

Cambridgeshire Green infrastructure Strategy Appendix 10 Publicly Accessible Open Space

Note: To be revised upon completion and publication of Natural England's Cambridgeshire and Peterborough ANGSt analysis.

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1 Introduction

This section identifies the baseline datasets and relevant analysis for Publicly Accessible Open Space, which is an important component of Green Infrastructure in Cambridgeshire.

Publicly Accessible Open Space takes a variety of forms from very natural areas through to largely managed open spaces for recreation uses, such as outdoor sports. Whilst the whole spectrum of open space has a value to the public in providing for outdoor recreation and the health and wellbeing benefits it brings, in terms of identifying where new publicly accessible open space is required to be provided to meet the needs of existing or proposed communities, it is necessary to identify an appropriate method for making that assessment.

For the purposes of the Strategy, provision of Publicly Accessible Open Space is assessed using the definitions contained within Natural England's 'Nature nearby: Accessible Natural Greenspace Guidance';

“Accessible greenspace – places that are available for the general public to use free of charge and without time restrictions (although some sites may be closed to the public overnight and there may be fees for parking a vehicle). The places are available to all, meaning that every reasonable effort is made to comply with the requirements under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA 1995). An accessible place will also be known to the target users, including potential users who live within the site catchment area.

Natural greenspace – Places where human control and activities are not intensive so that a feeling of naturalness is allowed to predominate. Natural and semi-natural greenspace exists as a distinct typology but also as discrete areas within the majority of other greenspace typologies.”¹

The general and spatial issues that relate to this Theme have been considered and conclusions have been made about how the issues can be mapped and overlaid to highlight the opportunities that exist for the Publicly Accessible Open Space Green Infrastructure Theme. Drawing this information together provided a map of Publicly Accessible Open Space opportunities that was then combined with the other six Themes, as well as other important issues and assets in Cambridgeshire, to inform and develop the Strategic Network of Green Infrastructure.

Whilst the Strategy therefore focuses on Publicly Accessible Natural Greenspace, this should not be taken to undermine the value of more formal open space as Green Infrastructure in addressing a number of the issues and benefits identified in the Strategy.

¹ Nature Nearby: Accessible Natural Greenspace Guidance, March 2010. Natural England p8.

2 Baseline information and datasets, including policy

Publicly Accessible Open Space is important for providing areas for recreation and enjoyment by communities at different scales and distances from people's homes. One way of measuring Open Space provision is through the application of standards. Tables 10.1, 10.2 and 10.3 summarise national, neighbouring authority and Cambridgeshire Local Authority standards that are relevant to Green Infrastructure.

Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 17: Open Space, Sport and Recreation – this highlights the requirement to undertake open space audits and strategies which can inform Green Infrastructure Strategies at both the strategic and local scale.

Table 10.1 National standards relevant to Green Infrastructure

National Standard	Accessible natural Greenspace Standards (ANGSt)	
Promoting Organisation	Natural England	
What are the standards?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An accessible natural green space of at least 2 hectares in size, no more than 300 metres (5 minutes walk) from home. - At least one accessible 20 hectare site within two km of home. - One accessible 100 hectare site within five km of home. - One accessible 500 hectare site within ten km of home. - One hectare of statutory Local Nature Reserves per thousand population. 	
Implications	Advantages	Disadvantages
	Nationally promoted Identifies general areas of deficiency and need Provides incentive and benchmarking Useful for advocacy and as an aspiration. Has been applied across the East of England to provide more local comparisons.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Only looks at accessible natural/semi-natural green spaces rather than wider - Green Infrastructure assets. - May be issues around what is classified as 'accessible' – linear vs. open access? Assumes full mobility on part of population Feasibility given existing land resources and uses Catchment area ignore barriers or access routes
Conclusion	<p>ANGSt has its limitations due to classification used, existing land resources and catchment areas. However, is a useful measure to identify broad deficits.</p> <p>Allows comparison with other areas if the same methodology is used and one acknowledges that not all Green Infrastructure sites would have been included.</p>	

With data supplied by districts, Natural England undertook a full ANGSt analysis of the county in autumn/winter 2010. *As of 10th January 2011 the Natural England report was in draft form and once finalised text from the document can be quoted in this Technical Appendix.*

National Standard	Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play (formally 6-acre Standard)	
Promoting Organisation	Fields in Trust	
What are the standards?	<p>Provision of helpful advice and information on a whole host of areas including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LAPS, LEAPS and NEAPS - Ensuring open spaces meet the sustainability agenda - The design principles of successful play areas - Benchmark standards of provision of open spaces for sport and play - Importance of local assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 acres/2.4 ha of “playing space”/1000 (24 sq m/person) • 12 sq m of (grass) pitches • 4 sq m “other” outdoor sports facilities • 8 sq m “children’s playing space” • 2.5 sq m equipped play areas (LEAPs and NEAPs) • 5.5 sq m amenity space <p>+ some guidance on quality and accessibility</p>	
Implications	Advantages	Disadvantages
	<p>Contains design principles. Useful for benchmarking. Provides certainty for developers and LPAs. Definite identification of needs.</p>	<p>Focuses largely on formal open space at a local level. There is a charge to buy the standard –restricted accessibility to the standard and its design principles. Proposed in 1928 – still relevant? Does it take artificial pitches, floodlighting and the full range of sports into account? Single issue standard – not multifunctional? Distance and catchments for standards?</p>
Conclusion	More limited than ANGSt, restricted types of space as it focuses largely on formal open space at a local level, no catchments.	

	At a District or local level can be used to identify gaps in provision, potentially to identify requirements for open space in new developments, and areas where multi-functionality could be built in on a site by site basis.
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National Standard	Local Nature Reserve (LNR) standard	
Promoting Organisation	Natural England	
What are the standards?	<p>One hectare of statutory Local Nature Reserves per thousand population (considered part of ANGSt). An LNR must meet at least 1 of 3 criteria and it is recommended that they have a recommended minimum size of 2ha.</p> <p>To qualify for LNR status, a site must be of importance for wildlife, geology, education or public enjoyment. It must offer opportunities for education.</p>	
Implications	Advantages	Disadvantages
	<p>Publicly accessible</p> <p>Provides some level of protection – shown on planning documents</p> <p>Useful for benchmarking</p> <p>Explicitly involves the local community</p>	<p>Only land owned by a Local Authority (including a Parish Council) or where the Local Authority has a vested interest (such as leasing) the land can be declared a LNR.</p> <p>Look at sites individually, not as part of network?</p> <p>Only create LNRs on certain land and for certain reasons.</p>
Conclusion	<p>Limited due to availability of land that is appropriate, but good for community engagement and local provision. Can support networks but they can be created in isolation. Requires Local Authority commitment.</p> <p>Easy to measure and compare to other areas. Distribution of LNRs where there is appropriate land and few existing nature conservation opportunities.</p>	

National Standard	Ecotowns 40% green space target	
Promoting Organisation	Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment CABE	
What are the standards?	<p>40% of an Ecotown should be composed of green and open spaces.</p> <p>Approaches to embedding sustainable behaviours among the community.</p> <p>Planned in a way which supports low carbon living and, in particular, minimises Carbon emissions from transport.</p> <p>Incorporate environmentally sustainable approaches to managing waste, wastewater, drainage and flooding, in line with PPS25: Development and Flood Risk (e.g. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems).</p> <p>Integrate green space and features to enhance biodiversity.</p>	
Implications	Advantages	Disadvantages
	<p>Multifunctional.</p> <p>Promotes networks.</p> <p>Provides benchmark and certainty in Ecotowns.</p>	<p>Uncertainty of what will happen to Ecotowns under the Coalition government.</p> <p>Only applies to Ecotowns.</p> <p>This figure of 40% includes private gardens – not all publicly accessible.</p> <p>Distribution of open space and public/private split.</p>
Conclusion	<p>Limited to Ecotowns, not look at distribution in area or public/private split. As envisaged, trying to raise bar for developers – better design, multifunctional, and exemplar for local area.</p> <p>May be relevant to Northstowe.</p>	

National Standard	Green Flag Award Criteria for quality	
Promoting Organisation	Keep Britain Tidy, BTCV and GreenSpace	
What are the standards?	<p>All formal Parks and Gardens should be of 'good' quality or higher (scoring at least 50%). They should be clean and well-maintained sites that are visually attractive and provide opportunities for leisure and relaxation. The sites should have well-defined boundaries. They should also be safe and secure with appropriate lighting and provision of ancillary facilities, including benches and litter bins where appropriate. Sites should have appropriate, well designed and accessible interpretative signage where necessary e.g. parks with historic/heritage features. Management plans should also be designed and implemented where appropriate.</p> <p>This standard reflects the Green Flag Award criteria for quality and will ensure that the high quality of sites is maintained, with the additional aim of achieving Green Heritage Status where possible. It will also help to ensure that the sites continue to attract visitors and provide benefits in terms of leisure, relaxation and well-being. Appropriate signage will help people to understand the significance of their cultural and natural heritage, thus adding to the visitor experience.</p>	
Implications	Advantages	Disadvantages
	<p>Nationally recognised. Good benchmark and impetus to maintain quality. Looks at quality, is detailed and looks at cultural aspects. Must have community buy-in and uses.</p>	<p>Need to pay to enter scheme – disincentive. Only looks at parks – what sort of multi-functionality is examined? Do you have to keep entering to keep the award – on-going cost?</p>
Conclusion	<p>No 'standard' as such, but does look strongly at quality. Good for benchmarking and an incentive, but is there an ongoing cost?</p> <p>Are there any awards in Cambridgeshire, should we try and get more?</p>	

Table 10.2 Neighbouring Local Authority standards relevant to Green Infrastructure

Neighbouring Local Authority	Bedfordshire	
The standard	In South Bedfordshire and Luton, this standard is that there should be 51m ² per person of publicly accessible green space. There's no equivalent standard for Bedford or Mid Bedfordshire. Policy NE17 – open spaces	
What are the standards?	<p>1. Not permitting proposals which would be likely to have an impact on the open space in terms of its function as part of the wider open space network and/or as a wildlife corridor, its setting, its existing or potential contribution to the townscape or its value as a wildlife resource unless the proposals are able to provide a replacement of at least equal value, in terms of the above qualities;</p> <p>2. Seeking in association with the development, the provision and/or the enhancement of open space and the creation of areas having high ecological value.</p>	
Implications	Advantages	Disadvantages

Neighbouring Local Authority	North Hertfordshire	
The standard	The North Hertfordshire District Green Infrastructure Plan (GIP) was completed in August 2009. The GIP does not contain standards but has an Action Plan which sets out GI projects with their benefits, cost band and priority. North Hertfordshire, do however have access and quantity standards for Green Space within North Hertfordshire which were used to inform the GIP.	
What are the standards?		
Implications	Advantages	Disadvantages

Neighbouring Local Authority	Essex
The standard	As of yet there isn't a county wide GI plan but there is a Essex County Council GI audit that was completed last year. Essex County Council have consulted their members and internal staff as well as external GI organisations (FC, EWT, NT, BTCV, RSBP, NE). There are full, but old and unimplemented GI plans for growth areas in Essex - GreenArc and Harlow, Thames Gateway and the Harwich area which were all produced and paid for as part of the CLG funding.

Neighbouring Local Authority	South Holland
The standard	Have no Green Infrastructure standards

Neighbouring Local Authority	South Norfolk				
The standard	The submitted Joint Core Strategy (prepared by South Norfolk, Broadland and Norwich City Council in association with Norfolk County Council) includes a mention of the requirement to provide green infrastructure in policies 1, 9 and 12. The Joint Core Strategy policies do not set standards for delivery; rather they seek to focus on Green Infrastructure priority areas as identified in the figures on pages 35 and 69 of the Joint Core Strategy. The Joint Core Strategy and Green Infrastructure Strategy & Delivery Plan can be viewed via the following link: http://www.gndp.org.uk/				
What are the standards?					
Implications	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Advantages</td> <td>Disadvantages</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Advantages	Disadvantages		
Advantages	Disadvantages				

Table 10.3 Cambridgeshire’s Local Authority standards relevant to Green Infrastructure

Cambridgeshire Local Authority	Cambridge City Council
The standard	Open space and recreation standards
What are the standards?	<p>Outdoor Sports Facilities – (Playing pitches, courts and Greens) - 1.2 hectares per 1,000 people.</p> <p>Indoor Sports Provision – (Formal provision such as sports halls and swimming pools) - 1 sports hall for 13,000 people. 1 swimming pool for 50,000 people</p> <p>Provision for children and teenagers - (Equipped children’s play areas and outdoor youth provision) - 0.3 hectares per 1,000 people</p> <p>Informal Open Space – (Informal provision including recreation grounds, parks and natural greenspaces) - 1.8 hectares per 1,000 people</p> <p>Allotments - 0.4 hectares per 1,000 people</p> <p>Within the Cambridge Local Plan, Cambridge East and North West Cambridge Area Action Plans.</p>
Cambridgeshire Local Authority	South Cambridgeshire District Council
The standard	Public open space standards SF/11
What are the standards?	<p>The minimum standard for outdoor play space and informal open space is 2.8 hectares per 1,000 people, comprising:</p> <p>Outdoor Sport¹ - 1.6 hectares per 1,000 people</p> <p>Children’s Playspace² - 0.8 hectares per 1,000 people</p> <p>Informal Open Space³ - 0.4 hectares per 1,000 people</p> <p>Cambridge East and North West Cambridge Area Action Plans contain their own standards, using those for Cambridge City Council.</p>

3 What this information tells us

There are few national standards relevant to Green Infrastructure that can be applied spatially to Cambridgeshire other than Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGSt). PPG17 supports the development of local standards of open space that can contribute to the delivery of Green Infrastructure at a local scale.

Most Local Authorities do not have a countywide standard for Green Infrastructure, but neighbouring Green Infrastructure strategies do need to be taken into account, particularly when developing cross-boundary links.

In Cambridgeshire itself there are no consistent standards across the county, local standards based on PPG17 vary depending on the District Council.

Given the variety of local standards across Cambridgeshire, the lack of county-wide standards in neighbouring authorities and the desirability of consistency nationally, Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGSt) have been used to examine the level of publicly accessible open space provision in Cambridgeshire, recognising that it only considers natural open space.

With data supplied by districts, Natural England undertook a full ANGST analysis of the county in autumn/winter 2010, providing indicative results to inform the development of a Strategic Green Infrastructure Network for Cambridgeshire. Detailed ANGST analysis for each district, describing in more detail where there are areas of deficiency in provision, will be included in the full Natural England report, due for completion by March 2011.

4 Spatial analysis

The figures in this section will be replaced with figures from LDA Design, which will contain the same data.

Figure 10.1 shows all the Accessible Natural Greenspace within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and also Accessible Natural Greenspace that lies within a 10km buffer zone of the county and unitary authority boundary, as Greenspace adjacent to these areas can be used by residents of Cambridgeshire. The map shows ANGSt by the different standard thresholds by colour.

Figure to be inserted once Natural England report finalised

Figure 10.1 Accessible Natural Greenspace within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Figure 10.2 shows the 2ha plus deficiency for Cambridgeshire. This shows that the majority of the county has a deficit of access to this size of space. Notable clusters of where the standard is met are around Cambridge, along the Ouse Valley and a few of the other waterways, around some of the market towns or settlements and near key Green Infrastructure sites.

Figure to be inserted once Natural England report finalised

Figure 10.2 2ha plus deficiency for Cambridgeshire

Figure 10.3 shows the 20ha plus deficiency for Cambridgeshire. This shows that a large part of the county has a deficit of access to this size of space. Notable clusters of where the standard is met are around Cambridge, along the Ouse Valley and the Rivers Cam and Ely Ouse around some of the market towns or settlements and near key Green Infrastructure sites.



Figure to be inserted once Natural England report finalised

Figure 10.3 20ha plus deficiency for Cambridgeshire

Figure 10.4 shows the 100ha plus deficiency for Cambridgeshire. This shows that the key areas of the county that have a deficit of access to this standard are in the north and south/southeast of the county.

Figure to be inserted once Natural England report finalised

Figure 10.4 100ha plus deficiency for Cambridgeshire

Figure 10.5 shows the 500ha plus deficiency for Cambridgeshire. This shows that the key areas of the county that have a deficit of access to this standard are in an arc around the north, west and south/southeast of the county.

Figure to be inserted once Natural England report finalised

Figure 10.5 500ha plus deficiency for Cambridgeshire

Figure 10.6 shows the combined ANGSt deficiency for Cambridgeshire. This shows areas of the county where none of the standards are met and has been produced by overlapping the areas of deficiency from the individual standards together and extracting where deficiencies against all for standards coincide. There are two main areas in the north and south of the county and a slightly smaller area in west.

- In the north the majority of Fenland District and an area of northeast Huntingdonshire down to Ramsey are deficient in ANGSt.
- In the south the area of ANGSt deficiency covers an area east and south of Cambridge, running to the county border with Suffolk, Essex and Hertfordshire, lying in the southern portion of East Cambridgeshire District below Newmarket and part of South Cambridgeshire District.
- The third substantial area lies within Huntingdonshire District and runs from the Spaldwick/Catworth area north to Glatton.

There are also several smaller areas identified that are deficient in against all ANGSt:

- Between Cambourne and Caldecote
- In the Tadlow to Guilden Morden area
- To the southwest of Abbotsley
- The southern part of St Neots
- An area between Hail Weston and Great Staughton

Figure to be inserted once Natural England report finalised

Figure 10.6 combined ANGSt deficiency for Cambridgeshire

The Theme for Publicly Accessible Open Space is based on this 'all deficiency' Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGSt) analysis. The Theme map therefore shows areas where none of the ANGSt are met in Cambridgeshire. At a strategic scale the Green Infrastructure Strategy should seek to address these areas where they coincide with the Strategic Network. Strategic Areas and Target Areas may have deficiencies against individual Standards.

Analysis at the Strategic Area level highlights the following:

Strategic Area 1: at present the Area has a total deficiency in ANGSt at the 100ha plus and 500ha plus standards and a significant deficiency in ANGSt at the 2ha plus and 20ha plus standards.

Strategic Area 2: at present the Area has an almost total deficiency in ANGSt at the 500ha plus standard and a significant deficiency in ANGSt at the 2ha plus standard. The 20ha plus standard is deficient to the east and south of the Area. The 100ha standard is well met in the Area.

Strategic Area 3: at present the Area has a deficiency in ANGSt at the 100ha plus and 500ha plus standard at the southern (St Neots) and northern (Chatteris and Ouse Washes) parts of the Area. The 20ha plus standard is deficient in the north of the Area and there is a significant deficit in the 2ha plus standard away from the corridor of market towns along the Ouse Valley. Opportunities to address deficiencies include through co-ordinating public access links, signage and promotion throughout the Great Ouse Wetland (see 4.3.3 case study)

Strategic Area 4: at present the Area has a significant total deficiency in ANGSt at the 2ha plus standard away from the market towns and Ely Ouse corridor. The 100ha plus and 500ha plus standards are well met and at the 20ha plus standard there are only pockets of deviancy within the Area.

Strategic Area 5: At present the Area has a significant deficiency in ANGSt at the very local 2ha plus standard and a small deficiency to the south of the Area at the 20ha plus standard.

Strategic Area 6: At present the Area is deficient in ANGSt at the 500ha plus standard around Cambridge and to the south, west and east of the Area and at the 100ha plus standard to the south, east and then in an arc around the Longstanton/Oakington area. There are significant deficiencies in ANGSt at the 20ha plus standard away from Cambridge and the far west of the Area, and at the 2ha plus standard there are significant deficiencies across the whole Area.

5 Issues and Opportunities

Issues

- The ANGSt analysis provides a baseline for the county. Planned future development, with resultant population growth, may be located in areas that already have a deficit against some or all of the standards, or they may adversely alter the standards.
- Conversely well-planned and delivered development can create new Accessible Natural Greenspace that addresses deficits in Cambridgeshire.
- It should be remembered that the definition of Accessible Natural Greenspace does not encompass all Green Infrastructure assets that may exist in Cambridgeshire, for example, more formal open spaces and Public Rights of Way.

Opportunities

- Planned development offers opportunities to create new Accessible Natural Greenspace to address deficits or to mitigate against new areas of deficit.
- Where appropriate, making areas of Natural Greenspace that are currently inaccessible to the public or that do not meet the criteria for accessibility can help address deficits at different ANGSt scales.
- Green Infrastructure investment across the county through the creation or improvement of new sites that meet the definition of Accessible Natural Greenspace can help address deficits in ANGSt.

Constraints

- The ANGSt assessment does not take account of the impact that planned growth will have on provision of Publicly Accessible Open Space and it is possible that if this was taken into account other areas of deficiency would be identified.