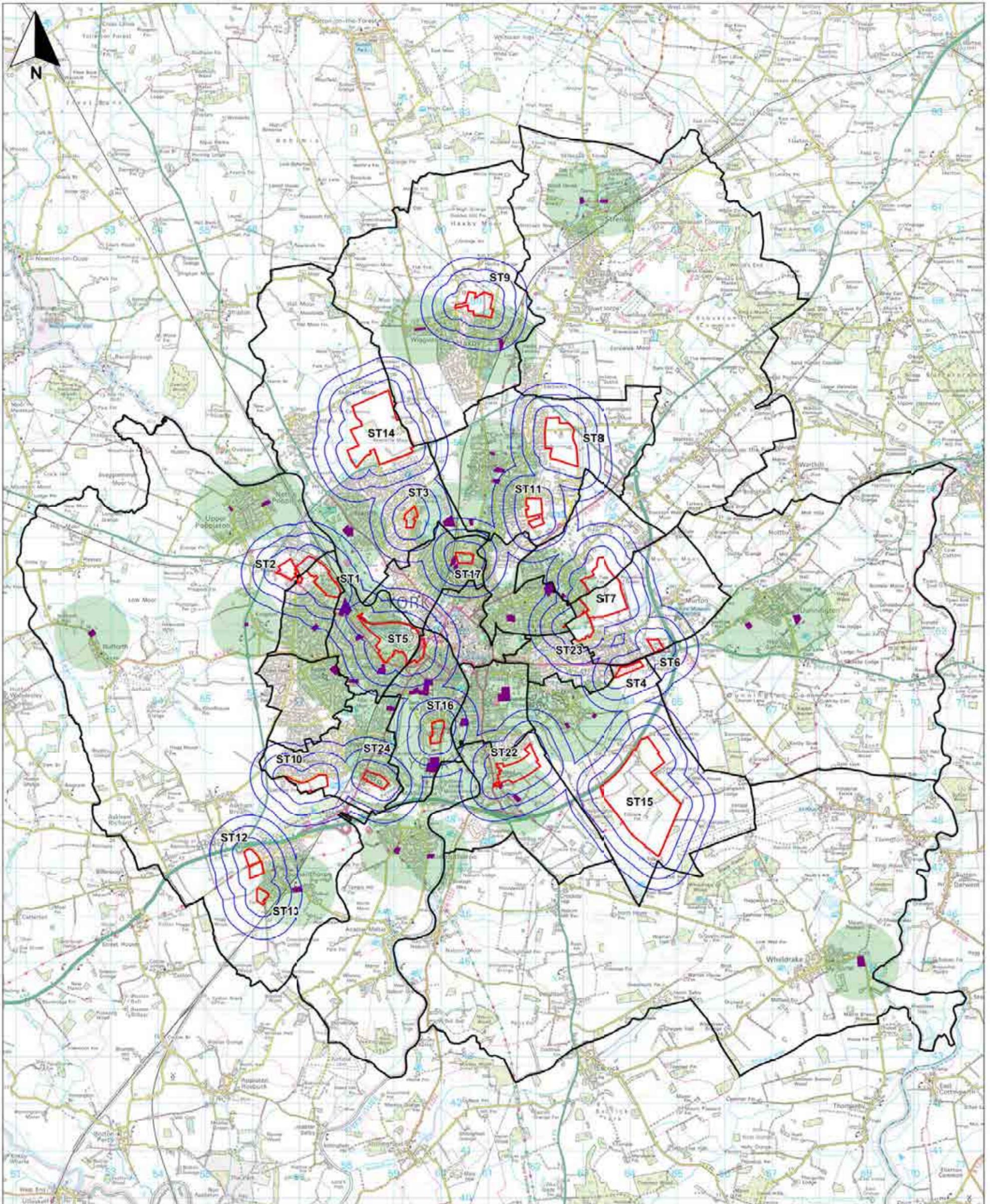
City of York Council  
Green Infrastructure Study

**Figure 3.7**  
Teenagers' Playspace 720m buffers  
15min walk

0 km 3 km  
Scale 1:75 000 @ A3

September 2014  
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**Key:**

- Strategic development sites
- Concentric buffers (240m - 480m - 720m)
- Allotments
- 720m buffer

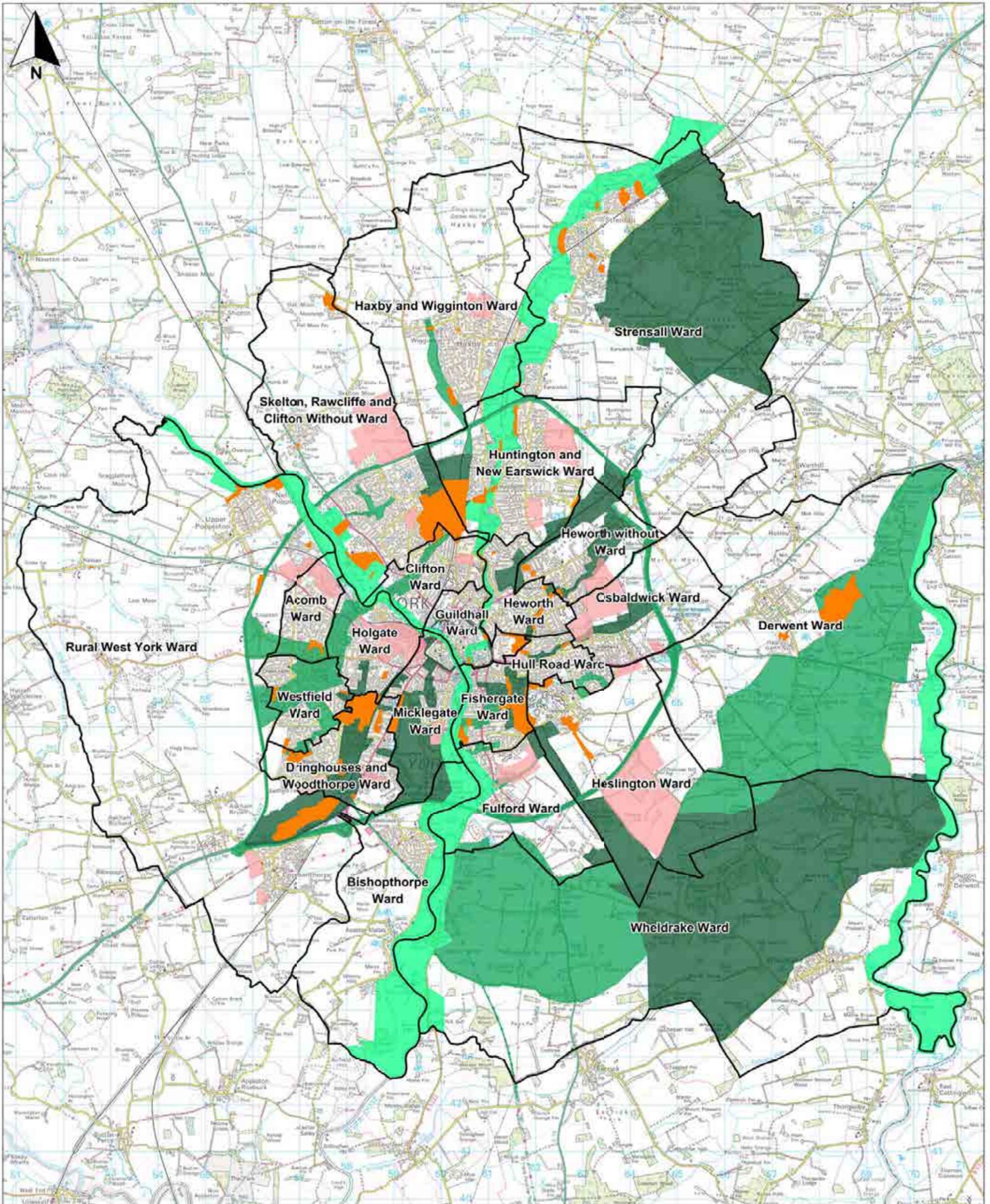
City of York Council  
Green Infrastructure Study

**Figure 3.9**  
Allotments 720m buffers  
15min walk



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**Key:**

- York ward boundaries
- Natural and Semi natural greenspaces
- Strategic development sites
- York GI Combined Corridors 2013**
- District
- Local
- Regional

City of York Council  
Green Infrastructure Study

**Figure 3.10**  
Strategic Sites and  
Potential Strategic Green  
Infrastructure Provision

0 km  3 km  
Scale 1:75,000 @ A3

December 2013  
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## 4. Review of Proposed Green Infrastructure Policies

### 4.1 Overview

This section considers the draft policies set out in the Preferred Options document in respect of the consultee comments made on the Green Infrastructure chapter and policies GI 1-7, and comparative examples of Green Infrastructure policies from other local authorities (Appendix H). The policies have been identified as useful reference points for policy development, but have not been screened for their robustness in terms of passage through Examination. Recommendations on the restricting of the Green Infrastructure chapter are made as well as suggestions on policy content which would aid clarity and help to respond to consultee observations.

### 4.2 Consultee Responses to the Preferred Options Document

Table 4.1 sets out the comments made by the statutory agencies on the Preferred Options Document and their potential implications for green infrastructure policies.

**Table 4.1 Principal Consultee Responses and Potential Implications**

Consultee	Policy/Section	Comment	Potential Implications
Sport England	GI4 Open Space and Pitches	...the policy's intent and relationship with the Playing Pitch Strategy could be much more clearly expressed.	Attend to cross-referencing. No direct implications for Green Infrastructure.
Natural England	GI1 Green Infrastructure	Natural England welcomes this overarching policy which highlights the multifunctional benefits of Green Infrastructure.	Opportunity to draw on Natural England as a key partner in the development of a Green Infrastructure Strategy.
	GI2 Biodiversity	Both the third bullet of policy GI2 and paragraph 17.5 should reflect paragraph 118 of the NPPF (first bullet point) that where significant harm is unavoidable compensation is a last resort. Policy GI2 implies that compensation (loss and replacement) is as acceptable as mitigation (effect reduction). 'As a last resort' should be inserted before 'or compensated for'.	Need to tighten policy to reflect NE's observation. No direct implications for Green Infrastructure.
	GI6 Green Corridors	Natural England supports Policy GI6.	Opportunity to draw on Natural England as a key partner in the development of a Green Infrastructure Strategy.
	GI7 Access to Nature	Natural England supports Policy GI7 part a, as this delivers multiple benefits. However sites recognised for their bird interest (e.g. Heslington Tillmire SSSI) are especially sensitive to recreational disturbance and this should be recognised. Increased levels of access should be managed according to nature conservation protection status and sensitivity.  Where ecologically acceptable, improved access will be reliant on landowner agreement and funding. To assist delivery, the IDP must	Amend policy reflect access concerns on sensitive sites.

Consultee	Policy/Section	Comment	Potential Implications
		identify improvements to Green Infrastructure as a priority.	
	Infrastructure Delivery Plan	<p>Delivery of GI is limited within the IDP. Of most concern is the deferral of identifying future needs to the GI Strategy (para 4.126) without any timetable for this document's completion. The positive approach to GI and Biodiversity should be mirrored within the IDP.</p> <p>Given the potential requirement to provide natural greenspace/ recreational buffers around allocations (notably sites ST10 and ST15), these infrastructure requirements should, at the very least, be identified in the IDP as the delivery of the allocations may depend on the delivery of this GI.</p> <p>Reliance on developer contributions and focus on recreational open space (paragraph 4.128) without a strategy in place may jeopardise the delivery of a strategic GI and ecological network, as required by the NPPF.</p>	Review potential use of IDP/CIL in York and opportunity to include Green Infrastructure projects depending on scale.
Environment Agency	Section 2: Spatial Portrait	<p>2.15 Green Infrastructure</p> <p>We are pleased to see that the importance of green infrastructure to the sustainability of the city is recognised. However, more should be said regarding the need to increase green infrastructure, specifically within more urban areas, and the wider social benefits this could bring.</p> <p>2.20 Green Infrastructure</p> <p>Great emphasis is placed throughout this section on the high quality green infrastructure which is already present within the city. However, looking forward, it would be prudent to include a short section which highlights the need, and the desire, to expand green infrastructure provision within the city centre, linking existing green infrastructure with new habitats and new green space within urban areas.</p>	<p>Policy could reflect these concerns relating to Green Infrastructure in urban areas and aspirations to expand the Green Infrastructure resource.</p> <p>Opportunity to draw on the Environment Agency as a key partner in the development of a Green Infrastructure Strategy.</p>
	Policy GI1: Green Infrastructure	<p>We are pleased that green infrastructure has been recognised as important and valuable assets, and the Humber River Basin Management Plan has been identified as a key document/strategy within part ii of policy G11.</p> <p>We support the Council's aspirations to enhancing green infrastructure but believe that there is room for improvement as the current draft lacks direction and gives no confidence that the measures outlined in the policy would achieve the Council's objectives for green infrastructure.</p> <p>Neither the policy nor the supporting text defines a green infrastructure assessment or indicates whether applicants would be required to show conservation of existing assets or indeed expansion or enhancement. Currently this policy fails to secure any meaningful improvement or show positive planning. In order to bring the policy in line with the NPPF, policy vi. For example could be rewritten as: <i>"requiring applicants to submit a green infrastructure assessment showing how the development would contribute to the conservation and expansion of green infrastructure within the City."</i></p> <p>We believe it should be made clear in this policy that green infrastructure has a dual use as flood storage areas for river or surface water flows.</p>	Remedied through a commitment to developing a GI Strategy which sets the overarching framework for GI within new development.
	GI6: Green Corridors	We full support this policy and believe that it is robust, aspirational and deliverable.	
Yorkshire Wildlife Trust	Question 17.1 Green Infrastructure. Policies GI 1-7.	The Trust is very pleased to see the way GI has been considered in relation to a wide range of issues, and also the quality of the background mapping and evidence that the policies are based on. The Trust would be happy to work with the authority and to share the mapping for our Living Landscapes see <a href="http://www.ywt.org.uk/living-landscapes">http://www.ywt.org.uk/living-landscapes</a> as the Green Infrastructure Plan develops.	Opportunity to draw on the YWT as a key partner in the development of a Green Infrastructure Strategy.
	3. Infrastructure Delivery Plan	The Trust is concerned that Green Infrastructure (GI) is very poorly covered in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan with no overarching GI plan in place, no projects suggested, and no funding or project partners listed. The approach appears merely to be to work with developers to provide GI within developments rather than to consider how to join up areas of GI. GI	Opportunity to draw on the YWT as a key partner in the development of a Green Infrastructure Strategy.

Consultee	Policy/Section	Comment	Potential Implications
		will become increasingly important in the future, climate change will exacerbate the urban heat island effect and street trees, green roofs and walls, and green spaces will be vital. GI can reduce the effects of intense rainfall, flooding and drought, improve health and the amount of exercise people take and also support biodiversity. In a number of ways well designed and implemented GI can save the council money in dealing with drainage and flooding issues and also improve health and the amount of inward investment in the city. The Trust would expect that a definite date for the completion of a GI plan should be set and it should also include a mapping component to identify areas to enhance and connect for biodiversity. Projects to fund and partners to work with should also be identified so that if the authority decides on a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in the future GI will be funded and put in place. The plan will also be important if Biodiversity Offsetting becomes government policy. The Yorkshire Wildlife Trust would be happy to work with the authority on this.	

**Table 4.2 Additional Consultee Comments**

Consultee Reference	Summary
<b>GI1 Green Infrastructure</b>	
11/11685	Linkages between climate change, flood management, green infrastructure and minerals, requiring collaborative working.
63/12727	Opportunities to meet requirements of the NPPF in the maintenance of biodiversity and wildlife corridors.
401/16552	City of York Biodiversity Action Plan as a framework for conservation. Corridors are critical.
1491/17452	Clear definition of Green Infrastructure required.
4413/11431	Cross-boundary consistency and collaborative working required e.g. Lower Derwent Valley.
4819/14288	Develop a Green Infrastructure Strategy.
3/11627	Need for specificity on the role of Green Infrastructure as part of applications.
295/14160	Refine definition of Green Infrastructure to include blue infrastructure and role of SUDS.
995/17032	Maintenance/management of green space is critical.
1668/15041 - 1705/1792 - 1785/9869	No need for a separate Green Infrastructure assessment as part of applications – picked up in DAS. Level of detail should be commensurate with the scale of the application.
2358/56541	Need for an integrated strategy.
5124/12237	Need to pay attention to the role of gardens, allotments and incidental land.
<b>GI2 Biodiversity</b>	
2/11589	Need to use BAP as a starting point for policy development and application.
3/11628	Attention on policy wording re: net gain, no net loss.
7394/17360	Need to ensure net biodiversity gain and contribution to coherent ecological networks.
<b>GI4 Open Space</b>	
145/13874	Policy unsound and unjustified and contrary to CIL Regs requiring provision should be specified in CIL.
349/14194	Need to more clearly express policy intent and relationship with Playing Pitch Strategy.

Consultee Reference	Summary
387/14208	Need to create opportunities for increasing physical activity e.g. linking green spaces; sustainable travel routes.
434/16580	Unreasonable to require new development to make up deficiencies in open space.
101/14231	Support preferred approach requiring major development to incorporate 60/40 on-site open space provision and require a contribution to off-site provision.
<b>GI7 Access to Nature</b>	
2/11593	Need to recognise improvement of management of access to sensitive sites. IDP should identify improvements to Green Infrastructure as a priority.
238/14114	Support provision of Green Infrastructure and welcome recognition of the contribution of heritage assets to the Green Infrastructure network.

Overall, the comments indicate that notwithstanding edits to the policies to clarify their intention (see also sections 4.1.1 and 4.1.2), a Green Infrastructure Strategy would act as a focal point for a wide variety of common interests, and a structured approach to fulfilling corporate and planning policy commitments (see section 5). The key points which appear to emerge from the consultation:

- clarify the definition of Green Infrastructure, to include its dimensions of type, scale, function and interaction;
- clarity on how the aspirations for Green Infrastructure will be delivered in practice;
- an urgent requirement to prepare a Green Infrastructure Strategy which will act as a focal point for the diverse considerations which reside under the Green Infrastructure banner, including existing strategies and action plans, notably the BAP and Playing Pitch Strategy;
- attend to reconciling the various objectives and targets associated with strategies which comprise Green Infrastructure protection and enhancement;
- prioritise the improvement of Green Infrastructure using IDP, for example, to ensure that there is a strategic perspective on the demands and opportunities associated with strategic development sites; and
- identify the role of management as a critical part of provision, particularly in respect of access.

#### 4.2.1 Policy Structure

The Local Plan Preferred Options proposed the following policies relating to green infrastructure, biodiversity and open space:

- GI1: Green Infrastructure.
- GI2: Biodiversity.
- GI3: Trees.

- GI4: Open Space and Playing Pitches.
- GI5: New Open Space.
- GI6: Green Corridors.
- GI7: Access to Nature.

The rationale behind the policies and the aspirations for planning for York's greenspaces such that they "*work like a connected park, linking the historic City centre to the City's neighbourhoods and countryside through a series of extended strays for walking and cycling and making use of rivers*" is sound and reflects current thinking. However, whilst the subjects of the policies are clearly relevant to the promotion of green infrastructure, whether seven policies are needed could be questioned, notably where these appear to overlap. Thus, to achieve the same policy thrust and output, the following policies are recommended:

### **Section 17: Open Spaces, Biodiversity and the Green Infrastructure Network**

GI1: Open Spaces and Playing Pitches (incorporating Policy G15)

GI2: Biodiversity and Access to Nature (incorporating Policy G17)

GI3: Trees

GI4: York's Green Infrastructure Network (incorporating Policy G16)

The logic behind this rationalisation and restructuring is based on the need to present a coherent suite of policies which succinctly convey the aspirations for environmental protection and enhancement, from the 'basics' of protecting what exists (open spaces, pitches, biodiversity, trees) to enhancing resources through additional provision and better management, through to the development of a strategy which integrates and advances these actions. There is currently no Green Infrastructure Strategy so having an unsubstantiated 'header' policy comes across as weak. It is more logical to get the basics in place then proceed to enhancing them through joined-up thinking and practice.

#### **4.2.2 Policy Content**

In light of the above suggested re-structuring of the chapter, there is also the opportunity to scrutinise the content of policy, particularly in respect of proposed standards of open space provision, such that there is a consistent approach across the council and between different types of development. Informed by policy examples collated at Appendix H, recommendations are set out in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Policy Recommendations

Policy	Recommendations												
Policy GI1: Open Spaces and Playing Pitches	<p>Specific reference is needed to expected contributions by type of open space <u>as a reference point</u> for a site-specific consideration, reconciling the current disparity between standards established in the 2008 study and those set out in the SPG: Commuted Sum Payments for new Developments (June 2014) (see section 4.3 below for detail) and in light of this, the use of a 5ha threshold for off-site contributions appears somewhat arbitrary. Whatever the threshold finally set, the following requirements could be set:</p> <p><i>“Developments &lt;Xha/units are expected to provide for amenity open space and facilities for young children with contributions to off-site provision/management for parks, natural/semi-natural, young people, sports facilities and allotments.</i></p> <p><i>“Developments &gt;Xha/units are expected to provide for a full range of open space, except where it can be demonstrated that it would be more effective to make off-site contributions to provision/management of facilities.”</i></p> <p>Detailed requirements could be made for an understanding of the character of open space in the vicinity of a proposed development, identifying where need can be met on and off-site, using the standards which have been reviewed in this study, namely a total of 5.83ha/1,000 population comprising:</p> <table data-bbox="402 824 1493 1025"> <tr> <td>Parks &amp; Gardens</td> <td>0.18ha/1,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Natural/Semi-natural</td> <td>2.13ha/1,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Amenity</td> <td>1.45ha/1,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Children’s/Teenagers Playspace</td> <td>0.25ha/1,000 (FIT benchmark) – to be incorporated into amenity open space</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Outdoor Sports</td> <td>1.78ha/1,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Allotments</td> <td>0.29ha/1,000</td> </tr> </table> <p>Development of, and reference to, an SPD which details how standards should be applied in practice and the implications for developer contributions, could be required.</p>	Parks & Gardens	0.18ha/1,000	Natural/Semi-natural	2.13ha/1,000	Amenity	1.45ha/1,000	Children’s/Teenagers Playspace	0.25ha/1,000 (FIT benchmark) – to be incorporated into amenity open space	Outdoor Sports	1.78ha/1,000	Allotments	0.29ha/1,000
Parks & Gardens	0.18ha/1,000												
Natural/Semi-natural	2.13ha/1,000												
Amenity	1.45ha/1,000												
Children’s/Teenagers Playspace	0.25ha/1,000 (FIT benchmark) – to be incorporated into amenity open space												
Outdoor Sports	1.78ha/1,000												
Allotments	0.29ha/1,000												
Policy GI2: Biodiversity and Access to Nature	Cross-referencing to GI4 and incorporate GI7												
Policy GI3: Trees	No recommended changes												
Policy GI4: Green Infrastructure	<p>Reference to the emerging Green Infrastructure Strategy should be a primary consideration in the policy, acting as the reference point for the aspirations as currently set out in the policy.</p> <p>Specific attention could be paid to the expectations for the delivery of Green Infrastructure associated with strategic sites, either as headlines within the policy or reference to separate guidance. The dimensions of these expectations are set out in section 4.1.3.</p> <p>In light of the comments made by consultees (see Tables 4.1 and 4.2 above), greater detail could be given on the expectations associated with the requirement for a green infrastructure assessment. This could include specification of criteria which guide Green Infrastructure in new development, as suggested in section 4.1.3.</p> <p>As part of the new Policy GI4, more detailed reference to the preparation of the City’s Green Infrastructure Strategy would to substantiate and advance the in-principle commitments through setting out its spatial implications and the expected added value (provided through the current text at para 17.2 taking account of the potential additions as set out in section 4.1.4).</p>												

### 4.2.3 In Principle Requirements for Provision of Green Infrastructure in New Development

Specification of the in-principle requirements for the provision of Green Infrastructure in (larger) new development as set out below would form a strong negotiating position for policy, clearly identifying the expectations of the City Council for developers to take into account Green Infrastructure issues within masterplanning. Specific criteria cover:

- provision of Green Infrastructure should be incorporated into a masterplan for the site;

- retained, new and enhanced Green Infrastructure provision should be incorporated into local Green Infrastructure networks;
- unless there is policy or other circumstances to the contrary, incorporate within the local Green Infrastructure network all sites of nature conservation and historic environment value and as much as possible of the following: woodlands, hedgerows, watercourses, sites with public access, public rights of way;
- where appropriate, enhance the retained Green Infrastructure resource;
- protect species and habitats *in situ* wherever possible, and ensure that there are appropriate green links to enable interchange between on- and off-site populations;
- where the development site adjoins a valuable area of semi-natural habitat, create a ‘Green Infrastructure buffer’ to act as a barrier to reduce potential adverse effects of the development on the adjoining land;
- habitats/landscape features created as part of a local Green Infrastructure network should be designed to contribute to sense of place, be appropriate to the site’s landscape character, avoid damage to valued historic or natural features, and, where possible, link together isolated areas of retained Green Infrastructure (to benefit wildlife and/or public access) and help mitigate the visual impact of the development;
- areas of flood risk should be the focus for habitat creations (and linked to the development’s SuDS) and provide public access. Such areas would make up part of the local Green Infrastructure network;
- provide access links through the development, associated with areas of high quality natural greenspace, to ensure ready access to sufficient areas of accessible natural greenspace;
- provide walking/cycling routes along green corridors that offer ready access to the urban/local centres. Their design should reflect their multiple objectives;
- the local Green Infrastructure network should include allotment provision; and
- ensure that an implementation and management plan is prepared for the land that makes up the local Green Infrastructure network and which address the full range of Green Infrastructure functions.

#### 4.2.4 Supporting Narrative to Green Infrastructure Policy

Section 17.2 provides a helpful overview of Green Infrastructure functions. However, consideration could be given to refining this text as per following example from the Local Plan consultation for Arun (2012) which set out key Green Infrastructure functions:

1. *Access links and access to recreation - the provision of sustainable transport and access routes, and a variety of recreational opportunities for the widest range of social, interest and age groups;*
2. *Conserving and enhancing biodiversity - the provision of ‘space for nature’, areas that conserve or enhance wildlife habitats or provide new habitats;*

3. *Sense of place - the landscape assets and their settings that provide the local character and sense of place and help provide high quality environments in which people want to live and work;*
4. *Historic character - areas of importance to the historic character, including specific cultural heritage assets;*
5. *Productive green environments - areas that provide opportunities for local sustainable food and fuel production at the local level ('edible landscapes'), including allotments, community orchards, community gardens, urban farms, coppicing of local woodlands;*
6. *Sustainable water resources - provision of 'space for water', Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and other areas that play a role in the sustainable management of water resources; and*
7. *Climate change - areas that provide for climate change adaptation through more flexible multi-functional approaches to urban and landscape design and management, including urban shading and cooling.*

### 4.3 Developer Contributions

Open space standards are a helpful reference point for the determination of appropriate provision for open space within new developments. Currently within York this is through an SPD: Commuted Sum Payments for Open Space in New Developments (updated July 2014). The requirements set out in this document (totalling 3.3ha) only partially fulfil the open space requirements which would be set through the verified open standards i.e. 5.83ha/1,000. The difference of approximately 2.5ha can potentially be accounted for by the absence of a requirement for natural/semi-natural open space in the SPD. These requirements should be changed to reflect the updated standards. In addition, the SPD is probably underestimating the commuted sum requirements for new development. Appendix F compares the commuted sums currently requested by various authorities. Taking the median (3 bedrooms houses) it would appear that a typical charging rate is approximately £3,000, compared to York's current requirement of around £2,000. These figures should be examined in light of the approaches of other authorities, Harrogate probably providing the best comparator.

### 4.4 Conclusions

Based on the clear support amongst consultees for the emerging Green Infrastructure-led policies for the City, the analysis of this chapter includes modest recommended changes to the structure, and to a lesser extent content, of these. The intention is to ensure that the structure and context relates to a Green Infrastructure Strategy which would act as a reference point to help guide policy implementation. Comparative policies from other local authorities have been used as a sense-check for policy scope (although this is not a systematic survey and detailed analysis could be required to check their robustness through analysis of representations and Examination reports if further reassurance was required).

## 5. Implications for a Potential Green Infrastructure Strategy

### 5.1 Introduction

The analysis of open space standards in light of updated information on quantity, quality and accessibility, their application to proposed strategic development sites and the analysis of emerging Green Infrastructure policies sets a clear agenda for the development of a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the City. Between these components of this study and supporting Strategies on Biodiversity, Playing Pitches and Green Corridors, there exist the components for the development of a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the City which would provide a reference point for the delivery of the Green Infrastructure policies as currently drafted.

This chapter offers some observations on how a Green Infrastructure Strategy might be developed, using data from this study and examples from other local authorities. The rationale for a Green Infrastructure Strategy is set out prior to suggestions on key principles and aspirations which could be used to guide Strategy development, objectives and data requirements, delivery requirements and initial thoughts on how Green Infrastructure could be planned for in practice across the City by identifying corridors, reservoirs and opportunity areas.

### 5.2 Rationale for the Development of a Green Infrastructure Strategy

Green Infrastructure Strategies are increasingly used as a means of advancing corporate objectives which cut across departmental boundaries, notably health, quality of life, climate change, and economic development, but also using the opportunity to integrate biodiversity, landscape and recreation agendas. Such ‘multifunctional’ purposes and outcomes have long been advocated by Natural England and its predecessors, at first through urban fringe and community forestry initiatives, but latterly as a strategic policy tool at district, county, sub-regional and regional scales which complements spatial and sectoral planning, illustrated by the Leeds City Region Green Infrastructure initiative.

For spatial planning, fulfilling statutory responsibilities as set out in the NPPF which states that “*Local planning authorities should: set out a strategic approach in their Local Plans, planning positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure*” (paragraph 114), and in particular for biodiversity that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by “*minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government’s commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures*” (paragraph 109). In addition, “*new development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. When new development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the planning of green infrastructure*” (paragraph 99).

Whilst the development of a separate Green Infrastructure Strategy is not advocated specifically by the NPPF, how the expectations of the NPPF are most efficiently and effectively addressed does require attention, and it could be that a Green Infrastructure Strategy is a useful means of achieving them.

The analysis of open space assets across York has revealed there to be a substantive network across the City which could, in principle, be used as the basis of structured approach to planning for green infrastructure. Figure 5.1 shows the natural/semi-natural greenspace analysed as part of this Review, along with notional biodiversity corridors of strategic, district and local importance. These form an important basis for establishing key interconnections, existing and potential, linked through rights of way, for example.

The experience and aspirations of Bath & North East Somerset (B&NES) are instructive for York in respect of the strong open space, biodiversity and heritage assets which define both authorities, recognising that there are opportunities to add value to the intended outcomes of the emerging Local Plan through delivering projects which help to demonstrate how policy might be joined up in practice. In practice, the approaches will reflect specific local circumstances, but the content of the B&NES Strategy is drawn upon to illustrate how a potential Green Infrastructure Strategy for York might be explored and developed.

### 5.3 Key Principles and Aspirations

There are a number of principles which steer the preparation of a Green Infrastructure Strategy, reflecting its integrative nature and the need to reflect the agendas of constituent interests. These are:

- **Spatial integration** - recognition of the importance of integrating component parts of the physical environment, understanding how they function and their interaction as part of a dynamic network.
- **Multifunctionality** - acknowledging a range of roles to be performed centred on environmental protection and enhancement to the benefit of local communities and economies and for its own sake.
- **Partnership working** - using a multi-agency approach to ensure project coherence and common ownership.
- **Sustainable development** - balancing environmental, social and economic objectives in turn helping to create and maintain a sustainable community.

The extent to which the various agendas are sought to be addressed through the mechanism of a Green Infrastructure Strategy depends to a degree upon corporate priorities and existing strategies relating to biodiversity, recreation and health, for example. Where there is perceived to be an opportunity to demonstrate that a response is being made to a specific issue or issues, then a Green Infrastructure Strategy can help to focus activity. Thus in the case of Bath & North-east Somerset, complementary agendas for ‘people, place and nature’ are addressed to provide a corporate response to enhancing quality of life across the district. This is expressed in the vision statement of the Green Infrastructure Strategy and the associated twelve topic-based outcomes:

*“By 2026 the Council and its partners will have worked with the community to achieve a well-used, managed, connected and expanding network of green infrastructure which provides a wealth of benefits for people, place and nature thereby contributing to making B&NES a place where:*

<p><b>Connecting communities</b></p> <p>Our local communities are connected through high quality networks of green spaces and corridors providing attractive spaces for play, recreation, relaxation, reflection, education and growing food.</p>	<p><b>Biodiversity</b></p> <p>Wildlife is thriving within urban areas, along the natural corridors and throughout the open countryside and biodiversity is increasing.</p>	<p><b>Landscape and built heritage</b></p> <p>The quality and integrity of the exceptional local landscape and built heritage is valued, respected and enhanced.</p>
<p><b>Thriving communities</b></p> <p>Local people are proud of this green network and people of all ages use it regularly for healthy exercise and are benefiting from improved physical and mental health.</p>	<p><b>Green economy and natural tourism</b></p> <p>The local economy and the workforce continue to benefit from the high quality natural and built environment. A growing sector of green tourism respects and makes use of the area’s natural and historic assets</p>	<p><b>Rivers and canal</b></p> <p>The river and canal corridors are recognised and valued as significant green corridors through the district and beyond. The river Avon and canal corridor supports an increasing number of water related businesses and the river has achieved good ecological potential.</p>
<p><b>Land management</b></p> <p>The stock of Council owned land is well used to fill gaps and deficiencies in the provision of accessible green space and to address habitat connectivity and a growing number of communities are involved in managing their local green spaces.</p>	<p><b>Healthy lifestyles</b></p> <p>More people are involved in community food groups, individual growing plots and allotments, successfully contributing to their own food needs with innovative production methods and models.</p>	<p><b>Active outdoor access</b></p> <p>A well connected, signed and promoted network of green travel routes is well used by the community and visitors, to travel throughout B&amp;NES and into neighbouring areas.</p>

<p><b>Climate change solutions</b> Green infrastructure plays an important role in making the area resilient to climate change. Street trees and urban greening schemes assist in cooling urban areas and sustainable flood alleviation schemes within the River Avon catchment reduce flood risks</p>	<p><b>Sustainable development</b> Well-designed new developments respect and contribute positively to the natural environment and there are an increasing number of SuDS, including green roofs, ponds, swales and permeable paving.</p>	<p><b>People and nature</b> Local people are involved in monitoring wildlife, appreciate the importance of gardens in supporting urban ecology and are active custodians of a healthy and vibrant natural environment.</p>
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## 5.4 Objectives and Data Requirements

The structure and contents of a Green Infrastructure Strategy will closely reflect both the existing character of strategies within the authority (such as biodiversity and recreation) and also the job which the Strategy is intended to do and its spatial scale. The blending of local and strategic green infrastructure will be of particular importance and this will work through to the objectives set for the strategy. In the case of B&NES, the document is structured around delivering the twelve ‘mini agendas’ set out above, through the following actions:

### Communities

- Support healthy lifestyles by encouraging more people to use green infrastructure.
- Improve the quality, function and management of Council owned green spaces and other accessible green spaces by establishing a culture and processes for long term management.
- Encourage more people to connect with nature and foster sense of place.

### Active Access to the Outdoors

- Improve the network of green travel routes.

### Landscape character and Built Heritage

- Respect and enhance the local landscape.
- Safeguard and enhance access to the local built heritage.

### Biodiversity

- Maintain and create robust ecological networks by reducing fragmentation and delivering habitat restoration, re-creation and biodiversity.
- Secure the multiple benefits that trees and woodlands can provide.

### Healthy Ecosystems and Water Management

- Recognise the importance of healthy ecosystems and protect and enhance the natural services they provide.
- Achieve more sustainable management of water resources, flood mitigation and flood risk.

### Climate Change Solutions

- Provide natural solutions to help tackle the impacts of climate change.

### Green Economy and Natural Tourism

- Contribute to a vibrant local economy.

The preparation of a Green Infrastructure Strategy will require the assembly and analysis of a range of data sets which underpin the preparation of project which address the objectives identified for the Strategy. Initial priorities are likely to centre on biodiversity, landscape and recreation through protection, enhancement and ensuring that existing assets are properly used. Detailed GIS data surfaces are required to underpin these to help develop an approach which accommodates both local green infrastructure and strategic assets. The key output is a typically a reference plan which illustrates core biodiversity assets, movement corridors and key enhancement opportunities. Illustrations of these outputs are given in Figure 5.2.

**Figure 5.2 Typical Green Infrastructure Strategy Maps (Cambridge, Bath & North East Somerset, South Hampshire)**

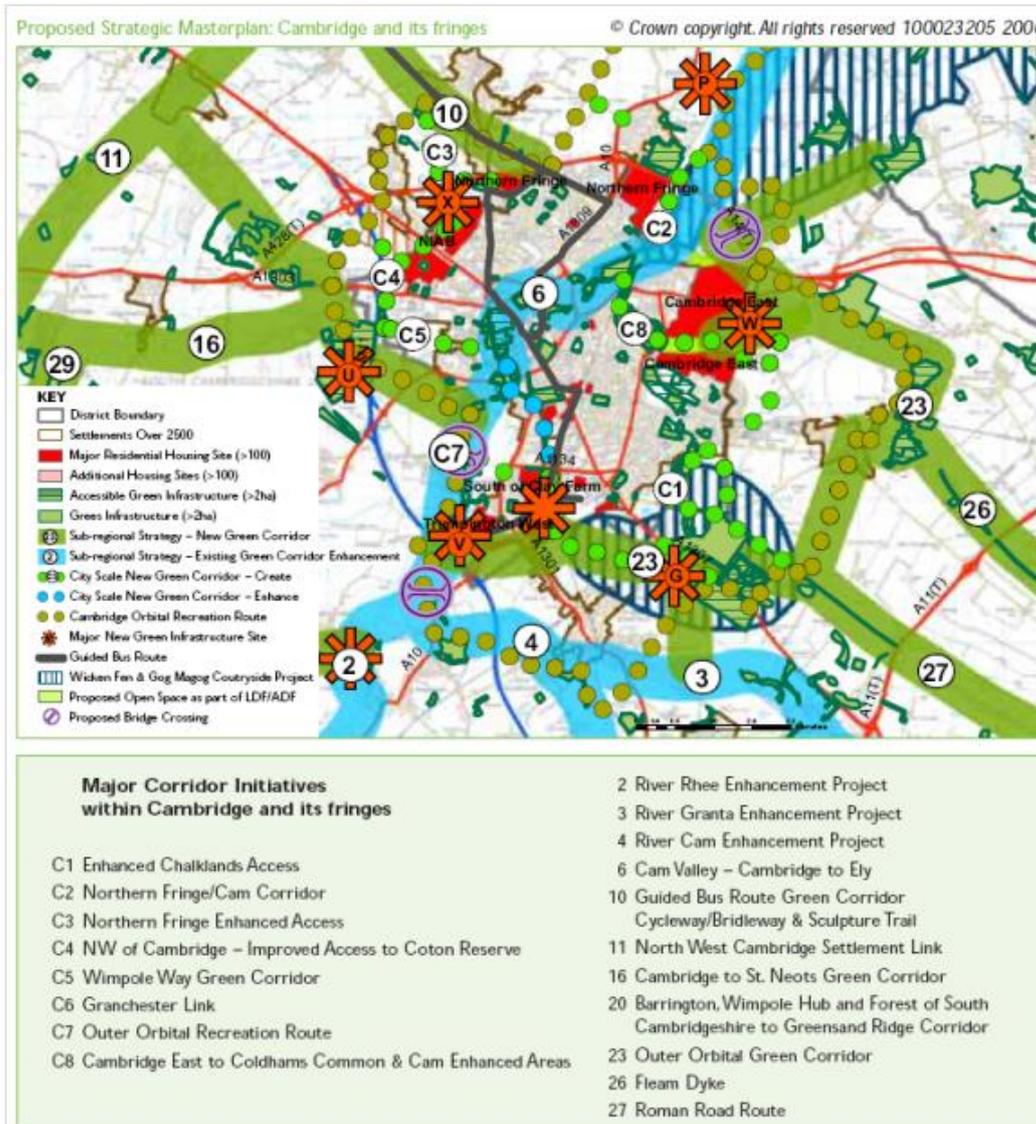
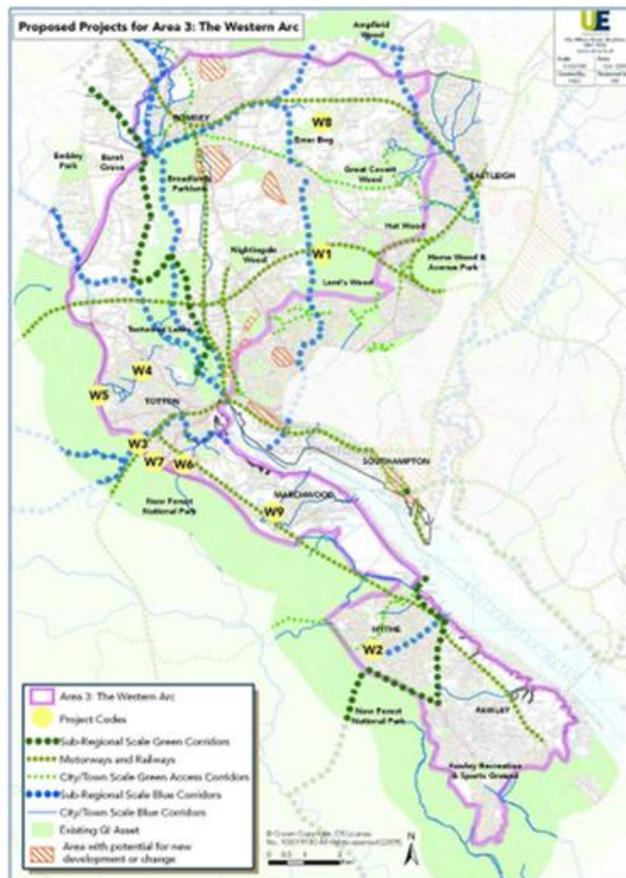
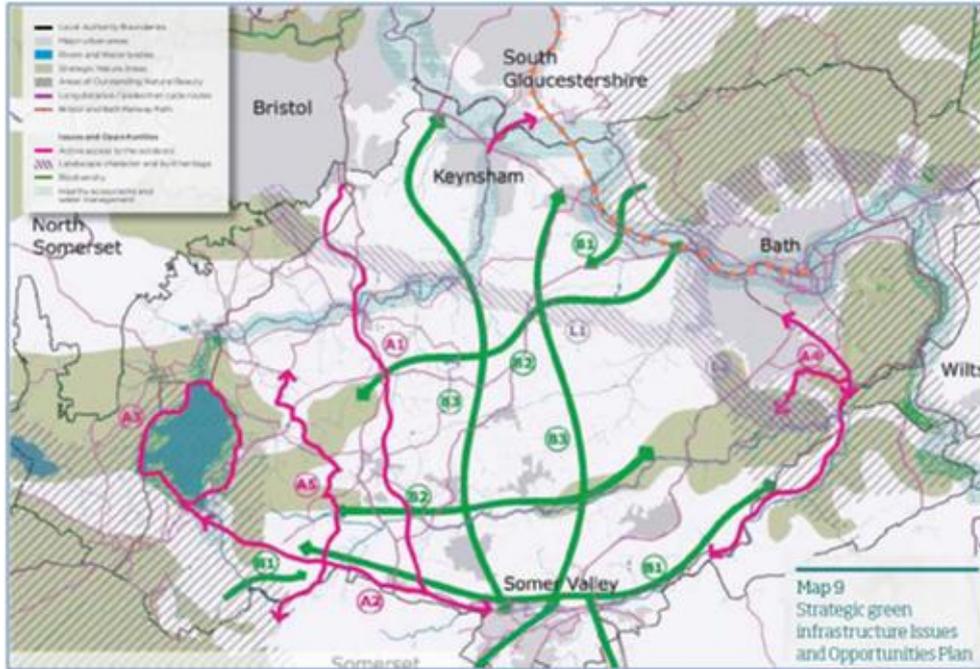


Figure 5.2 Continued



## 5.5 Delivering a Green Infrastructure Strategy

A central characteristic of a Green Infrastructure Strategy is its multi-dimensional nature, both in terms of its content ( and consequently the resources required for its assembly) and the commitment required of a range of participants help ensure that its recommendations can realistically be implemented. Leadership is critical, and a ‘champion’ (individual or department) is often required to draw together the diverse agendas, tackle the complexities of resource assembly and project delivery. Equally, partnership working appears to characterise most strategies, assembling various interested parties from statutory, voluntary, community and private sectors in the ownership of key projects which are to deliver the strategy<sup>9</sup>. This demands ‘political buy-in’, cross-boundary (spatially and sectorally) work and confidence that project funding will deliver the intended outcomes. Landscape Institute Guidance<sup>10</sup> identifies the following steps central to effective delivery:

### 1. Partnering and Vision

- Develop and define a vision that is relevant to the area and commands wide support.
- Identify the geo-spatial extent of the project at a landscape scale, unconstrained by political or administrative boundaries.
- Establish a crosscutting steering group with authoritative leadership and key stakeholder and community representation, supported by appropriate expertise.
- Promote collaborative working across political and organisational boundaries, multiple landowners, disciplines and scales.

### 2. Contextual Review

- Review and coordinate the national, local and community policy framework to provide a sound basis for formal planning intervention, development management, infrastructure provision and funding applications.
- Use a Landscape Character Assessment to understand and identify the features that give a locality its ‘sense of place’. This will include an understanding of the site and its immediate context to assess geology, soils, hydrology, habitats and species.

### 3. Data Audit and Resource Mapping

- Record green assets and identify ownership, primary uses and potential viability, using geographic information systems (GIS) where appropriate, to deliver multifunctional benefits.

<sup>9</sup> Likely to include: Natural England, Forestry Commission, Environment Agency, Sport England, English Heritage, Wildlife Trust, Parish and Ward Councils, Community Groups, Chamber of Commerce, City of York Departments (Planning, Transport, Economy, Leisure, Tourism, Health), sub-regional biodiversity interests, local health interests, landowners and managers.

<sup>10</sup> Landscape Institute (2013) **Green Infrastructure: an Integrated Approach to Land Use**

#### 4. Needs and Opportunities Assessment

- Identify local issues, challenges, risks and community needs using data audit and consultation.
- Identify opportunities for Green Infrastructure to provide solutions to known Issues.
- Evaluate and, where possible, quantify the current and potential ecosystem- services benefits from existing and proposed Green Infrastructure.
- Establish the resources and costs for successful, sustainable implementation and long-term management.

#### 5. Design the Planned Interventions

- Prepare and communicate a draft strategy, plan or design, incorporating the vision and objectives.
- Use responses to refine and improve the plan, strategy or design and its delivery.
- Ensure that the plan, strategy or design meets requirements for function, durability and beauty.

#### 6. Implementation

- Set design and management standards by establishing locally relevant criteria.
- Ensure the provision of adequate funding mechanisms for ongoing management and maintenance costs.
- Build the project, launch the strategy and adopt the policies.
- Set the milestones, targets and programme.

#### 7. Management and Maintenance

- Monitor the strategy's delivery against its objectives regularly, using key performance indicators and stakeholder consultation.
- Deliver aftercare, management and maintenance to projects.

### 5.6 **Developing a Green Infrastructure Strategy Map for York**

As a starting point for the exploration of the potential development of a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the City, Figure 5.3 illustrates the principal connections and opportunities which exist in and around the City to protection, enhance and re-build biodiversity, landscape and public access. The key facets of the strategy map are set out in Table 5.1.

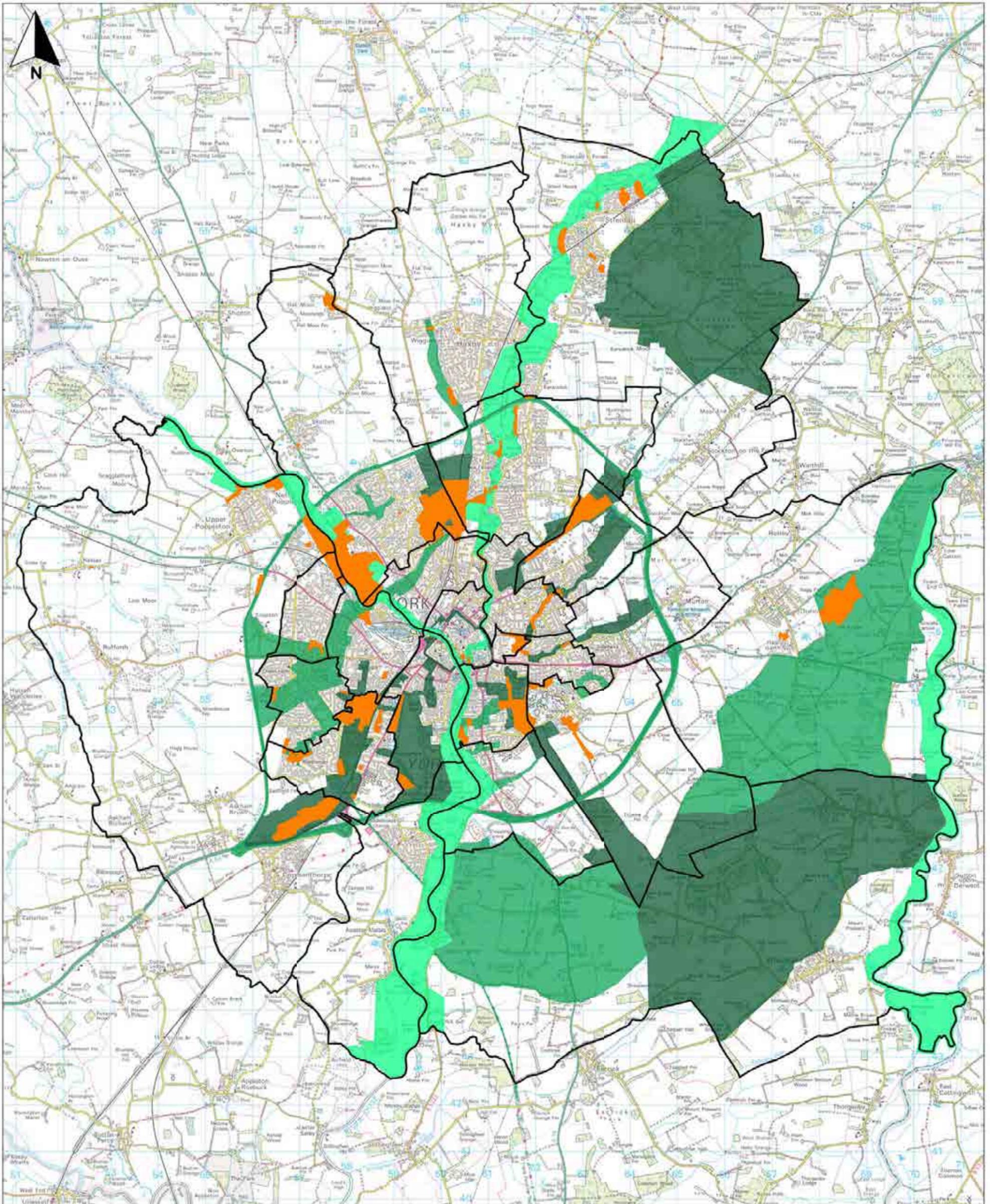
**Table 5.1 Potential Green Infrastructure Areas, Functions and Strategies**

Resource	Principal areas	Existing and Potential Functions	Overall Strategy
<b>Major Corridors</b>	City Centre southward along the Ouse Corridor	Biodiversity and access	Protect and Enhance
	City Centre northwestward along the Ouse Corridor	Biodiversity and access	Protect and Enhance
	Huntington northeastward along Foss Corridor	Biodiversity and access	Protect and Enhance
	Bootham Stray northward to Haxby	Biodiversity and access	Protect and Enhance
	Southeastern arc Escrick-Wheldrake-Dunnington	PRoW connectivity	Protect and Enhance
	Derwent Corridor	Biodiversity and access	Protect and Enhance
<b>Minor Corridors</b>	Ring Road	Biodiversity	Enhance
	Dunnington – Stockton on the Forest	Access	Enhance
	Heworth Golfcourse – Monk Stray	Access	Enhance
	Tang Hall – Ring Road	Biodiversity	Enhance
	Heslington – Ring Road	Access	Protect and Enhance
	Clifton – Holgate – Westfield	Biodiversity	Restore
	Holgate – Knapton	Biodiversity	Restore
	City Centre River Ouse	Biodiversity	Enhance
	City Centre River Foss	Biodiversity	Enhance
<b>Key Biodiversity Reservoirs</b>	Southeastern arc Escrick-Wheldrake-Dunnington	Biodiversity and access	Protect
	Derwent Corridor	Biodiversity and access	Protect
	Strensall Common	PRoW connectivity	Protect and Enhance
	Hob Moor – Askham Bogs	PRoW connectivity	Protect and Enhance
	Bootham Stray	Biodiversity and access	Protect and Enhance
<b>Opportunity Areas</b>	Monk Stray	Biodiversity and access	Restore Enhance
	Dunnington – Stockton on the Forest	Biodiversity	Enhance
	Heslington - Ring Road	Biodiversity	Enhance
	Copmanthorpe – Upper Poppleton	Biodiversity and access	Restore Enhance
	Skelton - Haxby	Biodiversity and access	Restore Enhance

**Strategy key**

<b>Area/Site Condition</b>	<i>Good</i>	Protect & Enhance	Protect & Enhance	Protect
	<i>Moderate</i>	Enhance	Enhance	Protect & Enhance
	<i>Poor</i>	Restore	Enhance	Protect & Enhance
		<i>Weak</i>	<i>Moderate</i>	<i>Strong</i>
<b>Area/Site Character</b>				





**Key:**

- York ward boundaries
- Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace
- York GI Combined Corridors 2013
  - District
  - Local
  - Regional

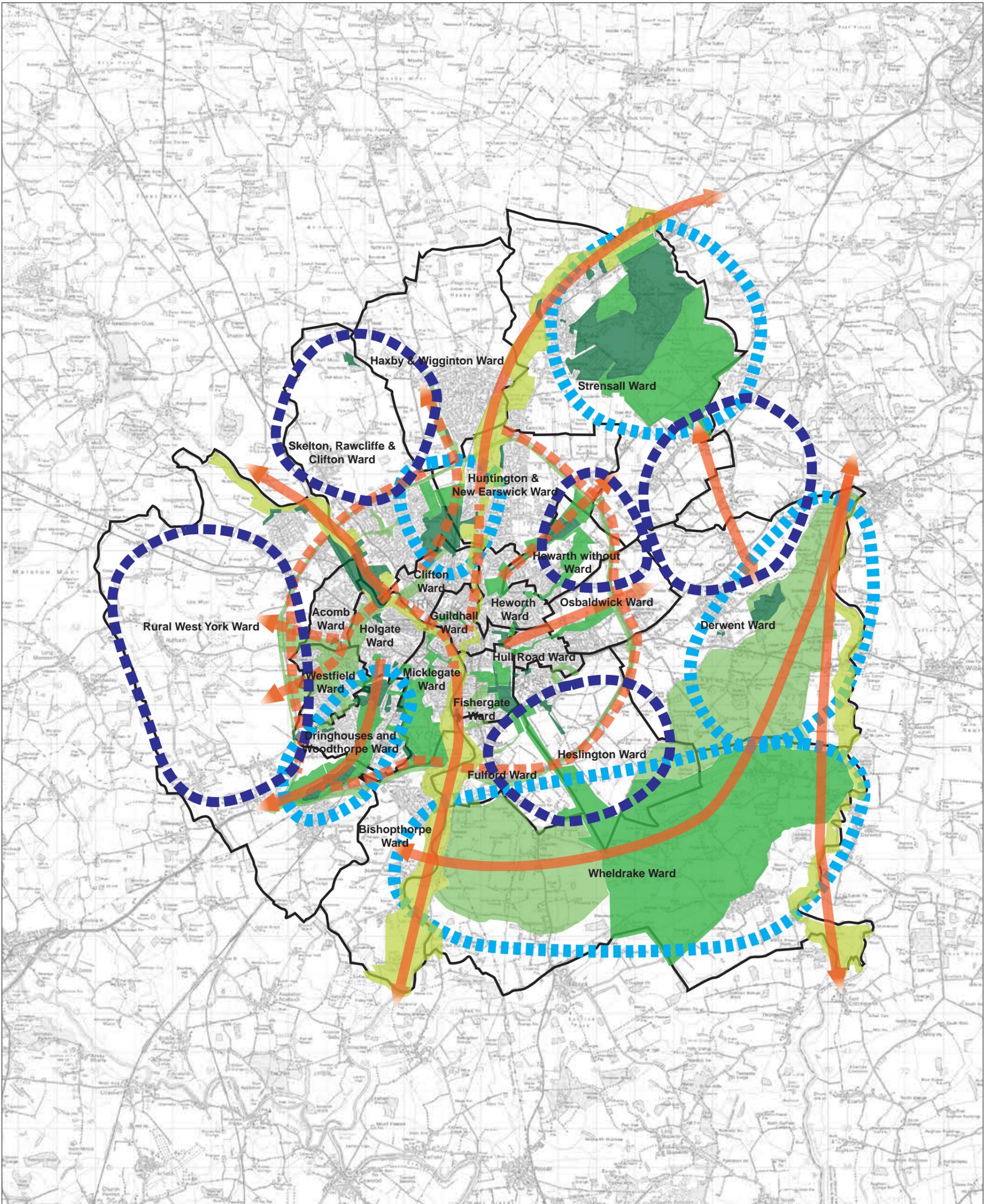
City of York Council  
Green Infrastructure Study

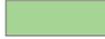
**Figure 5.1**  
Strategic Green Infrastructure  
Network Assets

0 km 3 km  
Scale 1:75,000 @ A3

December 2013  
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<b>Key</b>	
	Ward boundaries
	Natural and semi-natural greenspaces
<b>York GI Combined Corridors 2013:</b>	
	District
	Local
	Regional
	Major corridor
	Minor corridor
	Key reservoir
	Opportunity area

City of York Council  
Green Infrastructure Study

**Figure 5.3**  
Indicative GI Strategy

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## 6. Report Findings and Recommendations

### 6.1 Findings: Updated Open Space Survey

The following conclusions are derived from the analysis of the updated survey information:

- The 2013 update to 2008 survey did not find significant variances in the overall provision of open space across the City. However, corrections were made to the database and mapping (e.g. additional children's provision) which exposed some variances between the datasets in terms of totals by category.
- In light of the above, the standards established in 2008 which were based on the existing levels of provision are still valid and can be applied as benchmarks for future development at strategic and local scales, namely:

Category	Recommended standard of provision across York	
Parks	0.18ha/1,000	
Natural/Semi Natural	2.13ha/1,000	
Amenity	1.45ha/1,000	
Children's playspace*	0.48 facilities/1,000	0.25ha/1000 (FIT benchmark)
Teenagers' playspace*	0.21 facilities/1,000	
Outdoor sports facilities	1.78ha/1,000	
Allotments	0.29ha/1,000	

\*incorporated into amenity open space

- Whilst there have been changes in the overall provision of open space types (due to population growth and some re-classification of open spaces principally relating to Parks and Gardens to natural/semi-natural open space and outdoor sports pitches which do not meet quality standards) the overall standards remain valid as locally-established benchmarks of provision.
- The standards were checked against local authority comparators and national guidance and found to be broadly comparable, albeit with the caveat that standards are to be set locally and the starting point for them is the existing level of provision within an authority.
- There is a significant amount of background information in the 2008 Report relating to quantity and accessibility, based on questionnaire survey findings (see Appendix A) and the procedure for determining open space requirements (see Appendix B). This remains valid and should be used to inform the Council's approach open space provision.
- The 2013 update gives the opportunity to assess local provision (by ward/area) in terms of the supply/demand balance and likely change in context of growth.
- Open space provision is always a blend of the consideration of quantity, quality and accessibility, both in terms of existing and potentially new facilities.

- The following table sets out the in-principle additional open space demands associated with proposed strategic and local developments.

	Dwellings	Population	Parks & Gardens (ha)	Natural/Semi-Nat. (ha)	Amenity (ha)	Children (sites)	Teenagers (sites)	Outdoor Sport (ha)	Allotments (ha)
Strategic Growth Requirements	19,432	44,694	8.04	95.20	64.81	21	9	79.55	12.96
Local Growth Requirements	2,061	4,740	0.85	10.10	6.87	2	1	8.44	1.37
<b>TOTAL REQUIREMENT BY 2030</b>	<b>21,493</b>	<b>49,434</b>	<b>8.89</b>	<b>105.30</b>	<b>71.68</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>87.99</b>	<b>13.33</b>

- These open space requirements associated with growth in the City are in addition to existing deficits in provision (notably in respect of outdoor sports provision and teenage provision).
- Suggestions are made in the Recommendations section for work on amending the policies to reflect likely issues arising in respect of providing for new development, addressing deficits and advancing Green Infrastructure standards across the City.

## 6.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations for action by City of York Council are drawn from the key findings set out above and the Report as a whole.

### 6.2.1 Survey

- Retain the standards established in 2008 as a benchmark for provision, with attention on the findings of the 2013 in respect of local provision (by ward and area).
- The 2013 update finds no compelling case for altering these standards, notwithstanding the updating of the database and revised mapping.
- Whilst the quality and accessibility of open space is generally acceptable/good, there is the opportunity to identify and address gaps/investment opportunities in light of proposed growth at local and strategic scales which will meet new demand and help to address deficits.
- The updated GIS/database should be used as a monitoring tool to help co-ordinate leisure and planning activity, and the negotiation and implementation of developer contributions.

### 6.2.2 Strategic Provision

- As a benchmark, the total proportion of open space to be provided as part of new development is 5.83ha/1,000 population as a minimum level of provision, with detailed attention required to the split between open space categories (there being significant cross-over between amenity, natural/semi-natural and parks/gardens for example) and the extent of off-site provision in light of the nature of the site and existing local provision, particularly in respect of sports pitches. Cemeteries would need to be provided in addition to this figure. There is no quantitative or accessibility standard relating to their

provision, although their role in nature conservation, landscape and cultural heritage can be significant.

- Site-by-site provision needs to be guided by area profiles and further detailed work on the current demand for, and quality of, facilities in the locality, such as sports pitches. It would be reasonable to expect this to be carried out as part of the masterplanning work.
- Strategic sites can make a particularly valuable contribution to the provision of natural/semi-natural open space and help to develop links with accessible countryside and potentially broader aspirations for a City-wide Green Infrastructure network. Site masterplanning needs to take particular account of natural/semi-natural open space provision and the natural interlinkages with SuDS.
- The open space requirements associated with strategic and local development present a significant challenge which will need to be responded to in a variety of ways including:
  - Direct provision on-site, particularly associated with larger sites where, in principle, the larger the site the greater the opportunity for a full range of provision.
  - Exploration of the potential for providing a new park to complement existing provision. This could potentially be funded off-site as a City-wide resource, perhaps linked in with a wider Green Infrastructure Strategy (e.g. Country Park).
  - Particular attention to ways of addressing current and future demands on sports provision such as through increasing the capacity and quality of, and access to, existing facilities.
  - Through modifying the primary use of open space, exploring opportunities for multifunctional provision e.g. natural/semi-natural open space combined with SuDS; allotments as part of amenity space; additional teenager provision; combining amenity and natural/semi-natural provision through management for wildlife.

### 6.2.3 Policy

- The policy position needs to be resolved in respect of minimum expectations in respect of a broad quantum of open space to be provided as part of new development, and where the mix can be varied in light of local circumstance and enhancements/synergies to be achieved in the light of new provision.
- The current seven policies relating to Green Infrastructure could be simplified into a more coherent framework centred on:
  - GI1: Open Spaces and Playing Pitches (incorporating Policy GI5).
  - GI2: Biodiversity and Access to Nature (incorporating Policy GI7).
  - GI3: Trees.
  - GI4: York's Green Infrastructure Network (incorporating Policy GI6).
- Policy wording could be refined to better reflect the precise demands of the Council in respect of the expectations for open space provision as part of new development.

- Stronger reference between enhancing the quality of Natural/Semi-natural open space and Local Plan policy on promoting biodiversity could be made.
- In line with the comments of statutory consultees, the links to a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the City could be made significantly clearer, starting with a commitment to produce a Strategy, particularly in light of the scale of proposed development. The Biodiversity Strategy and Green Corridors Study are important inputs to this process.

#### 6.2.4 S106/CIL/SPD

- A revised SPD is required as a basis for commuted sums to be demanded of strategic sites. The current SPD is probably underestimating the commuted sum requirement by around 30% (roughly equivalent to the likely proportion of natural/semi-natural open space).
- Close monitoring of the implementation of developer contributions is required such that there is a clear link between open space provision (either on or off-site) and the context within which that provision is situated.
- The revised SPD needs to be founded on a robust model of provision (compare other councils such as Harrogate) and reconciled with recent large scale 106 agreements.

#### 6.2.5 Green Infrastructure Strategy

- A Green Infrastructure Strategy should be developed which advances the policy objective of enhancing the provision of open space and biodiversity across the City, helps to create potential synergies between interested parties and strategies, and justifies 'off-site' provision associated with strategic developments, particularly in respect of natural/semi-natural open space.