

# **City Centre Action Plan**

## **Open Space & Green Infrastructure Background Paper**

**August 2013**



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## Open Space & Green Infrastructure Background Paper

This background document accompanies the Submission Document and outlines some background in relation to the section on *A Greener Centre*. This document is not on deposit for consultation and is background evidence.

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## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Purpose of the document**

1.1.1 The purpose of this document is to inform the planning process and to provide more detail to support the Submission City Centre Action Plan (CCAP) in relation to policies on green infrastructure and open space (Policies AP 12 and AP 13). Following the adoption of the Core Strategy in 2010, the CCAP applies a number of detailed provisions in the city centre.

### **1.2 Structure of the document**

1.2.1 This paper is set out as follows:

- The policy framework for open space in the Development Plan
- Background evidence and other strategies affecting open space / green infrastructure
- Emerging CCAP, SEA/SA and comments received
- Justification for the approach in the City Centre
- The approach for the CCAP
- How the overall level and type of open space is sufficient or deficient
- Deliverability of open space & green infrastructure
- Appendices

1.2.2 This document is a background document to the City Centre Action Plan.

## 2. The policy framework

### 2.1 National guidance

- 2.1.1 The importance of open space to a city like Southampton is recognised in the Core Strategy and by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) which states that:

***“The proximity and accessibility of green space is especially important to people living in urban areas. The physical access to a place affects how people will benefit from it. Easy access to good-quality green places will provide enhanced well-being: a greater sense of belonging and feelings of security, stretching people’s boundaries, promoting mobility and improving health”.***

*CABE, 2008 Inclusion by design: equality, diversity and the built environment*

- 2.1.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines open space as:  
***“All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity”.***
- 2.1.3 Green infrastructure is defined as: ***“A network of multi-functional green space, urban, and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities”***
- 2.1.4 The NPPF recognises the need to plan for open spaces and related green infrastructure and sets out the government's requirements. It asserts the importance of protecting and enhancing our natural and built environment, which includes open spaces and related green infrastructure (Paragraph 7). It advises that buildings should provide, or have access to good amenity space (Paragraph 17).
- 2.1.5 The NPPF also asserts that parks, sport playing fields and other open spaces are an important part of people’s enjoyment of life and starts with the presumption that these spaces will not be built on unless the open space or land has been demonstrated as surplus to requirements or that the provision is re-provided elsewhere (Paragraph 74). In accordance with paragraph 73, local authorities are required to assess the needs of local communities and undertake an audit of existing open spaces looking at the quantity and quality of open spaces, their use and accessibility. These assessments provide the basis of a local strategy for open space.
- 2.1.6 There are further requirements under Paragraphs 114 and 117 for the local authority to plan for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity networks and green infrastructure – and to achieve this on a strategic level on a landscape-scale, preserving habitats and networks as appropriate. In addition, one of the priorities of the National Biodiversity Strategy for England is to make sure that these issues are considered and relevant open spaces are protected and managed for wildlife.

### 2.2 Sub regional guidance

- 2.2.1 In June 2010 the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) adopted the PUSH Green Infrastructure strategy. The planned growth for the PUSH area needed some consideration of the effects that new growth might have on the natural resources of the region. A key part of these considerations has been to commission the preparation of a Green Infrastructure Strategy. The purpose of this Strategy is to identify existing green infrastructure (GI), consider what enhancements or introductions should be made, and to recommend how the Strategy might be delivered. The guiding principles for green infrastructure use connectivity and multifunctionality to create a robust network of green spaces to address identified deficits and needs.

2.2.2 The PUSH South Hampshire Strategy (adopted Oct 2012) also set out the planning framework for the sub region. The strategy for the area, although not a statutory plan, was prepared with the close involvement of the Leaders, Chief Executives and other officers of the PUSH authorities. It provides a framework to inform and support the preparation of statutory local plans and largely fulfils the 'duty to cooperate' on planning issues. In relation to green infrastructure it commits the City Council to working *"together to plan, provide and managed connected networks of multi-functional green spaces including existing and new green infrastructure... Local Plans will protect the value of existing green infrastructure and the integrity of green infrastructure network. They will provide for enhancements to the quality, connectivity and multi-functionality of green infrastructure"* (p.34).

## 2.3 Local Development Plan

### *The Core Strategy (2010)*

2.3.1 The city council's approach to open space was set out in a Background Paper (December 2008) for the Submission Core Strategy, in relation to the public examination from which the Core Strategy was adopted following changes by the inspector. The inspector concurred with criticism of the submission version that it did not provide sufficient safeguards against the net loss of public open space through redevelopment and that the present shortfalls might be exacerbated. Consequently he clarified the wording of Policy CS 21 on Open Space, and the council is to ensure that there is no net loss of public open space (paragraphs 4.142 – 4.143).

2.3.2 The Core Strategy was adopted in January 2010. This expanded the strategic approach to open spaces in the Local Plan to include green infrastructure. It sets out the policies for open space and together with 'saved' policies from the Local Plan safeguards sites for the purpose of open space. Policy CS 21 (Protect and Enhance Open Space) commits the council to retaining the quantity of open space, sets out the types of open space to be protected, and to seeking contributions from developers towards open space provision. Closely related to C S21 is Policy CS 22 (Promote Biodiversity & Protecting Habitats), which commits the council to safeguarding designated sites, extending the 'green grid' network, and enhancing biodiversity (see Appendix 3).

2.3.3 In his report on the Core Strategy, the Planning Inspector strengthened the strategic approach to open space, and in Policy CS 21 the Council is committed **"to retaining the quantity and improving the quality of open space on an overall basis"** (para 4.143). The Inspector took the view that the Council needed to address the current shortfall in various types of open space by helping to deliver new open space, and safeguard against the net loss of public open space through redevelopment. With respect to the provision of open space, the Council should be **"...safeguarding existing provision and achieving more.."** (para 4.143).

2.3.4 At the same time the inspector encouraged the Council to develop a city-wide approach to the provision of open space by accepting that **"some redevelopment schemes might result in a small loss but improved quality, whilst other projects should provide net gains in the amount of open space that more than match in overall terms.."** (para 4.143).

2.3.5 Additionally, the council's recent SHLAA provided a clear steer away from development on protected open space: **"In an urban area such as Southampton all sites (apart from those covered by specific designations) are considered, in principle, suitable for residential development. This means that unless the site is designated or protected for another use, i.e. open space, employment, operational port land then it is likely to be suitable for housing"** (SHLAA 2013, Para 11.1).

2.3.6 The Local Plan Review (Saved Policies) currently forms part of the adopted development plan for the city and applies national and regional planning guidance to Southampton. It shows how land should be developed and its policies are used to determine applications for planning permission. Saved policies in the Local Plan Review address the following open space issues in the city centre:

- Protection of Existing Open Space - Policy CLT 3 (Appendix 5);
- Open Space in New Residential Development – Policy CLT 5
- Provision of Children’s Play Areas - Policy CLT 6;
- Provision of New Public Open Space – Policy CLT 7 (iv and vi)
- Protecting Waterfront access and Waterside Open Space - Policies CLT 10, CLT 11 and CLT 13;
- Other policies to restrict developments on parks and gardens of special historic interest (HE 5), protect habitats (NE 1 - 5), and demand high quality housing design and layout (H 7).

2.3.7 In her report on the Local Plan Review, the Planning Inspector recommended that the authority should consider conducting an audit of open spaces in order to better consider these areas in future planning policy. This was taken forward in the Open Space Audit and the draft Green Spaces Strategy.

2.3.8 The CCAP will compliment the Core Strategy, delivering more detailed policies for the city centre area, and replacing Local Plan Saved Policies CLT 3, 5 & 7 for the city centre. The exception being Saved Policy CLT 6 (Provision of Children’s Play Areas) which will remain in place until updated in the next iteration of the Local Plan. See the Table 1 below.

**Table 1 – Progression of open space / green infrastructure policies for the city centre area**

Local Plan: Saved Policies retained in CCAP area	Work carried out since Local Plan	Adopted Core Strategy	City Centre Action Plan
<p>CLT 6 <b>Children’s Play Areas</b> (sliding scale of provision)</p>	<p><b>SCC Open Space Audit:</b> Deficits &amp; quantum of space</p> <p><b>SCC Green Space Strategy:</b> Hierarchy &amp; standards.</p> <p><b>Green Infrastructure (PUSH)</b> – Standards set out, assets listed, strategic sites / projects, mitigation for international sites.</p> <p><b>Sport &amp; Recreation Action Plan (SCC)</b> – Deficits &amp;</p>	<p><b>CS 21 - Protect &amp; Enhance Open Space</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Key Spaces” (city, district &amp; local spaces) – protect and enhance (CLT 3) + GI Assets</li> <li>• “Other” Open Spaces – replace or reconfigures</li> <li>• “Green Grid” – safeguard or extend</li> <li>• Developer contributions</li> <li>• Strategic Gaps</li> </ul> <p><b>CS 22 - Promote Biodiversity &amp; Protecting Habitats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nature conservation safeguarded sites</li> <li>• Green grid (safeguard /</li> </ul>	<p><b>Draft Policy AP 12 - Green infrastructure &amp; open space</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect key open spaces</li> <li>• Additional (protected) open spaces</li> <li>• Reconfiguration of open spaces</li> <li>• Strategic links</li> <li>• Green grid routes</li> <li>• New open spaces</li> <li>• Green infrastructure</li> </ul> <p><b>Draft Policy AP 13 - Public open space in new developments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New civic spaces</li> <li>• On-site provision of</li> </ul>

	opportunities, s106 improvements, minimum standards	extend / improve connections) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect biological interests (BAP)</li> <li>• Development to produce net gain in biodiversity</li> </ul>	amenity space <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green roofs / walls</li> <li>• Qualitative improvements to public realm</li> </ul>
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### 3. Background evidence

#### 3.1 The SCC Open Space Audit (2004)

3.1.1 Southampton has around 1,140 Hectares of green space city-wide encompassing parks, allotments, greenways, and many grass plots which provide amenity space.

3.1.2 The aim of the audit was to carry out a comprehensive survey of open space, sport and recreation provision within the city. The audit highlighted the importance of open space in the city. Since this was carried out improvements have been undertaken as part of the council's ongoing responsibility for open space and in response to the audit. It looked at management and supply as well as how people perceive spaces within the city, the issues which affect Southampton's open space provision, as well as its future needs and demands. Key Findings of the Audit were:

3.1.3 *Quality improvements needed in relation to:*

- Clear entrances for open spaces across the city.
- Access is poor - the condition of surfaces and lack of footpath routes.
- Better play equipment for older age groups in playgrounds.
- Deficient lighting in key parks.
- Improving links between open spaces could create routes between existing open spaces which have heritage or interest value.

3.1.4 *Quantity and Distribution:*

- Shortages of formal parks and garden sites in north, west and east.
- Shortages of natural and semi-natural urban green space in **east** and Southampton City Council green corridors need to be reworked and connected to give access to the countryside.
- Little provision for outdoor sports facilities in the centre of the city.
- There is a shortfall of formal parks and gardens in **Shirley** and **Bassett** in the north. This is exacerbated by the impact of the busy A33, A35 and A3057 roads, which act as a potential barrier to access to districts which are better served with this type of open space to the west, south and east
- The **west** is hindered by poor access to better served areas of open spaces (particularly formal parks and gardens) to the north and east of the city by the A35 and A3057. Although in this area there is access to open space such as Mansel Park and

Lordshill recreation ground, these fulfil different functions (mostly outdoor sports) and are generally in poor condition, making them unattractive and limited in appeal. NB. Since the audit this park has benefited from many improvements and is now Green Flag standard.

- There is the potential to establish a green grid network to link open spaces both in the city and out into the wider countryside.
- Amenity open space is poorly represented across Southampton.
- Significant deficiencies of provision of facilities and open space for teenagers and children.
- Green flag awards show disparity of open space, as they have only been awarded for formal parks in the centre of the city. It indicates that improvements are needed for open spaces in the outer area of the city in order for them to be of the same standard as those in the city centre.
- Balancing of standards and provision across the city.
- The only type of open space that could be considered to have a surplus is Allotments.

### 3.1.5 *Biodiversity*

- Surveys should be carried out to inform the most appropriate management practices and specifications for individual open spaces.
- Management of biodiversity in open spaces in keeping with overall wildlife management strategy or BAP
- Green corridors managed within the context of an integrated urban management framework where biodiversity issues are given meaningful and practical consideration.

### 3.1.6 *Limitations*

- Housing amenity land (including public gardens) is important in terms of biodiversity and landscaping – supplementary work could be carried out on this - consideration given to the fact the majority of this category would not have been considered in the audit as it was under 0.2 ha - should be mentioned in strategy and implications considered.

3.1.7 Currently 893.1 hectares of open space are designated across the city (under policy CLT 3 of the Local Plan and policy CS 21 of the Core Strategy). These are long standing designations and comprise the Central Parks, Southampton Common, the Sports Centre, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), allotments, playing fields, local parks and informal recreation areas. The Open Space Audit found that, when judged against most of the national and local open space standards, the city is poorly provided.

## 3.2 The Green Spaces Strategy (2008)

3.2.1 This strategy was partly drawn up to provide guidance to the Development Plan, and identified four protection grades:

- **Protect** – protected from development.
- **Replace** – total area of this type is desirable to keep but distribution across city is not optimal. Development only allowed where type is overprovided and amount of green space is replaced by similar provision in an area of the city that is underprovided.
- **Reconfigure** – where AOS is fragmented. If a proposal would result in a larger area of continuous AOS, of higher quality and ease of management then could be built upon. Possibly some total loss to ensure the quality of the retained AOS.
- **Convert** – low quality AOS with little amenity value. Used for an alternative green space type or developed to generate income to improve other nearby green spaces.

3.2.2 The strategy asserted that the planning process can ensure that any new spaces provided aren't so small that they can't be maintained efficiently and that monies collected via developer contributions can be used to improve an area, where appropriate. Planning can also help ensure that open spaces are accessible and that new spaces are well designed.



The Residential Design Guide SPD provides advice on designing open spaces on new housing schemes. The Landscape checklist, included as an appendix in that document, informs developers what plans they need to submit to check that they have addressed these issues properly. The City Centre Development Design Guide also provides advice on the design of open spaces.

- 3.2.3 The City Centre Master Plan highlights the value of an attractive city centre environment in securing additional investment in the city centre (offices, retail, leisure and housing), providing jobs for local people. This includes networks of parks and green pedestrian routes as part of an extensive high quality public realm. Parks and civic spaces raise property values of adjacent sites as well as contributing to improved public health, and tackling climate change.

### 3.3 Sport and Recreation Facilities Strategy (2010)

- 3.3.1 This covered various types of sports facilities and playing pitches following needs assessments and audits of provision required up to 2018 (taking account of demographic projections). The strategy commits the city council to: *'Help increase levels of physical activity, health and wellbeing in Southampton by ensuring that its residents have access to high quality and accessible sport and recreation facilities used for sport and recreation'*.
- 3.3.2 Using various quality standards the strategy identified shortfalls in sport and recreation open space provision, the following facility requirements were highlighted taking into account population increases to 2018:
- Grass playing pitches – significant shortfalls in all parts of the city (based on 1.6 HA per 1000 population), but especially in the central and south areas of the city.
  - 1 synthetic turf pitch
  - 2 health and fitness facilities

### 3.4 Green Space Audit (2010)

- 3.4.1 This audit provided the city council with an up to date view on its current park provision. It sets out clear and robust evidence to support the Green Space Strategy and the development of further greenspace policies.
- 3.4.2 There are 50 parks and greenspaces, totalling around 464 hectares in the city (in the form of five city parks, four neighbourhood parks, and 41 local parks). The audit found that formal park provision is evenly distributed across the city with the majority of sites (60%) assessed as being of average quality, and 28% assessed as high quality. Remaining sites were scored as low quality.
- 3.4.3 It was concluded that the majority of sites were of high value to their localities and were recognised as being important for social inclusion, health benefits, ecological value and sense of place. Only two sites are identified as being of low value – Donkey Common and Northam Bridge.

### 3.5 Southampton City Council's Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy

- 3.5.1 This sets out the actions the council intends to deliver to adapt to and mitigate against climate change. Research has found that climate change, rather than habitat destruction, is now the single greatest threat to birds, mammals and plants the world over.
- 3.5.2 The absence or lack of opportunity for habitats / species to migrate in the face of climate change are as a result of habitat fragmentation, obstacles to migration (for example, the widespread development in the South East) and the fast rate of change projected. Reduced summer rainfall and increase temperatures, in conjunction with increased

demand for water resources, are likely to have detrimental effects on river and wetland ecology.

- 3.5.3 It is therefore imperative that as part of the Development Plan the council puts in place measures to mitigate against the effects of climate change on the city's biodiversity and natural environment. Policies should maximise the role of urban greening, such as new planting within the public realm as part of wider green infrastructure networks, in urban cooling and in achieving a number of additional recreational, ecological and flood storage benefits, by creating linked networks of well-irrigated open spaces. Open spaces will play a central role in this.

### 3.6 Southampton City "Fit 4 Life" Strategy

- 3.6.1 Aim: To promote and improve the health and wellbeing of the people of Southampton; by identifying, implementing and evaluating effective programs of work through a partnership approach to enable people to be Fit 4 Life.
- 3.6.2 The strategy encompasses all areas of society with a particular emphasis on health inequalities and those perceived to be at highest risk. In relation to open spaces a desired action would be to utilise the built and natural environment to promote and support people being physically active and take into consideration the city's carbon footprint. Activities would include promoting open spaces and public paths which can be reached by foot or by bicycle and maintaining them to a high standard.
- 3.6.3 The Healthy City Scrutiny Panel recently undertook an Obesity Inquiry. The Panel was reminded of the need to be strategic about the links between health and environmental factors, Professor Barrie Margetts setting out that **"A public health approach is essential; we cannot rely on individual behaviour change/treatment as the main method of addressing the problem. The approach must focus on the wider environmental and structural determinants that link deprivation and obesity... From a city council perspective it is likely that more can be done to enhance opportunities for increased activity"**.

### 3.7 Other strategies

- 3.7.1 Other strategies link with the provision of open space. These have been outlined in the Green Space Strategy Technical Report, but include the Local Transport Plan (promoting walk to work routes and cycle routes), Rights of Way Improvement Plan (a network which benefits as wide a range of users as possible), and Biodiversity Action Plan (enhancement of the environment; information and education; involvement, access and health).

## 4. **Emerging CCAP, SEA/SA and comments received**

### 4.1 CCAP Issues & Options

- 4.1.1 The CCAP reconciles two key objectives: to combine high quality high density development with good open space provision, by setting out the need for a wide range of improvements which will make city centre living attractive. The Core Strategy set out that the Council will retain the quantity of existing open spaces, help deliver new spaces, improve the quality and accessibility of spaces and protect biodiversity throughout the city. This approach is reflected in the policy for the city centre – namely Policy AP 12 (increase the quantity and improve the quality and accessibility of open space) and Policy AP 13 (open space in new development).
- 4.1.2 The Issues and Options stage dealt with open space as part of a strategic approach to retaining the city parks, incorporating open space into key development sites, and as part

of the vision for the city centre to “*be known for its innovative and creative businesses, leisure opportunities and fine parks and open spaces.*” There was general support for the overall objectives.

- 4.1.3 Comments tended to be concerned with the detailed approach of open spaces within the city needing “*to play an increasingly significant part in reducing recreational pressure*” whilst balanced with biodiversity interests. It was recommended that the City Council work closely with developers and provide suitable policies to ensure that a proactive approach is adopted in the design of new developments.

#### 4.2 CCAP Preferred approach

- 4.2.1 The next stage of the CCAP developed a specific approach to open spaces. The Preferred Approach CCAP contained two draft policies pertaining to open space. These policies have been shaped by the consultation responses received at different stages in the production of the CCAP.
- 4.2.2 General comments received on the Preferred Approach paper with regard to open space included:
- Support for the protection of existing open spaces which are considered an asset for city;
  - Support for the provision of open space in new developments;
  - The vision for new parks and open spaces will improve connectivity, and should not be restricted to purely improving pedestrian friendly routes;
  - Support for the designation of additional open space;
- 4.2.3 Some respondents gave more specific responses including:
- If the intention is to include a greater level of open space provision, it needs to be specified;
  - Mayflower Park is one of the few areas where people of all backgrounds mix and it should therefore retain an open space with access to the waterfront;
  - Platform Road highway improvement scheme needs to identify replacement open space for loss of Vokes Park
  - Objection to the loss of open space at Town Quay Park. There is no opportunity to find replacement open space which would provide the same unique characteristics of views to the water & historic structures
- 4.2.4 The points above have been addressed in the Proposed Submission of the CCAP, whether through the two specific policies on open space and green infrastructure (Draft Submission Policies AP 10 & AP 11) which are more specific on the provision of open space, or through site specific policies in the CCAP such as Mayflower Park (Preferred Approach Policy 22), and the deletion of Lower High Street (Preferred Approach Policy 29) with continued protection for Town Quay Park.
- 4.2.5 There was also concern expressed that the Plan does not secure a balance between housing & commercial development - new developments should be matched by social and community provision. The concern is that the scale of increased activity in earlier phases of the Plan will put increased pressure on the Central Parks.

### 5. Justification for the policy approach in the City Centre

- 5.1.1 Open spaces and green infrastructure are of vital importance to the city centre, meeting a number of needs and roles. An appropriate balance must be made between the city centre as an economic driver delivering major development in a sustainable location, and the need for and benefits of high quality spaces. The key challenges facing the city include providing sufficient housing, reviving its urban areas and the city centre, achieving

economic growth and addressing transport, environmental and sustainability issues. Open space issues are particularly important as the proportion of flats and maisonettes in the city centre is above the regional average.

- 5.1.2 At the core strategy examination the Inspector proposed the approach which is now reflected in CS 21 that the council should maintain the quantity of existing open space (increasing it where possible) and improve the quality and accessibility of the existing open space to improve usage.
- 5.1.3 Although Southampton has developed up to most of its boundaries, it has a high quality natural environment including Southampton Common which covers over 300 acres, the Central Parks, the Greenways network and waterside in addition to smaller open spaces throughout the city, and the internationally important River Itchen and River Test. The city has a large area of green parkland and civic spaces, but it is not necessarily as well distributed across the city centre as it could be.
- 5.1.4 There are a wide range of benefits for local areas of well maintained open spaces. These include:
  - 5.1.5 The local **recreational and sport opportunities** which open spaces provide. These allow local activity to take place within a short distance for residents and city centre workers (NPPF paragraph 70). This is especially true for the city centre where around 40% of residents are students, and are less likely to own a car.
  - 5.1.6 Promotion of **Healthy lifestyles** by making use of open spaces, and this is enhanced where the variety and type of spaces is varied and attracts different users. Improving physical and mental health by encouraging a more active lifestyle, enjoyment of the natural environment and encouraging walking and cycling (NPPF paragraph 73).
  - 5.1.7 Improving the **character of the urban environment** by facilitating networks of green spaces and civic squares, and the landscape benefits of this are attractive to businesses who appreciate a green centre with opportunities to make use of the spaces in the immediate vicinity. Parks and open spaces are key structural elements defining the image of Southampton. They have shaped the city, are an important part of its image and are a source of civic pride – and in that regard significant impact on the economy (attracting in investment and aiding the regeneration of areas). At a local level, open spaces provide a focus for the community; somewhere to meet up, a place to play and enjoy and a location for events such as festivals and concerts. They have a role to play in reducing stress, improving health and increasing people's enjoyment of life.
  - 5.1.8 Encouraging **Biodiversity** by creating a mix of habitats. The NPPF expects local planning authorities to enhance biodiversity. The CCAP seeks to deliver that by building on the strategic approach in the Core Strategy by developing a Green Grid for the city centre. All open space should, therefore, contribute to the enhancement of biodiversity and there should be improved wildlife management of open space. New open space should be designed in such a way as to be adaptable to the impacts of climate change. However, many of these matters again relate to management and maintenance of open space where planning has little influence.
  - 5.1.9 The national Biodiversity Action Plan adopted the *Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt)* for nature conservation areas. This does not necessarily require new sites to be found to meet these standards; more likely it will mean that parts of existing open spaces are managed differently in a way which enhances biodiversity. Other methods could be to ensure that new planting is of native species or an exotic species mix with an overall good wildlife and ecological value. Contributions from developers to implementing these measures and improving biodiversity can be sought when securing planning permission.

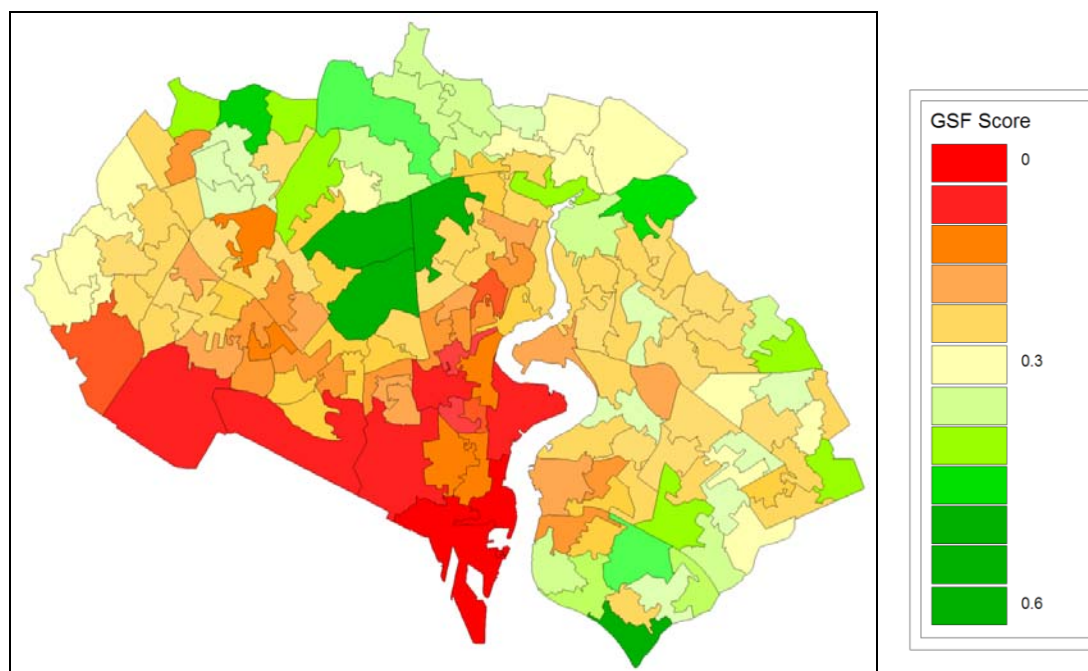
- 5.1.10 Southampton has had a network of greenways since the 1980s. These are ribbons of open spaces which follow stream valleys through the city. They form valuable breaks in built-up areas or between built development, with the primary purpose of improving biodiversity or acting as a “green lung” buffer between buildings. These greenways provide a good basis on which to improve Southampton’s open spaces.
- 5.1.11 The Core Strategy policy (CS 22) seeks to enhance the green grid and expand the concept beyond the existing greenways to provide more and better links through the city and links to the waterside, surrounding countryside and open space outside the city. Extending the green grid can also improve accessibility from residential areas to the city’s existing open spaces as well as to the city, town, district and local centres. These linkages can provide new and enhanced pedestrian routes and, where appropriate, cycle routes. Most open spaces should be easily accessible by walking and cycling by all sections of the community. The exceptions may be where a site is important for nature conservation and therefore public access should be restricted to protect it. It may also be impracticable to meet accessibility standards in certain cases, for example where slope angles make it impossible to put in suitable ramps for wheelchairs.
- 5.1.12 CS 22 policy does not necessarily require the creation of new open spaces to form the green links; better linkages could be created by tree planting and landscaping along connecting roads and by improved signage, information and maintenance. Opportunities for improving the visual links and signposting should be taken where they arise through new developments and through works to existing open spaces and their surroundings. Where there are no opportunities using council owned land, it may be possible through negotiations with private landowners to augment a link.
- 5.1.13 Green open space facilitates the **mitigation from the effects of climate change**. They exhibit the ability to allow clear drainage from heavy rainfall, cooling properties during hot periods, and adsorbent of pollutants through vegetation.
- 5.1.14 New open spaces **reduce pressure on existing public space** across the city centre and allow open spaces to be more intensively used. This will address concerns that the increasing population will put a detrimental pressure on the parks and open spaces. The CCAP provides for a number of new open spaces across the city centre and in doing so it will distribute and help to even out the pressure on urban spaces (see Map 8 of the CCAP).
- 5.1.15 **Mitigation for recreational disturbance and effects of climate change through green infrastructure**. Maintaining and creating attractive spaces also encourages people to use the amenity of local parks rather than travel out to sites outside the city – this helps mitigate the impacts of recreational disturbance on protected habitats and species. The adopted Core Strategy seeks to protect biodiversity through a number of approaches.
- 5.1.16 Policy CS 22 commits the Council to working with other PUSH authorities to achieve a sub-regional approach through the Green Infrastructure Strategy (see Appendix 4 for details). One of the key purposes of the Strategy is to ensure that, through providing a framework for implementation, the requirements of the Habitat Regulations are considered and mitigation can be delivered. There are particular sensitivities relating to the internationally important habitats and sites on the coast and in the New Forest. Policy CS 22 sets out a number of criteria for the protection and enhancement of the city’s protected habitats and biodiversity. Paragraph 5.4.21 also demonstrates how the Core Strategy has been assessed in line with the Habitats Regulations. The CCAP therefore seeks to implement a range of mitigation measures to protect designated sites.
- 5.1.17 The council’s Habitats Regulations Assessment has been undertaken and sets out where intervention is required in response to any significant likely effects on European sites. The

report established the nature and severity of effects and provides additional avoidance and mitigation measures to help ensure that adverse effects can be avoided. Site specific impacts, such as mobilisation of contaminants, loss of potential wader roost, collision mortality risk, and noise and vibration effects, are considered avoidable via the measures proposed in following chapters. Strategically operating impacts will be managed through a combination of joint-working initiatives and monitoring of their effectiveness.

## 6. The approach for the CCAP

- 6.1.1 In accordance with Core Strategy policy 21 (and paragraph 74 of the NPPF) the council will retain the existing level of open space. In most cases this involves protecting current open space, however there are instances where the council has accepted that currently protected open space could be replaced elsewhere as there are significant regeneration benefits. These include:
- Queens Park (as part of the Platform Road / gyratory improvements)
  - Blechynden Terrace (relating to wider Central Station improvements north of the station)
  - Mayflower Park (as part of the Royal Pier development – see relevant site policy)
- 6.1.2 Safeguard additional existing open space were possible and appropriate. This is already open space but has not be protected as such – e.g. St. Michael's civic space and the adjoining public amenity space, and St. Mary's churchyard.
- 6.1.3 Seek to provide new open spaces to support the increased population that are anticipated with growth in the city centre.
- 6.1.4 Utilise the council's Green Space Factor (GSF) tool. This is being implemented by the city council as a direct result of the European "*The Green and Blue Space Adaptation for Urban Areas and Eco Towns*" (GRaBS) project, which looked at ways to develop the use of green infrastructure as a tool to adapt urban areas to the effects of climate change. Map 1 overleaf shows the current scores for the Lower Super Output Areas of the city, demonstrating how sites in the city centre, central and waterfront areas of the city are much lower in green provision. By utilising GSF maps like these for individual sites and localities the city council aims to provide a way to measure qualitative improvements in green infrastructure across the city centre.

**Map 1: Southampton Green Space Factor (2013 scores)**



**7. How the overall level and type of open space is sufficient or deficient taking into account existing & future development needs in the city centre.**

- 7.1.1 The Open Space Audit and Green Space Strategy (Green Space Strategy) identified 1,140 hectares of green space in Southampton but concluded that there is little opportunity to increase the provision in the city. A very small amount of new green space may become available through development of some of the brown field sites, but generally there are no areas where new green spaces can be provided on a large scale.
- 7.1.2 In his report for the Core Strategy the Inspector (Para.114) stated that minimum standards are a long established practice. There are no national standards for Amenity Open Space but with the Council's Green Space Strategy there are now local standards upon which to gauge local levels of provision. The suggested quantity standards (in hectares per 1,000 population) in the GSS are therefore based on the current local provision of green space and therefore provide a robust and clear evidenced base for inclusion in the CCAP. The standards in the GSS are as follows:
- Allotments/Cemeteries - 0.20
  - Amenity Green Space - 0.22
  - City, District or Local Parks - 0.42
  - Outdoor sport provision - 1.00
  - Natural / Semi-natural areas - 1.75
- 7.1.3 In relation to the quantity standards above the aim is to ensure that development does not significantly impact on green space provision in Southampton so it was proposed that this level of amenity open space provision be taken forward either to be provided on site, or as an off-site contribution equivalent to providing it.
- 7.1.4 School grounds are treated differently in the GSS. These account for around 64 ha city-wide but were left out of any quantity assessments as they are not open to the general public out of school time. The table below sets out how the CCAP will meet the standards and how it is proposed to adds new elements to meet the needs where realistic.

**Table 2 – Meeting the open space standards in the city centre**

CCAP area: 24,678 population by 2026 (Based on 8,226 increase to 2026 – see Appendix 1).				
OS type	Current provision ( <u>Gross</u> )	Requirements in AP 13 ( <u>Gross</u> ) by 2026	<u>Net</u> deficiency before new space in CCAP?	New CCAP space to help offset any deficiencies – see Appendix 1 for commentary.
Allotments	Sandhurst Road Allotments	GSS standard requires an allotment within 30 mins walk.	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No additional requirement needed in CCAP area.</li> </ul>
Amenity Green Space	<b>2.9 Ha</b>	<b>5.4 Ha</b> (7.7 Ha when including c.46,000 workers using AP 13 target) *	2.5 Ha (4.8 Ha)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approx 6 Ha <b>new</b> green &amp; civic amenity spaces (CCAP Table 5) will make up the shortfall. See Table 4 below for full breakdown.</li> </ul>
Formal Parks	<b>28.2 Ha</b>	<b>10.3 Ha</b> (12.6 Ha when including c.46,000 workers using AP 13 target) *	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing city parks are within a 20 mins walk for CCAP area and provide 15 Ha more space than the GSS standards.</li> <li>1.4 Ha newly protected open space designations for existing open spaces (CCAP Appendix 5)</li> </ul>
Outdoor Sport	<b>4.0 Ha</b> (Hoglands Park mainly)	<b>24.6 Ha</b>	20.6 Ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not realistic / viable to provide 20.6 Ha in city centre. Indoor provision makes up for some of this (inc. the Quays swimming complex, St.Mary's Leisure Centre on CCAP boundary &amp; gymnasiums across city centre).</li> </ul>
Natural & Semi-Natural	<b>ANgST proximity standards are met for CCAP:</b> 20HA+ site within 2 km - Southampton Common 100HA+ site within 5 km - Itchen Valley CP 500HA+ site within 10 km - New Forest National Park			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No additional requirement needed in CCAP area.</li> </ul>
* Calculated using 0.05 HA per 1,000 workers in draft Policy AP 13				

7.1.5 According to the latest 2011 census figures, the key city centre area (predominantly the Bargate ward) contains a population of around 16,450. Around 40% of the Bargate ward population are university students (which compares to 14% student population city-wide). Likewise, the number of one-person households is also very high at 45% and within those households 43% do not have a car (compared to 29.5% city-wide).

7.1.6 These figures demonstrate that the city centre has a slightly different demographic to the rest of the city and a number of conclusions can be drawn. The population reduces markedly during the vacation and summer months as students head home, which reduces the pressure on the parks, however alternative users will be using the parks during this



time, most likely tourist visitors and workers (particularly during lunch breaks). This variety of users counter balances the use of the parks at different times of the year and allows the pressure to be spread out more than it would for a suburban park.

**Table 3 – Open Space protection to be conferred on these existing open spaces:**

<b>Existing Open Space</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Size (Ha)</b>
Guildhall Square	Civic space	0.40
Golden Grove pocket park	Amenity Space	0.24
Holy Rood church & Frontage	Civic Space	0.12
St. Michael's Square + adjacent pocket park at Castle Way	Civic Space	0.16
St. Mary's churchyard	Civic Space/Green	0.53
<b>TOTAL = Approx 1.45 HA</b>		

**Table 4 – New open space to be created and safeguarded as open space:**

<b>New Open Space</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Indicative net quantum's (Ha)</b>
<b>Spaces linked to new development:</b>		
Blechynden Terrace (reconfiguration of retaining existing quantum area)	Civic	0.17
West Quay Watermark Civic area + Western Esplanade link from Watermark civic area to Royal Pier (based on 2013 outline scheme)	Civic / Green	0.30 - Swimming & Diving Centre Pocket Park) 0.80 - Civic Space along Western Esplanade and new Plaza
Royal Pier / Town Quay (reconfiguration and extension)	Civic / Green	0.80 - Mayflower Park extension (estimated)
Civic Spaces / public amenity in MDZ	Civic / Green	0.80 - Geothermal public square 0.30 - MDZ boulevard 0.30 - Western MDZ civic park 0.30 - South of Central Station 0.50 - Harbour Parade green links
Town Depot – small amenity park	Green	0.20
Fruit & Veg Site (public realm)	Civic / Green	0.25
<b>Other spaces:</b>		
Queens Terrace and Platform Road	Green	0.50 - unused CLT 4 road in Queens Park + Queens Terrace returned to green / civic space
Albion Place / Castle Way	Green	0.28 (Albion Place / Castle Bailey Wall)
Civic Square (front of Civic Centre)	Civic / Green	0.40
<b>TOTAL = Approx 6.0 Ha</b>		

## 8. Deliverability

### 8.1 General considerations

- 8.1.1 New open spaces will be delivered either by developers as part of on-site provision (see Background Paper on Delivery) or through developer contributions (e.g. CIL). The council recognises that it will sometimes be difficult for individual developments to provide the required open space on site and so a number of locations and links are identified which together would represent an increase in open space and green infrastructure provision for the city centre.
- 8.1.2 The city council will encourage developers to provide open space on-site; for example as pocket parks within the curtilage that are available to the public, or significant green routes, or green walls/roofs (see Appendix 2 for examples that justify the council's approach to the standards). However, for small or constrained sites and those which are immediately adjacent to the city centre parks the contribution from CIL payments will be used to provide open space elsewhere in the city centre. and to improve accessibility to existing open space by creating more attractive green pedestrian / cycle / wildlife corridors across the city centre.
- 8.1.3 The CCAP identifies strategic links (pedestrian/cycle/green) which will provide attractive, safe, convenient routes across the city centre which connect parks, civic spaces and 'pocket' parks. Where developments are adjacent to these routes they will be expected to contribute so that incremental improvements can be made.
- 8.1.4 Recent viability studies undertaken for the city council (Community Infrastructure Levy, S106, CCAP key sites) have not identified any impediments to delivery over and above the normal costs and infrastructure associated with city centre development. The new open spaces will be negotiated as part of the normal planning process for major schemes and schemes will be assessed as to whether they are in conformity with the CCAP principles on open space and green infrastructure.

### 8.2 Delivery of Green roofs

- 8.2.1 Improvements in biodiversity can be achieved by the installation of green roofs and/or green walls. Green roofs are generally installed as 'extensive' (low weight, wildlife orientated) or 'intensive' (akin to a small garden, designed primarily for human recreational benefit). Intermediate variations between these two types are also an option. It is also important that green roofs are incorporated into designs at a very early stage, given that they are required to take significant weight and the need for well designed waterproofing.
- 8.2.2 The benefits of green roofs are achievable to occupants of buildings, as well as the local setting:
- Sustainable drainage
  - Biodiversity
  - Countering climate change and urban heat island effects
  - Building performance enhancements (less cooling required, acoustic benefits etc)
  - Amenity to users and benefits to wellbeing (health)
  - Financial (lower running costs and increased life of the roof)

### 8.3 Delivery of Standards

- 8.3.1 The objective for setting standards in Policy AP 13 is to provide a target for new development. The Core Strategy takes a similar policy approach (in particular CS 15 - Affordable Housing, and CS 16 - Housing mix and type) in setting out quantum targets

and provides flexibility in negotiation as and when schemes come forward. Likewise, Policy AP 13 sets out the quantum of open space the city council sees as realistic but provides flexibility on how this is delivered - whether this is provided on or adjacent to the development site and in what form it might take (e.g. pocket park or green roof).

- 8.3.2 The city needs to safeguard existing spaces and seek additional open spaces to serve the increased population, visitors and workforce. Significant open space will be required in the redevelopment of the MDQ and the creation of green pedestrian links.

## **9. Conclusions**

- 9.1.1 Open spaces and green infrastructure are of vital importance to the city centre, meeting a number of needs and roles. An appropriate balance must be made between the city centre as an economic driver delivering major development in a sustainable location, and the need for and benefits of high quality spaces.
- 9.1.2 The CCAP will compliment the Core Strategy, delivering more detailed policies for the city centre area, and replacing Local Plan Saved Policies CLT 3, 5 & 7 for the city centre. It reconciles two key objectives: to combine high quality high density development with good open space provision, by setting out the need for a wide range of improvements which will make city centre living attractive. This is reflected in the policies for the city centre – namely Policy AP 12 (increase the quantity and improve the quality and accessibility of open space), Policy AP 13 (open space in new development) and site specific policies.
- 9.1.3 The CCAP will retain the existing level of open space with modest reconfiguration or replacement where appropriate for regeneration benefits. It will safeguard additional existing open space and seek to provide new open spaces (around 6 Ha) to ensure that development does not significantly impact on green space provision in Southampton. The plan will also utilise the council's Green Space Factor tool to bring incremental improvements to green infrastructure on a site by site basis as development schemes come forward.

## Appendix 1

### CCAP Population forecasts

- ARUP Demography Study  
2011 – 2026 (city-wide) projection suggested **8.7%** increase in population.
- SCC long term projections 2017 – 2026 (Bargate ward)  
Calculated to be **21,800** by 2026 = **3,700** increase since 2011 : **18% increase**
- SCC forecast range using 2011 census data:-

Scenario 1	8% - Forecasted growth (city-wide)	16,452 (2013)	17,883 (2026)
<b>Scenario 2</b>	<b>18% - Expected CCAP growth</b>	<b>16,452 (2013)</b>	<b>19,413 (2026)</b>
Scenario 3	30% - Higher growth	16,452 (2013)	21,387 (2026)
Scenario 4	50% - Highest growth	16,452 (2013)	24,678 (2026)

SCC have recently used the ARUP Demography Study to factor in Household Size (Persons per Dwelling) using a multiplier starting at 2.33 (in 2001) reducing to 2.25 (2026) = Average 2.29 persons per dwelling over plan period.

### Applying the standards set out in the draft CCAP to the population forecasts:

**STEP 1 – For deriving gross open space requirements for the CCAP area (using 2011 based census projections):** 24,678 population by 2026 - apply the GSS standards for the following categories for CCAP area.

4.9 HA	- Allotments
5.4 HA	- Amenity Green Space (above 0.1 HA)
10.3 HA	- City, District, Local Parks (22.6 HA total if adding 38,000 workers in city centre)
24.7 HA	- Outdoor Sport provision

Natural/Semi-Natural wildlife standards for the city have not been included in these calculations – the city centre would need to provide over 6 net hectares of this type of space if using the GSS, which is deemed unrealistic for this plan. See section 2 below.

**STEP 2- Looking at the current provision in Southampton city centre, the gross provision is:**

Amenity Space =	2.8 HA (above 0.1 HA)	- Deficient
City & Local Park =	28.2 HA (Parks + Mayflower Park)	- Standard is met
Civic Spaces =	2.2 HA	- No set standard
School Grounds (St. Mary's) =	1.6 HA	- No set standard
Sports (Bowling Green) =	0.1 HA	- Deficient

**STEP 3- Accessibility (walking distance) standards are included in Green Space Strategy as follows:**

- Amenity green space (1 minute)
- Local Park or non-green Civic Space (5 minutes)
- District Park (10 minutes)
- City Park (20 minutes)
- Allotments (30 minutes)

## **Conclusions for CCAP area using the CCAP quantity standard and accessibility standards**

Looking at what SCC has now and what might be needed for (gross) provision in the City Centre we can draw some broad conclusions about how realistic the Green Space Strategy standards are for the CCAP–

### **Allotments: STANDARD MET**

SCC can discount any additional need for this because there are allotments at Sandhurst Road (west of the Polygon area), which will be within 30 minutes walk of most places in the city centre.

### **Amenity Green Space (above 0.1 HA): DEFICIENT**

This is harder to assess due to the small fragmented nature of these spaces, however, looking at the GSS / Audit maps it is clear that the number of amenity spaces above 0.1 Ha is limited in the city centre – overall there is 2.5 Hectare deficiency (to meet the gross 5.4 Ha standard). This rises to a 4.8 Ha deficiency if city centre workers are included, The new provision over the plan period of around 6 Ha of new space together with the extensive city parks provision will overcome this deficiency

### **City/District/Local Parks: STANDARD MET**

Central Parks alone are 21 HA, and including Queens Park and Mayflower Park there is 28 HA of park area, so SCC comfortably meets the standard – additionally they are within a 20 minute walk from most places in the city centre.

### **Outdoor sports provision: DEFICIENT (IN BOTH QUANTUM & ACCESSIBILITY)**

Hoglands Park (Central Parks) is around 5 HA, and St. Mary's Primary playing fields at 1.5 HA open space; so even in terms of existing provision the city centre has no where near what the standard sets down (21.8 HA). It is very doubtful SCC could viably provide 15 HA of new outdoor sports provision in the city centre – but contributions could be justified towards wider sports provision in the city. Indoor provision goes some way to making up for some of this shortfall (inc. the Quays swimming complex, St. Mary's Leisure Centre on CCAP boundary and gymnasiums across city centre).

### **Natural/semi-natural wildlife: STANDARD MOSTLY MET**

The total quantum of 38 Hectares for this type of space is clearly beyond anything available inside the CCAP boundary, but using the accessibility / distance standards from the GSS the following conclusions follow:

**One accessible 2ha site within 300m: DEFICIENT.** The nearest provision to this is Rollesbrook Green Corridor (1.43 HA) off the southern end of Hill Lane, but more than 300m outside the CCAP area.

**One accessible 20ha site within 2 km: STANDARD MET.** With the Common classed as a semi-natural space this meets the standard.

**One accessible 100ha site within 5km: STANDARD MET.** Itchen Valley Country Park is less than 5km from the city centre.

**One accessible 500ha site within 10km: STANDARD MET.** The New Forest National Park is less than 10km from the city centre.

## Appendix 2

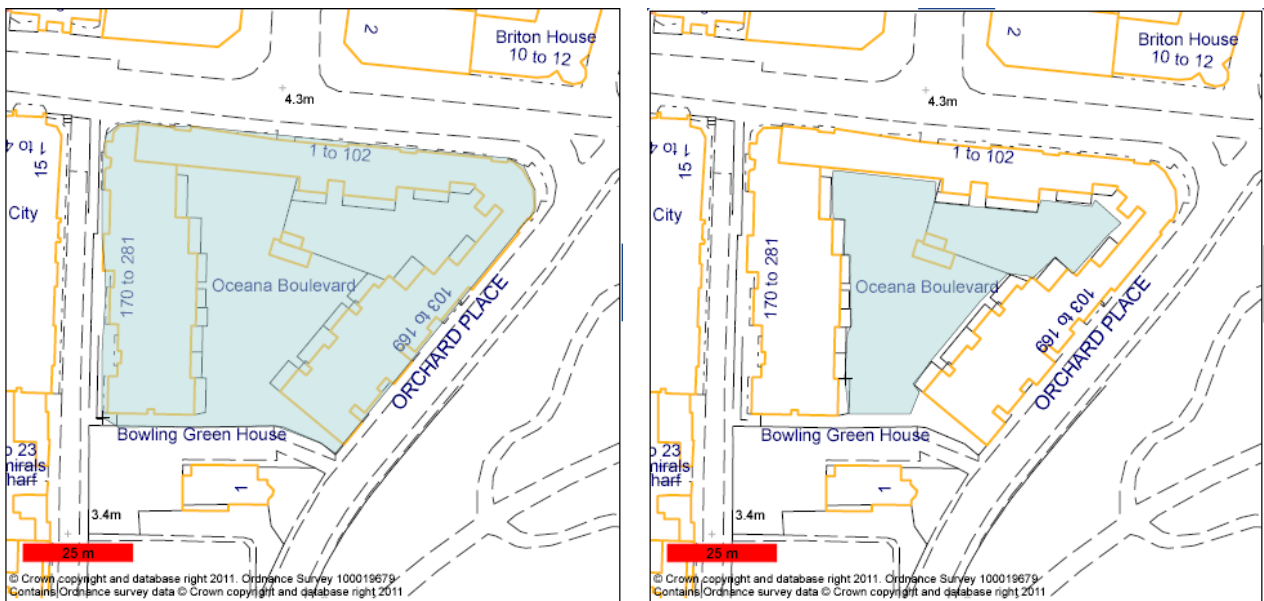
### Justifying the approach - 0.22 HA amenity open space per 1,000 people

#### Example of built development: Oceana Boulevard

Assumptions: 2.29 residents per dwelling (2.29 over the plan period, used by HCC and the ARUP Demography Study). Oceana Boulevard - 281 flats. 643 residents = 0.14 HA open space required using the draft policy approach. Oceana Boulevard has 0.17 HA. This would be around 25% over the draft CCAP target.

Blue area (left) denotes site curtilage (0.6 HA) / Blue area (right) denotes 0.17 HA amenity space.

This amenity space represents 28% of the site area.



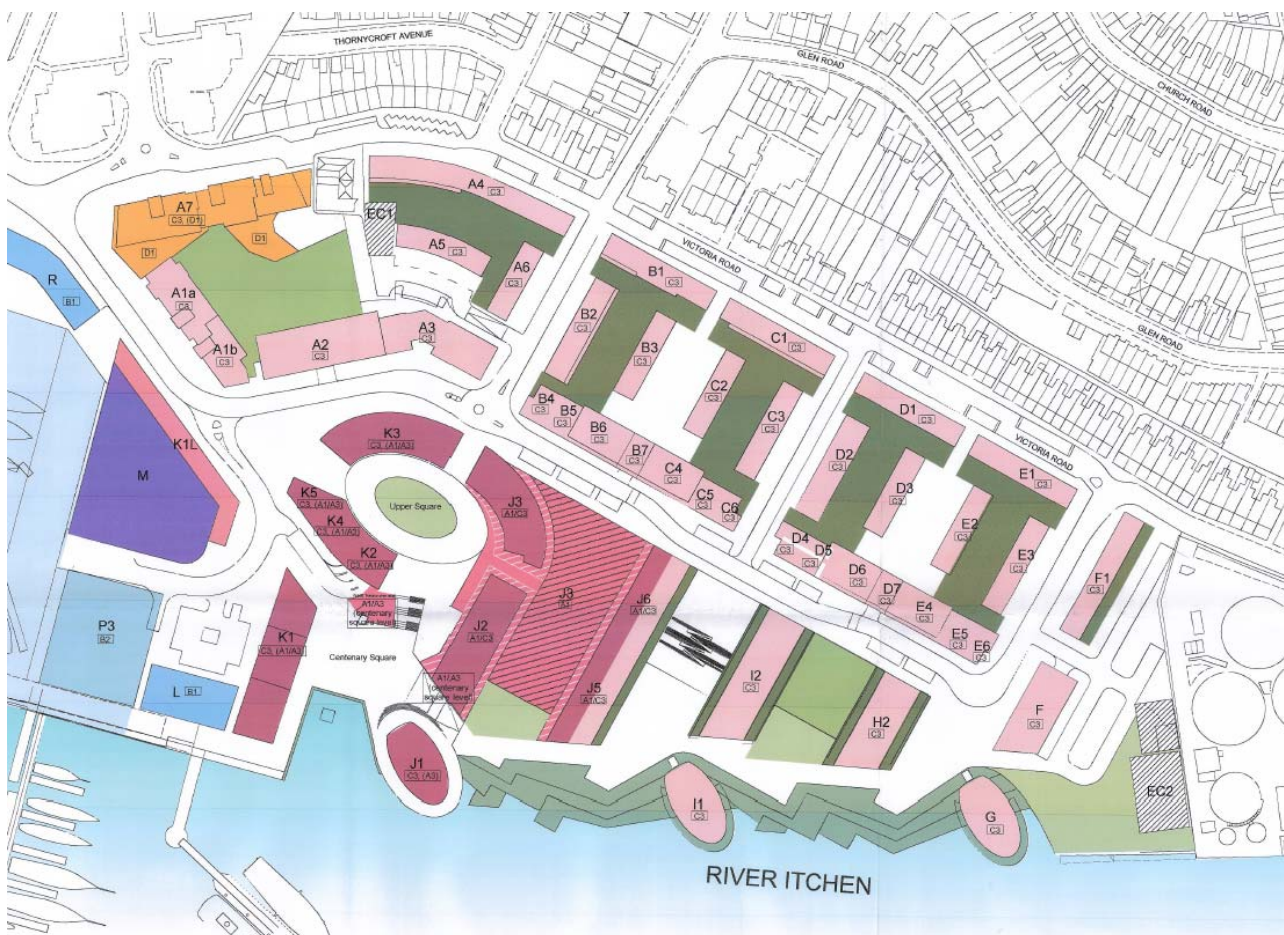
## Justifying the approach - 0.22 HA amenity open space per 1,000 people

### Example of current development: Centenary Quay, Woolston (under construction)

Assumptions: 2.29 residents per dwelling (2.29 over the plan period, used by HCC and the ARUP Demography Study). Centenary Quay – 1,518 dwellings. 3,476 residents = 0.75 HA open space required using the draft policy approach. Centenary Quay permission has at least 1.0 HA. This would be 25% over the draft CCAP target.

Light green areas (below) + adjacent white areas denote public open space.

This amenity space represents around 12% of the residential area.

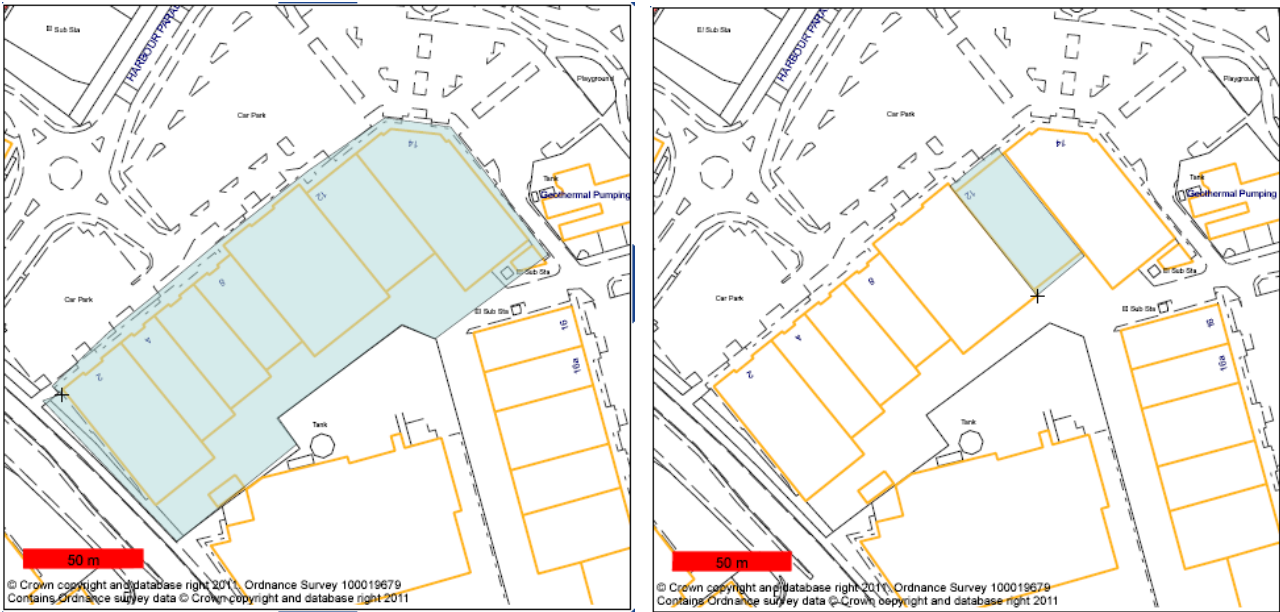


## Justifying the approach - 0.05 HA amenity open space per 1,000 workers

### Example development: Western side of West Quay Retail Park

Assumptions: 12sqm office floorspace per worker (used by the latest study undertaken by Strutt & Parker for SCC in Deliverability Report) and **0.05 HA amenity space per 1,000 workers**. Site based on Strutt & Parker study for SCC Masterplan – 40,000 sqm = c.3,300 workers (3.3 x 0.05 HA) = 0.16 HA required using the draft policy approach.

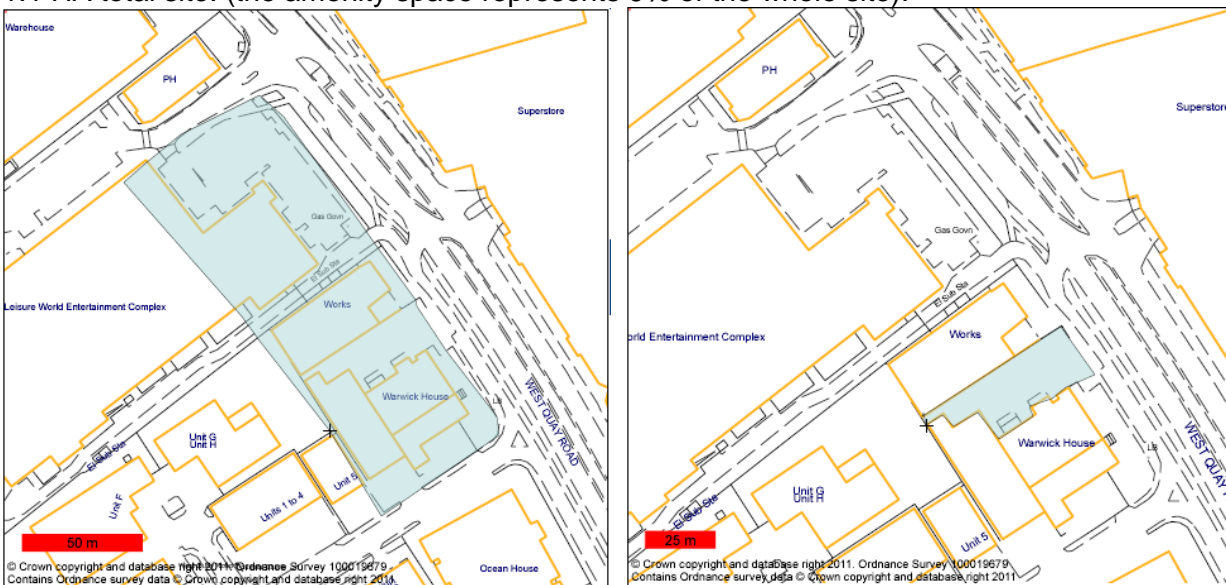
Blue area (left) denotes site curtilage / Blue area (right) denotes 0.16 HA amenity space. 1.6 HA total site. (the amenity space represents 10% of the whole site).



### Example development: One site in Western Gateway area

Assumptions: 12sqm office floorspace per worker (used by the latest study undertaken by Strutt & Parker for SCC in Deliverability Report) and **0.05 HA amenity space per 1,000 workers**. Site based on Strutt & Parker study for SCC Masterplan) – 25,000 sqm = c.2,080 workers (2 x 0.05) = 0.10 HA required using the draft policy approach.

Blue area (left) denotes site curtilage / Blue area (right) denotes 0.10 HA amenity space. 1.1 HA total site. (the amenity space represents 9% of the whole site).





## Appendix 3

Policy CS 21 – Protecting and Enhancing Open Space					
Link to City of Southampton Strategy objective(s): SO1 – People proud of their city & making a positive contribution SO4 – An attractive, sustainable and stimulating environment SO6 – A unique sense of place	Link to Core Strategy Strategic objective(s):				
	S11	S12	S14	S15	S19
<p>The Council will retain the quantity and improve the quality and accessibility of the city's diverse and multi – functional open spaces and help deliver new open space both within and beyond the city to meet the needs of all age groups through</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Protecting and enhancing key open spaces including Southampton Common, central, district and local parks;</li> <li>2. Replacing or reconfiguring other open spaces in order to achieve wider community benefits such as improving the quality of open space, or providing a more even distribution across the city;</li> <li>3. Safeguarding and, when opportunities arise, extending the green grid (see Policy 22);</li> <li>4. Seeking developer contributions to provide high quality, accessible open spaces.</li> </ol> <p>The Council will work with neighbouring authorities to protect the strategic gaps between Southampton and Eastleigh and Southampton and Hedge End / Bursledon / Netley.</p>					

Policy CS 22 - Promoting Biodiversity and Protecting Habitats				
Link to City of Southampton Strategy objective(s): SO1 – People proud of their city & making a positive contribution SO4 – An attractive, sustainable and stimulating environment	Link to Core Strategy Strategic objective(s):			
	S9	S12	S15	S19
<p>Effective protection of biodiversity cannot be achieved by focusing solely on land within the city. The Council will work with other PUSH authorities to achieve a sub-regional approach, in particular through the Green Infrastructure Strategy for South Hampshire.</p> <p>Within Southampton the Council will promote biodiversity through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Safeguarding international, national and local designated sites from inappropriate development;</li> <li>2. Giving appropriate consideration to internationally and nationally protected and important habitats and species;</li> <li>3. Safeguarding and extending the existing Green Grid to provide a network of wildlife corridors and stepping stones between areas of green space within the city and linking to the surrounding countryside;</li> <li>4. Ensuring that development retains, protects and enhances features of biological interest and provides for the appropriate management of these features;</li> <li>5. Ensuring development seeks to produce a net gain in biodiversity by designing in provisions for wildlife and ensuring any unavoidable impacts are appropriately mitigated.</li> </ol> <p>Developer contributions may be sought from relevant developments to support the provision and improvement of green infrastructure in accordance with Policy CS 25.</p>				

## Appendix 4

### The PUSH Green Infrastructure Strategy

The PUSH Green Infrastructure (GI) strategy identifies a number of projects which will need to be implemented by the city council. These are intended to form part of a wider package of measures to mitigate for recreational impacts of new development and although they do not relate directly with the city centre they are part of the council's mitigation work under the Habitats Regulations.

#### **C2 Coastal Access Initiative**

*Meets objectives for - Green Grid / Coast for people, wildlife and improved water*

The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 will create continuous linear access around the coast. This will affect land around the coastal part of the sub-region. Before access routes can be confirmed, route proposals will be subject to Habitats Regulations Assessment. Coastal Access in the sub-region will coincide with various European sites of nature conservation interest hence this project will take some time to be completed once the feasibility work begins. This initiative is to be jointly worked up by all the coastal authorities in PUSH.

#### **W1 Forest Park**

*Meets objectives for – Green Grid / Greener urban design*

Existing woodlands located adjacent to residential areas of Southern Test Valley, Chandlers Ford, Eastleigh and Southampton are currently managed by the Forestry Commission, although some of the woodlands are in private ownership. These woodlands provide a setting to the north west of Southampton and the Southampton University buildings and provide an important link between the urban core and wooded farmland north west of the M27. The woods are accessed via existing pedestrian and cycle routes, particularly from North Baddesley, Nursling and Rownhams and Southampton.

The Test Valley's Core Strategy (March 2009) proposal for a Forest Park (policy SCSP12) aims to link up the woodlands of Lords Wood, Hut Wood and Toot Hill, and associated open spaces and include the creation of new footpaths, mountain bike trails, signposting, information boards and car parks. The GI strategy supports the Core Strategy's proposal which could provide an additional and alternative local green space potentially reducing the need to utilise European designation sites for this purpose. This project should seek to:

1. Develop a wide range of connecting green routes which aim to reduce the need to travel to this area by car. Any new car parking should be carefully located and limited in size.
2. Link, both physically and in terms of management, Testwood Lakes, Itchen Valley country park and Lakeside country park with the proposed Forest Park, as a cross boundary project. This could seek to seamlessly serve the recreational, leisure, tourism, health, sport and biodiversity needs of the two major urban areas of Southampton and Eastleigh, and enhancing the green gap between them.
3. Enhance the cycleway network along the River Test, to the Testwood Lakes visitor centre and into Southampton, Test Valley and Forest Park, in order to provide attractive alternative areas of recreational space to the New Forest NP. This could include strengthening links from the Totton – Test Valley Way long distance footpath (formally known as the Test Way) and the Sustrans cycle route (National Route 24 Southampton to Bath, via Salisbury) to the Forest Park.
4. Investigate the potential for more intensive recreational use on the fringe of the built-up area, particularly in areas with accessible links into Forest Park.
5. Retain areas of lowland heath mosaic landscape character to the north of Southampton (in Lord's Wood by Castle Hill and by Bracken Hall).
6. Promote woodfuel production and link to local markets.

7. There are also a number of large and robust woodlands west and north east of Romsey, and to the north lies Fishlake Meadows, closely adjacent to, but outside of, the PUSH boundary. Linkages, for people and wildlife, should be promoted, both between those large landscape features with each other, and between them and people and wildlife areas within the PUSH boundary.
8. Potential site for habitat creation in the River Test valley between Romsey and the M27, comprising of improved grassland and water meadows. This project should seek to create around 300ha of freshwater habitat, and could hold specific opportunities for managed realignment.

Justification:

- Contributes to meeting ANGSt standard (explained in Section 4 below)
- Ties in with the Health maps Natural England
- Sits within a Biodiversity Opportunity Area
- Contributes to HRA avoidance and mitigation
- Part GI provision to meet growth requirements

Local Authorities : Southampton, New Forest, Eastleigh and Test Valley

#### **U4 Lordsdale Greenway**

*Meets objectives for – Green Grid / Country Parks & Woodland / Greener urban design*

This greenway follows a circular route from Vinery Gardens allotments in the south, passing through Old Shirley, Coxford and Aldermoor, before following a northerly direction through allotments and up into Lordswood.

The greenway will provide non-motorised access between homes, schools, places of work, amenities (e.g. the Hospital) and other local facilities. The corridor includes the Mill brook and ponds. Opportunities to increase the number of ponds should be explored. Woodland enhancement and increased tree planting can also be achieved along the route of the greenway.

Additional greenways could potentially link up to future Country Park in southern Test Valley (Project W1) and therefore be part of a cross boundary project.

#### **U5 River Itchen Corridor**

*Meets objectives for -*

The river and its bank sides (which are sometimes very narrow in parts of Southampton) represent a core GI asset, which serves the workplaces and residential locations along its route. Landscape enhancements at this location will enhance biodiversity and quality of life value, especially tranquil recreation, and reinforce sense of place. Chessil Bay LNR which is located on the eastern banks of the Itchen estuary has significant potential for interpretation and managed public access.

This study uses the proposed projects put forward in the GI Strategy to inform the evidence base and recommendations for further appraisal of sites in future DPDs (Section 8).